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• Coolock/Darndale Adult Literacy Service

• Dublin Adult Learning Centre

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• Tralee CTC, Kerry

• Kylemore CTC, Dublin

• Finglas West CTC, Dublin

• Kilkenny Employment for Youth CTC

• Harmonstown Youthreach, Dublin

• Mountjoy Prison Education Service, Dublin

• Portlaoise Prison Education Service, Laois

• Merchants Quay Ireland, Dublin

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Foreword

Following the large-scale consultation process to develop the Evolving Quality Framework for Adult Basic Education, it became very clear that learners, practitioners and management within adult literacy services were looking for guidance on how to provide better evidence of learning. To this end NALA set up a project that aimed to develop a national assessment framework built on the principles of adult literacy practice in Ireland.

The first stage of the project involved an experienced team of practitioners developing a consultation paper, called Issues and Opportunities in Assessment. The paper explained assessment and why there was a need for an assessment framework: there would be "an agreed 'big picture' within which individual learners can be assessed" (J. Merrifield, U. Coleman and O. Mc Donogh, May 2001, p4). The paper went on to present draft principles for the framework, as well as draft areas/features of performance. These formed the basis of the draft framework as it was tried out in a number of settings over a period of two years.

Many groups were involved in trying out the draft framework, all of which committed great time and energy to refining and shaping the first national assessment framework for adult literacy and numeracy in Ireland. Without them, this project could not have been achieved nor would it have been so successful. Throughout the testing phase, many aspects of the framework were changed and new additions were made, including the title, Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ).

A final year of the project was spent refining the MLJ User Guide to assist practitioners in using this new resource. The Guide sets out how the framework offers the opportunity to build on current assessment practice and enhance the quality of the teaching and learning process. It shows how progress can be shown across a range of skills, from specific knowledge to how confidently learners apply such knowledge in their everyday lives.

However, in addition to the MLJ User Guide, practitioners will need training and support to fully embrace MLJ. We intend to provide this training from 2005. For the Vocational Education Committee (VEC) sector, the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) and NALA have formed a joint MLJ Mainstreaming Steering Committee to oversee the introduction of the framework into their adult literacy services. Only with training and support will tutors be able to understand the new language and concepts within the framework and introduce the appropriate elements of it to learners they are working with.

MLJ does not meet the needs of all learners and was designed for use with learners working on literacy and numeracy up to Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) Foundation level. It has been very timely that the assessment framework has been developed, as it greatly complements the creation of two new levels below FETAC Foundation level in the National Qualifications Framework.

The creation of MLJ has involved a lot of people whom I would like to acknowledge and thank sincerely for their hard work. I have already mentioned the importance of the contribution of the many VEC- and community- based providers of adult literacy involved in the project.

During that time, the providers were most familiar with Dr Juliet Merrifield, who has led the project since the beginning, working alongside Ursula Coleman, Olga McDonagh and Liz McSkeane, as well as trainers Marea Mulqueen and Elaine Wilson-Gill, to bring it to a successful conclusion. In NALA, Gemma Lynch has co-ordinated the project from its inception with great commitment.

Over the coming year, we will continue to develop MLJ based on feedback from the development stage, creating English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Visual Literacy and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) mapping tools. We welcome feedback from learners and practitioners as they begin to use the framework as it currently stands.

Inez Bailey

Director of NALA

January 2005

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Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to the Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ) User Guide. This introduction will help you to "map the learning journey" with confidence. It will tell you:

▎ what MLJ is about;

▎ how and why we developed it;

▎ what is good about it;

▎ who will use it;

▎ why we need a framework to map the learning journey;

▎ why training is important;

▎ how we have organised the framework;

▎ what commitment you need to give it;

▎ why it is important that learners' work stays confidential;

▎ what terms the framework contains;

▎ how we have organised this user guide; and

▎ who to contact about Mapping the Learning Journey.

There is a more detailed explanation of the mapping process further on in this user guide.

Before explaining Mapping the Learning Journey, we will tell you what it is not:

▌ Mapping the Learning Journey is not an accountability tool. It is not designed to supply statistics, to provide material for centre reports or to evaluate tutors.

▌ Mapping the Learning Journey is not a curriculum. It does not provide a set of topics or skills that learners must cover or must aim to acquire. The curriculum in adult literacy remains learner-centred and learner-driven. So, tutors and learners should continue to discuss content, materials and methods, based on learners' needs and goals. In that context, the framework can be used to analyse learners real-life tasks and activities to help identify progress and plan future work. In this way, the framework can be used to help learners see how they are achieving their goals.

▌ Mapping the Learning Journey is not a 'test' and it is not an accreditation system.

▌ Finally, it does not replace the various assessment methods currently used in adult literacy schemes in Ireland. Many schemes have developed effective, creative ways of assessing and recording progress, including learner logs, session records and portfolios of work. Also, literacy and numeracy work requires a wide range of assessment processes for specific purposes: for example, analysing spelling error, analysing reading miscue and identifying specific learning difficulties. Mapping the Learning Journey can include all these specific, learner-centred assessment methods. It enhances them by providing a framework that is consistent nationally, across the whole adult literacy sector.
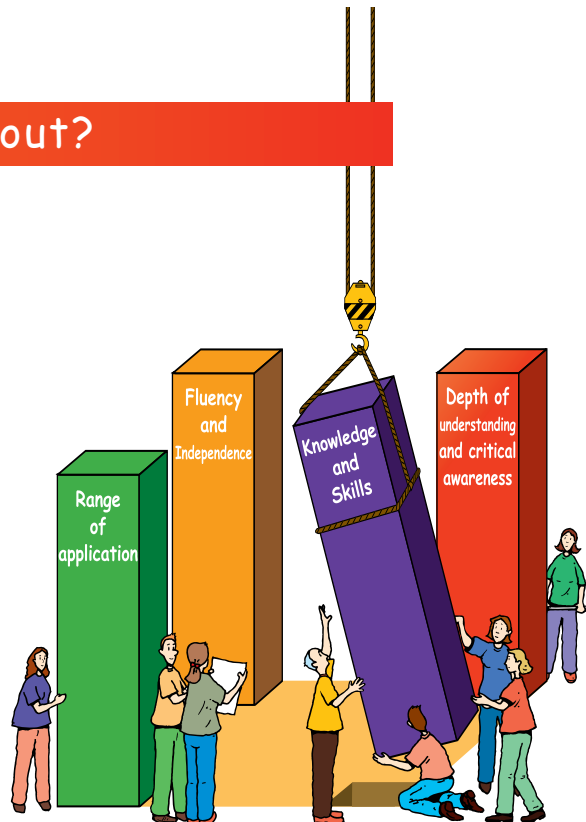
So, this framework is not a curriculum, a test or an accountability tool, and it is does not mean that literacy providers should stop using learners' logs, or portfolios, or specific assessment techniques for specific needs. NALA will provide training and support systems to help make sure that the framework is used as intended.

Mapping the Learning Journey provides a framework for:

❚ supporting the teaching and learning process, and

❚ describing the progress and achievements of literacy learners.

It is part of the Evolving Quality Framework for Adult Basic Education, under the Teaching and Learning quality area.

It offers a structured way for learners and tutors to reflect on the learning journey and to record learners' progress over time.

Mapping the Learning Journey aims to reflect best practice in teaching and learning in adult basic education (ABE). ABE in Ireland has a proud tradition of putting the learners at the centre of its work . This is why MLJ is grounded in the core principles of good adult literacy practice, which we explain below.

Learner-centred

The learner's needs, goals and interests are at the core of the teaching and learning process in adult basic education.

Mapping progress is not something the tutor does to a learner or for a learner. This framework can help the tutor and learner together discuss where the learner is and where they want to go. Because each individual learner has their own specific goals, strengths, weaknesses and preferences, the dialogue between tutor and learner will refer to areas of the framework that are most relevant. In this way, the framework can be adapted to suit the requirements of different learners and of the same learners at different stages of their learning journey.

Constructive

The mapping framework is not a test. There is no passing or failing. Learners do not get marks and they are not compared with each other. The framework helps tutors and learners to review work and activities, inside and outside the teaching and learning sessions, to identify learners' strengths as well as areas they might wish to work on. Seeing progress over a period of time will help sustain motivation.

Clear

Learners should know what the mapping framework is for and how they can use it in their situation. The process of introducing the framework will vary, depending on the learning environment and on the learners themselves. Guidelines on how to manage this situation are in section 4 of this user guide.

Holistic

The framework has 4 cornerstones:

❚ Knowledge and skills and

the three **process cornerstones**

❚ Fluency and independence

❚ Depth of understanding and critical awareness, and

❚ Range of application.

This acknowledges that progress in literacy is about more than developing the technical knowledge and skills. It involves personal, social and emotional development. By including the three 'process' cornerstones as well as knowledge and skills, the framework provides a way of affirming and recording the growth in confidence, self-belief and independence that learners demonstrate in a huge variety of ways. This gives a much more rounded picture of progress than an assessment based solely on the technical knowledge and skills involved in literacy and numeracy.

How and why we developed it?

Mapping the Learning Journey was developed by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA). NALA's goal is to ensure that all adults with literacy difficulties have access to a wide range of high quality learning opportunities.

NALA is a membership organisation made up of learners, tutors, adult literacy organisers, centre managers and people interested in ABE. Mapping the Learning Journey was developed in response to members' interests in improving quality in teaching and learning.

It was developed by those involved in ABE and through study of theories of how adults learn and assessment frameworks for literacy and numeracy in other countries. Mapping the Learning Journey has been tested and validated by 20 literacy services around the country.

What is good about it?

Places that have tested Mapping the Learning Journey have found that it:

❚ encourages learners to think about and discuss with their tutors how well they are doing;

❚ helps learners understand:

– how they learn,

– how they are meeting their goals,

– how much they already know, and

– what areas they need to work on in order to reach their goals;

- helps tutors plan activities that allow learners to make progress in core skills and develop their ability and confidence to apply these skills in their daily lives;

- is flexible and adaptable because it is not a curriculum or set of instructions but rather a framework for analysing real-life activities and tasks to identify and record progress;

- enhances the creative teaching methods and assessment techniques that tutors use and allows a clear format for making a meaningful note of how well learners feel they are progressing; and

- improves quality in teaching and learning.

Who will use it?

In a quality teaching and learning process it is very important for learners to understand their own needs, interests and goals and how well they are doing in reaching their goals. The relationship between the tutor and learner is fundamental to this process.

Tutors in ABE in Ireland use a number of teaching and assessment techniques in order to enable learners to meet their goals. Mapping the Learning Journey is a framework that tutors and learners will use to record or map what the learner has been working on and what progress they have made. Over time it allows learners to create a picture of their learning journey.

Learners can look back on what they could do in literacy, and how confident or independent they felt when they began their learning journey and compare that with their present situation. Tutors can use this process to help learners understand how they learn, the strengths they already have, the progress they have made, and what they might focus on next to achieve their goals.

Mapping the Learning Journey is a way of gathering information about what is happening as a result of the teaching and learning process. Learners have the right to know if they are making progress and, indeed, what is meant by 'progress'. Tutors and learners need to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses to plan suitable work, find the right learning materials and generally guide the learning process.

Organisers and managers need information to plan work schedules, resources and tutor training. Assessment provides the information we need for all of this.

Why do we need a framework to map the learning journey?

Tutors and learners already discuss and assess needs and progress: – for example, at the first meeting when decisions are made about what goals to set and what material and methods to use and at review sessions, where progress is discussed and goals agreed for the next period of work.

Many tutors and learners have recognised the benefits of introducing systematic ways of recording this activity and describing learners' progress. These complement the informal, intuitive processes that are always a part of adult literacy work. This framework builds on these processes and offers an agreed framework for assessing progress that is consistent across the adult literacy sector.

We have developed the framework based on research into assessment and adult literacy and on an extensive process of consultation with adult literacy practitioners, taking place over a period of four years.

The framework aims to bring together national best practice on assessing learners' progress and provides tutors and learners with guidelines on how to map progress, what to map and what criteria to use.

Mapping the Learning Journey provides an agreed 'big picture' within which individual learners can assess their progress. It allows learners and tutors to use an array of methods and approaches and also provides the training and staff development needed to use them effectively.

Mapping the Learning Journey, as a national framework, does not mean uniformity: it is important for schemes or centres and individual tutors and learners to have the flexibility to use the framework in their own ways as appropriate. However, some consistency is useful so that tutors and learners around the country share common principles and common criteria for assessing learner progress.

Why is training important?

The training that NALA will provide for tutors will focus on understanding and applying the guiding principles of the framework so that it will be used to strengthen learner-centred assessment practices. The training will include practical exercises on mapping samples of learners' work and will cover how this works in practice. The tutors who tested the framework with us found it very useful. In addition to the training you will need plenty of support when you start to explore the framework with learners. You might forget certain things from the training or you might want to be reassured that you are doing it right.

You might have questions or concerns as you begin to use the framework with learners. You will have support no matter what. Your organiser or centre manager will be able to help and the NALA Regional Development Worker for your area will be available to help you find out how you are getting on. Their contact details are given at the end of this section. It is impossible to use the framework without the training and it would be very difficult for you to be comfortable using the framework with learners without ongoing support.

How have we organised the framework?

Now that you have seen what Mapping the Learning Journey is, why it is worth using and why and how it was made, let's have a look at the different parts that make up the framework:

❙ Guiding principles

❙ Cornerstones and areas of learning

❙ Continuum of progress

ABE in Ireland has a proud tradition of putting the learner at the centre of its work. This is why Mapping the Learning Journey has the following values or guiding principles as its core:

❙ learner-centred - used in the context of learners' needs, interests and goals;

❙ flexible and informal – consistent with the origin of the word 'assessment' from the Latin word 'to sit beside';

❙ constructive - providing feedback on learners' strengths and on areas they need to develop in a constructive rather than a critical way;

❙ clear - understandable enough to be used by learners and tutors to discuss progress together; and

❙ holistic - reflecting the whole learning process and ways of knowing and understanding, including social, emotional and cultural aspects.
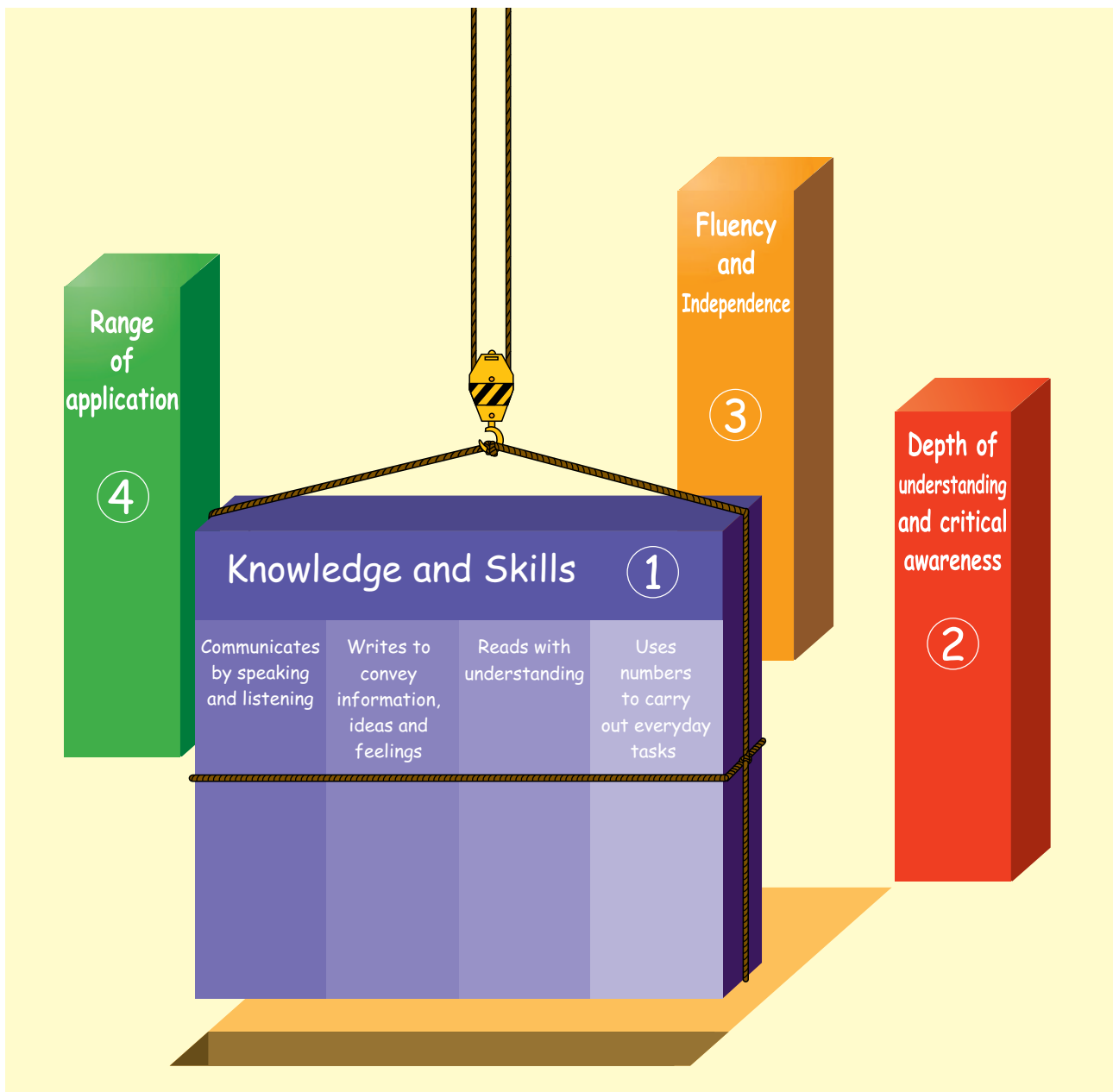
Cornerstones and areas of learning

This framework highlights the questions that you and learners need to ask to clarify what learning has taken place and what you need to do next. These questions address the key elements of the learning process, which in turn provide the basic structure of the framework.

Mapping the learning journey identifies four cornerstones of progress:

1. Knowledge and skills, which is made up of four areas of learning:

❙ Communicates by speaking
   and listening

❙ Writes to convey information,
   ideas and feelings

❙ Reads with understanding

❙ Uses numbers to carry out everyday tasks

2. Depth of understanding and critical awareness

3. Fluency and independence

4. Range of application
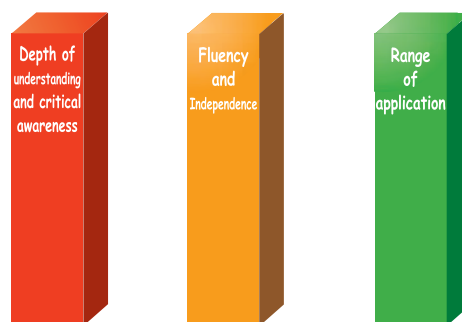
The cornerstones are illustrated by the diagram on page 11 of this section. Each of the cornerstones is defined in more detail by specific elements. These are illustrated on the mapping form below and explained further in section 2.

Continuum of progress

Mapping the Learning Journey allows learners and tutors to assess progress on a nine-point scale, considering two factors:

❙ the 'level of difficulty' of an activity, or a task – what demands the activity places on a person in terms of the four cornerstones; there are three 'levels of difficulty' in the framework and

❙ how well the learner carries out the activity – or the 'stage of mastery'; there are three 'stages of mastery' within each of the three 'levels'. Taken together these give a nine-point scale on which to map progress.

Progress in learning is 'spiky'. We may be skilled and confident in one area of literacy, but less so in another. We may be able to carry out literacy tasks with ease in one type of environment, but not in another. We may be making little progress in technical skills, but great progress in confidence, in being able to apply and use what we know. The way the framework is organised allows us to reflect the spikiness of progress, by mapping it to the four cornerstones and the four areas of learning.

The Mapping Form

What range does it cover?

The framework maps progress in basic literacy and numeracy. For anyone familiar with FETAC Foundation Communications, it may be useful to consider Mapping the Learning Journey as providing a framework for identifying progress below the FETAC Foundation level (up to the point of being able to move on to that level).

At the other end of the range, some activities overlap with the content of the FETAC Foundation Level Communications. Literacy learners who are using this framework may be just starting, or about to start, work on a FETAC Foundation course.

What commitment do you need to give?

Mapping the Learning Journey is voluntary. NALA will provide all of the information and training that managers, tutors and learners will need to make an informed decision on using MLJ to map progress with learners. To make that decision literacy providers will need to

◆ learn about Mapping the Learning Journey;

◆ attend essential briefings and training on how to use the framework (provided by NALA);

◆ discuss Mapping the Learning Journey with learners and decide together whether this would be a useful tool to meet their assessment needs;

◆ seek support locally or from NALA, as appropriate;

◆ contribute views of managers, tutors and learners to the ongoing evaluation of Mapping the Learning Journey.

How often you use the framework during a year will depend on the learners' needs. However, it is likely that you will use the framework at least three times a year. The training that we in NALA will provide will help you to recognise where in your current practice using the framework will be most useful for learners.

Tutors and learners will be helped to become familiar with using the framework in a flexible way. Not every part of it will be used on every occasion nor will be useful for every learner. Tutors and learners together will decide what parts of this framework are relevant to their needs and goals at any given time and will map progress onto the relevant parts of the framework. We will work with you in the future to find out if we can make improvements to the framework or add new areas.

Why is it important that learners work stays confidential?

Confidentiality is a core part of adult literacy practice. Mapping the Learning Journey is part of the Evolving Quality Framework, of which one of the guiding principles is confidentiality. The Evolving Quality Framework states that:

" An ethical code of confidentiality, respect and trust will inform all aspects of the organisation."

This includes using Mapping the Learning Journey. You should discuss with your learner how confidentiality is ensured in your centre, so that they can be assured about how information on their progress will be used.

What terms the framework uses

The Mapping the Learning Journey framework was developed from the ground up. This framework introduces some language and terms on assessment that may be new to some tutors and learners. This is the first time adult literacy learners and practitioners in Ireland have comprehensively named what skills and qualities learners are developing as they work to reach their goals. We have tried to keep the 'new' terms as easy to understand as possible, and have provided an explanation of terms. These are available in Appendix A at the back of this pack.

How we have organised this User Guide?

We have designed this user guide to support you in mapping the learning journey with adult literacy learners. This resource has all the information and documentation you will need to apply the framework in your own setting.

This user guide has six sections:

Section 1 describes the rationale for mapping the learning journey, summarises the aims and structure of the framework and outlines the principles that guided its development.

Section 2 gives a detailed description of the framework with examples of real tasks and activities that learners worked on over the pilot stages.

Section 3 contains an in-depth case study of a learner's work that has been mapped using the framework.

Section 4 explains how the framework operates in practice and discusses issues and questions that may arise while you use it to map learners' work.

Section 5 includes samples of learners' work and details how to map the work using the framework.

Section 6 contains all of the documentation that you will use to record learners' progress.

Before you start to map the learning journey, Sections 1 and 2 will give you essential background information. You should read these pages closely at the beginning of your work.

When you have started to use the framework, you will refer often to Section 2 to clarify detail, and to Section 4 for ideas about how to handle any difficulties with using the framework as they arise.

The in-depth case study in Section 3 and the samples with descriptions of discussions between tutors and learners on mapping progress in Section 5 provide background material to illustrate the structure and use of the framework in practice.

The mapping form in Section 6 provides a tool for analysing and recording learners' work using the framework.

Who to contact about Mapping the Learning Journey

We hope that you and your learners enjoy Mapping the Learning Journey and find it useful. If you have any questions or comments please contact the NALA Regional Development Workers:

Cork: Margaret Murray

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e-mail: mmurray@nala.ie

Mullingar: Peter Kiernan

Phone: (044) 403 74

e-mail: pkiernan@nala.ie

We are very interested in hearing your views on Mapping the Learning Journey. We will continue to work to support you in using it and to improve it over time.
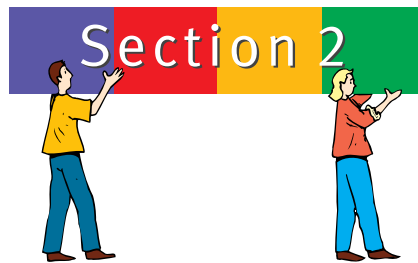
Continuous updates on Mapping the Learning Journey are available on the NALA website: www.nala.ie

Mapping the Learning Journey

NALA

Section 2

Introduction

Section 2 of this user guide explains the main parts of the framework. In contrast to what many people believe, learning does not occur in a predictable, linear fashion; nor does it have just one main feature. Developing literacy skills can be likened to building a house. First, foundations or cornerstones have to be laid. Like the cornerstones of a building, the Mapping the Learning Journey cornerstones provide an outline of the shape and size of the learning that is happening.

Then, bit by bit, the walls and roof appear. Over time, tutors and learners build on the basics to progress the learning journey. Scaffolding is needed in building while the work is in progress. Similarly, tutors in adult basic education provide support to learners. But if the foundations are sound and the materials are of high quality, the house will survive long after the builders have left. The aim of good adult literacy practice is to enable people to understand and reflect critically on their life circumstances with a view to initiating constructive change.

When we spoke to tutors and learners in the early stages of developing the framework, four features of learning seemed to be particularly important to the learning process. These features of learning are depicted in this framework as four cornerstones. These include the knowledge and skills cornerstone with four areas of learning, and three process cornerstones: depth of understanding and critical awareness; fluency and independence and; range of application.

When assessing progress it is important to consider all four cornerstones. No one, or two, or even three of them will give a solid enough foundation to the learning process. It is when all four cornerstones are working dynamically together that real and lasting learning occurs.

Within each of the four cornerstones we have identified individual elements that are needed for full progress to be made. However, the mapping framework is used flexibly, and not all learners will be assessed on all elements: it depends on their own purposes for learning. The aim of the learning process is to make progress in relation to the learner's particular goals and interests.

This section notes the individual elements in each cornerstone and outlines examples of activities and tasks to describe the three levels of difficulty under each element. These examples are here as a guide to help tutors and learners decide which parts of the framework are most appropriate to the type of activity learners have been working on. As you begin to use this framework, you will refer often to this section to clarify details. The laminated pages included in this section will be particularly important to you. This section begins by giving you a better understanding of the four cornerstones.
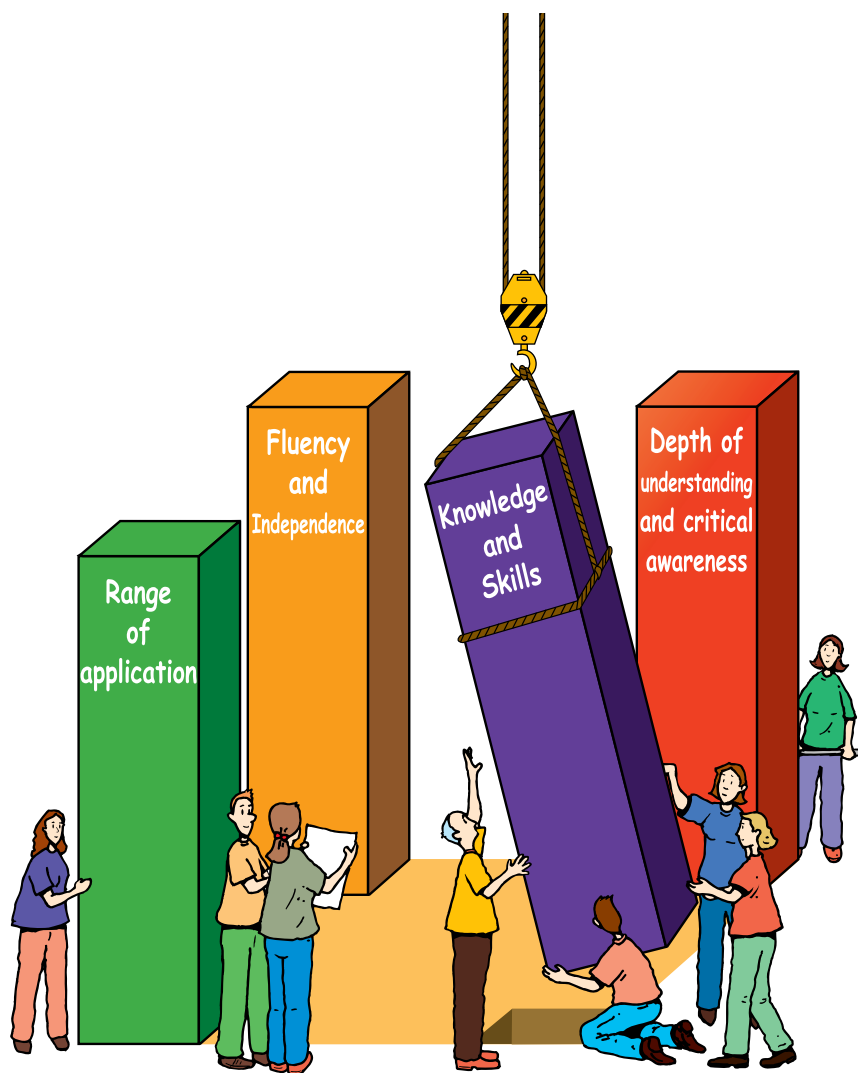
Research and tutors' experience indicate that there are many aspects to the learning process. Mapping the Learning Journey describes four of these; these are the cornerstones. Like cornerstones of a building, they provide an outline of the shape and size of the learning that is taking place.

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills

The 'knowledge and skills' cornerstone describes what a learner achieves in relation to the following four areas of learning:

▌ communicates by speaking and listening;

▌ writes to convey information, ideas and feelings;

▌ reads with understanding; and

▌ uses numbers to carry out everyday activities.

Knowledge and skills are very important for learners to accomplish their goals. But they are not enough on their own. Mapping the Learning Journey identifies three other aspects of learning that learners and tutors told us are essential to making progress: we call these the process cornerstones.

Process Cornerstones

Cornerstone 2:
Depth of understanding and critical awareness

Depth of understanding and critical awareness describes how well learners can apply their knowledge and judgement to the real-life activities and tasks they need to manage.

Cornerstone 3:
Fluency and independence

Fluency and independence indicates how well a learner carries out real-life activities and tasks, how consistent they are when they handle these and how much support they need.

Cornerstone 4:
Range of application

Range of application describes how far the learner can apply what they have learned in one situation (for instance, in the room with a tutor) to everyday situations.

Depth of understanding and critical awareness

Fluency and Independence

Range of application

Taken together, these four cornerstones give a full view of how well learners can use what they know in their own lives. They highlight aspects of learning that can vary a great deal for different learners when handling different situations and activities. For example, one learner may have the knowledge and skills to write their name and address correctly, but lack the confidence to do this in an unfamiliar or a public place. Therefore, their range of application needs work. Another learner may be able to carry out the same activity and task but only very slowly and with a lot of help: in this case, they need to work on fluency and independence.

TIP Remember that these terms are part of the new language being introduced by this framework. Understanding this language requires training, support and practise. You can present these parts of the framework with your learner using the words that you feel are most appropriate.

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills

Within the 'knowledge and skills' cornerstone there are four areas of learning. Cornerstone 1 below describes these in terms of specific elements.

Table 1: Elements of knowledge and skills	
Area of learning	Elements
Communicates by speaking and listening	▌ Listens to obtain information ▌ Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication ▌ Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose
Writes to convey information, ideas and feelings	▌ Writes words that express what they want to say ▌ Organises the flow so that a reader will understand ▌ Uses the rules of writing appropriately ▌ Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience
Reads with understanding	▌ Recognises words commonly used ▌ Makes sense of writing rules ▌ Finds key information from different forms of writing ▌ Understands meaning and purpose
Uses numbers to carry out everyday activities and tasks	▌ Uses numbers in daily life ▌ Uses money in daily life ▌ Understands and uses units of time ▌ Uses measurement in everyday life

Because knowledge and skills includes these four areas of learning, we need a large number of elements to describe this cornerstone.

This does not mean that the process cornerstones are less important. For some learners, they may be more important in helping them to reach their goals. Therefore, we also describe these three cornerstones by referring to their specific elements.

Process cornerstones

Process cornerstones 2, 3, and 4 below describe the specific elements that make up depth of understanding and critical awareness, fluency and independence and range of application.

Cornerstone 2: Depth of understanding and critical awareness
Elements
▌ Applies personal knowledge and life experience ▌ Uses judgement ▌ Plans and checks own learning

Cornerstone 3: Fluency and independence
Elements
▌ Carries out the activity and task easily ▌ Carries out the activity and task consistently ▌ Carries out the activity and task independently

Cornerstone 4: Range of application
Elements
▌ Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar activity and tasks ▌ Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings

We need to take account of all these parts of the framework – cornerstones, areas of learning and elements – when reviewing learners' progress.

However, remember that not everything will be relevant to a particular learners' goals or learning plan: some learners will want to work on one area of learning, others will be interested in all four. Tutors and learners together can select those parts that best match learners' needs and interests.

The nine-point scale

The scale we use to show learners' progress over time has two aspects. One aspect is the level of difficulty of the activity itself. The other is the learner's proficiency in carrying out the activity.

Mapping the Learning Journey defines activities in terms of three broad levels of difficulty. The first step for you in using the framework is to identify the level of the activity that the learner is doing – beginning level, mid-level or upper level. These three levels are described in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Levels of difficulty		
Beginning level	**Mid-level**	**Upper level**
These activities and tasks require learners to know only the most basic tools and concepts. Examples include the alphabet, familiar words, numbers and basic facts.	Activities and tasks at mid-level require learners to apply the basic tools and concepts in simple ways. Examples include writing basic sentences, counting and using knowledge of facts to carry out an activity or task.	At upper level, learners need to use tools and concepts in a more complex way to solve problems. Examples include writing a letter, doing calculations involving money and monitoring own progress.

There are activities and tasks of different levels of difficulty that apply to all of the framework. For example, 'Write words that express what they want to say' could refer to a very simple activity, such as writing their own name and address (beginning level), or to a much more complex activity and task such as writing a letter of complaint (upper level).

To assess learners' progress we have to take account of how well they do the activity, as well as how difficult the activity is. For example, a learner may do very well at a beginning level activity or task such as writing their name and address. On the other hand, their writing might have some or many mistakes. The framework uses three categories to describe how well a learner completes an activity or task, in other words, their stage of proficiency.

In section 3, we present the learning journey of Michelle. Michelle was working on her writing skills with her tutor Margaret. In her early attempts at writing her name and address Michelle needed Margaret's support to present her address in the correct sequence and she made a few mistakes. Together with Margaret, she decided that this showed limited proficiency in completing the task. Over time Michelle learned the correct sequence for writing her name and address and made fewer mistakes. When she mapped one of these later tasks with Margaret she could see that she had shown some proficiency in completing the tasks. With more time and practise Michelle was eventually confident enough to write her name and address with no mistakes on the back of a raffle ticket in her local pub. When she discussed this with Margaret they could see that this showed great proficiency in completing the task.

Table 6 below describes what we mean by the three stages of proficiency.

Table 6: Stages of proficiency explained		
With limited proficiency	**With some proficiency**	**With great proficiency**
The learner shows little or no knowledge of the basics needed to carry out the task or activity and makes many mistakes	The learner shows some of the basics they need for what they want to do, makes some mistakes, but the end product is recognisable.	The learner has completely mastered the tools and concepts and completes the task or activity with competence and confidence.

These three categories, which describe how well the learner carried out the activity or task, apply within each of the three levels of difficulty described earlier. Together they make up a nine-point scale of progress.

Table 7: Nine –point scale of progress								
Beginning level of difficulty			Mid-level of difficulty			Upper level of difficulty		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
limited proficiency	some proficiency	great proficiency	limited proficiency	some proficiency	great proficiency	limited proficiency	some proficiency	great proficiency

TIP

Remember that when we describe someone as having achieved 'with great proficiency', we are referring to this in the context of activity and tasks of particular levels of difficulty. We may also refer to single elements of an area or cornerstone. Many learners could reach point 9 (great proficiency on a activity and task at the upper level of difficulty) in one element of reading or writing, for example, even if their grasp of the other elements is at a lower stage. However, to reach the FETAC Foundation Level, they would generally need some proficiency in upper-level activities and tasks for all of the elements.

Using Mapping the Learning Journey in practice

You can use the nine-point scale to clarify and record with learners their progress in completing an activity. For this you will need to refer to the level of difficulty and the stage of proficiency and apply them to the cornerstones and elements covered by the activity.

Adults are likely to show very different progress on the different areas of learning. For example, some learners are fairly strong on reading but need a lot of work with writing; people who have difficulty reading are often confident using numbers. In the same way, learners' profiles on the four cornerstones can be very different.

A learner who carries out an apparently simple writing activity or task, does not have much scope for demonstrating a high level of knowledge and skill. Remember Michelle from Section 3. She was learning how to write her name and address. This is such a simple activity or task that it cannot tell us a lot about Michelle's writing ability beyond how well she writes her name and address. However, if she wrote it with ease and without help she demonstrates a high degree of fluency and independence. Michelle also demonstrated a wide range of application by having the confidence to fill in the raffle ticket in the pub.

For this reason, it is not very helpful to describe learners as 'beginners', except in the sense of someone who is just starting a learning programme. There are many different ways of being a 'beginner' and learners may well be at the beginning in some areas and at an advanced stage in others. This uneven quality or 'spikiness' is very typical of many adult literacy learners. The detail of this must be clarified if you are to guide the learning process in ways that will help learners to achieve their goals.

The laminated pages at the end of this section bring together all of the key parts of the framework. For each cornerstone we list the elements, with descriptors of what they might include at beginning, mid-level and upper level activities. A second table for each cornerstone gives specific examples of learners' work drawn from the piloting and development stages of the framework. These examples are intended as a guide to the levels, but not a prescription for a programme of work. The activities and tasks that you will work on with learners will be much more varied and original and will be shaped by the learners' needs, interests and goals.

Conclusion

Mapping the Learning Journey is a process of ongoing reflection and reviewing of learners' progress towards achieving their goals. It encourages learners to actively engage in understanding and reflecting on their own learning journey. This section of Mapping the Learning Journey is invaluable because it provides essential information that will be referred to often as you begin to use the framework. The in-depth case study that follows in Section 3 will provide real samples and descriptions developed during the pilot stage of the framework. Section 4 of this User Guide complements Section 2 by providing ideas on how to handle difficulties using the framework as they arise.

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National Development Plan

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Mapping the Learning Journey

Section 3

Case study

Depth of understanding and critical awareness

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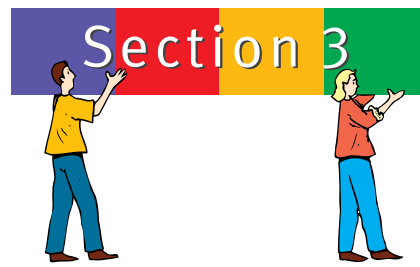
Section 3

Introduction

This section aims to help you to understand how **Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ)** can help learners to develop a better understanding of their individual learning profile. It begins by describing the stages in the teaching and learning process. We then highlight the learning journey of one of the learners involved in developing **MLJ.** This learner is called Michelle. We present the information about Michelle's learning journey as a case study.

The reason we have included this case study is to show you how **MLJ** can help tutors and learners to identify together the stages in the learner's progress, taking into account the **knowledge and skills cornerstone and the three process cornerstones: depth of understanding, fluency and independence and range of application.** This shows tutors how they can use the framework to meet the individual needs of learners. Michelle and her tutor Margaret used only those cornerstones and areas of learning that were relevant to what Michelle was working on. We will begin by discussing the general stages in the teaching and learning journey and then we will introduce you to Michelle.

What are the general stages in the teaching and learning journey?

The general stages in a learning journey are outlined below:

1. The learner identifies or reviews their individual learning goals with their tutor initially and over a period of time.

2. The learner decides what activities they want to work on with their tutor over a period of time.

3. The tutor develops the activities identified with the learner (**MLJ** provides supports when developing activities – see section 4).

4. Over time the learner and tutor begin to understand what the learner already knows and can do. This is often discussed together, informally. A learning journal may be kept, for example, so the tutor and learner can reflect on the learning journey at appropriate intervals.

5. As we mentioned in Section 1, how often you use the framework during a year will depend on a learner's needs. However, it is likely that you will use the framework at least three times a year. **MLJ** can provide a very useful picture of a learner's progress.

❚ Firstly, the tutor and learner look at the activities and tasks that have been completed. They work out how complex or difficult this task or activity was. You will remember from Section 1 that there are three levels of difficulty: beginning, mid- and upper. Upper-level **MLJ** tasks or activities are very close in difficulty to FETAC Foundation Level tasks. Section 2 contains a number of laminated sheets that give examples of tasks and activities developed and used by learners and tutors during the testing of **MLJ**. These can help you to decide what level of difficulty applies to the task or activity.

❚ Secondly, the tutor and learner decide what evidence of progress the completed task or activity is showing. It is unlikely that they will have been focusing on every element of the area of learning they have been working on. Nor will it always be relevant to focus on every element of the process cornerstones. Again there are supports built into the framework to help them to make this decision (see laminated sheets – Section 2 and all of Section 4). Also the training that tutors will receive will be invaluable to the mapping process.

❚ The tutor and learner look at the **MLJ** mapping form together. They have already decided the level of difficulty and the elements of the cornerstones that apply to the evidence of progress shown by the completed task or activity. The tutor and learner discuss together how well the learner has completed the task or activity. Over time these mapped exercises build up to show the learner very clearly how they have progressed and what areas they may wish to focus on.

These stages are reflected in the story of how Michelle and Margaret, her tutor, used MLJ to map Michelle's progress.

Michelle's story

Michelle is a 19 year old trainee in a training workshop. The work in samples 1, 2 and 3 was carried out under the guidance of her tutor Margaret, who also gave us valuable information about the general circumstances in which Michelle produced the samples. All three samples are essentially the same activity, carried out in different ways: Michelle wanted to write her own name and address. Michelle worked on some elements of the **writing area of learning** under the **knowledge and skills cornerstone**. Michelle's task showed evidence for some elements of each **process cornerstone.**

Sample 1: Cloze task

This was one of the first pieces of writing that Michelle did when she started work at the centre. She was at an early stage in her writing work. At that time she found it difficult to write her own name and address – but she did have some basic literacy skills. Her reading was far in advance of her writing and she was able to write some letters of the alphabet and say some specific sounds. Margaret first tried to get her to work on her address using a syllabic approach, breaking up the long words and putting them together again, but as Michelle found this too difficult, she developed this activity for her.

This was a very simple cloze task: the main words in Michelle's address were supplied, with some letters left blank. Michelle had to complete the words, several times over, which helped her to practise the spelling of the words and then write out her name and address in full. In its level of difficulty, it was at the **beginning** of the range of reading and writing tasks.

It took Michelle about 15 minutes to finish this. Margaret was there to give help if needed and only helped if Michelle was unsure or asked for help. Then, Michelle wrote out her name and address in full.

Taking all of these circumstances into account, it is possible to say something about the degree of **fluency and independence** that Michelle demonstrated in this work. Michelle and Margaret mapped the completed task on the **process cornerstones** first and then moved on to map the **knowledge and skills cornerstone.**

Mapping the process cornerstones

Michelle and Margaret first looked at the learning using the **process cornerstone fluency and independence.** They looked at both the ease and independence with which Michelle completed the task as evidence of fluency and independence. Maps 3.1 to 3.7 below are copies from the mapping form used by Michelle and Margaret and show where they agreed Michelle was making progress at that time. We have included all nine stages of progress here to show you what they are, but it is not often helpful to use all stages with a learner at the start of their learning. This is an intuitive decision that tutors will make based on their experience and the **MLJ** training they will receive. We have noted above that it took Michelle 15 minutes to complete this writing task.

Fluency and independence

Map 3.1: Ease in carrying out the task

Fifteen minutes was a long time to spend on such a simple task and we know from Margaret's comments that Michelle found the work difficult. Because of this, we would have to say that at this point, she was at the earliest stage in this aspect of fluency and independence. This is significant because writing her own name and address is something that Michelle wanted to do with total ease and without hesitation.

As we have seen, this was a very structured task. Michelle had to supply missing letters for words that were quite familiar to her – her own address. In writing this out later, she had in front of her the practice work that she had just done on those key words.

Map 3.2: Independence in carrying out the task
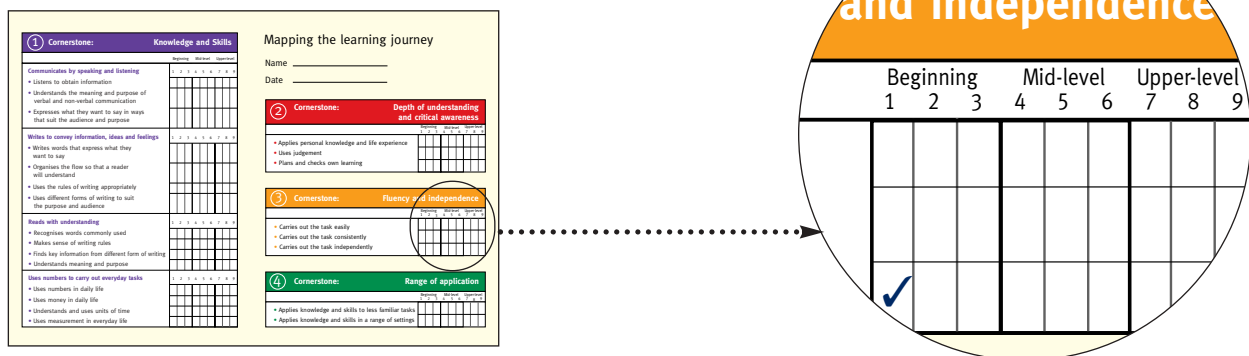
We know from the information that Margaret gave us that in carrying out this task, Michelle was very dependent on her tutor. She needed her to be there to give encouragement and occasionally point out an error. We do not yet have any information that would allow us to comment on how well Michelle **sustains performance of a task over time.** Therefore, Michelle and Margaret could not assess this element of the cornerstone. So they left it blank. However, the rest of the information we have allows us to judge that at that time, Michelle's fluency and independence was at the earliest stage (1 on the mapping form).

Range of application

We can also say something about the **range of application** in which Michelle was able to do this work. Clearly, her own name and address are very familiar indeed, so the task itself does not make any demands on Michelle to apply knowledge and skill to unfamiliar literacy tasks.

Map 3.3: Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks
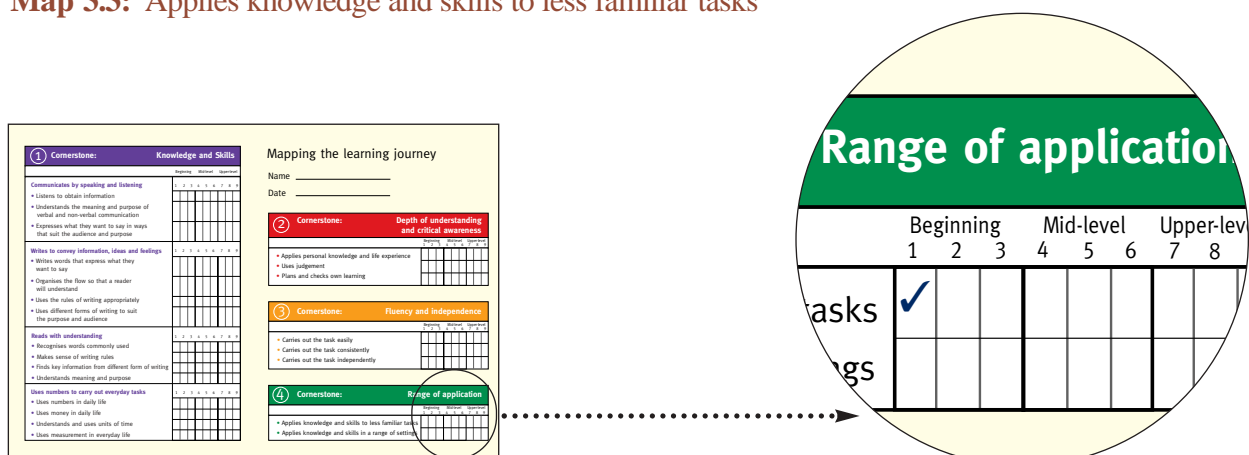
Likewise, the setting was one she was used to and felt comfortable in, but at that time, there was no indication that Michelle was able to do this work in a different, less familiar, place. So she and Margaret placed her progress at 1 on the mapping form.

Map 3.4: Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings

Depth of understanding and critical awareness

Because this task was a simple one, it did not give much scope for Michelle to demonstrate **depth of understanding and critical awareness.** Perhaps the mistake she made in writing out her address in full – she put 'Artane' after Dublin and did not give it a line to itself – indicates a gap in what could be called 'general knowledge', in this case knowing the usual format for addresses. So, once more she and Margaret placed her progress at 1 on the mapping form.

Map 3.5: Applies personal knowledge and life experience

It is worth noting that the impression we have so far about Michelle's work is based as much on the information her tutor supplied about the way she did the work, rather than just on the actual piece of writing itself.

Mapping the knowledge and skills cornerstone

We know from our earlier analysis that this task – filling in letters and writing her own name and address – is a very basic one. No matter how well Michelle carried it out, the **knowledge and skills** it allowed her to show in writing must be at the **beginning** stage.

In fact, she did not get the work completely right. She had not yet achieved total accuracy. She misspells 'road', she left a letter out of her own name and she got the format of the address wrong. So we cannot say that this was at the **top** of 'beginning' (stage 3 on the mapping form).

But neither was it at the very start (stage 1 on the Mapping form). Michelle did get the letters right and the mistakes did not make the pi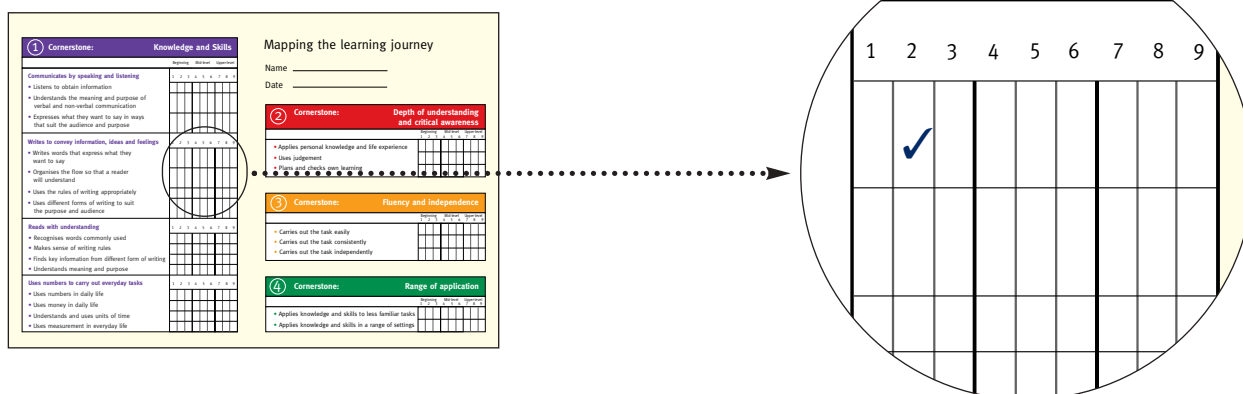ece illegible. So we can say that this piece of writing demonstrates less than total proficiency on this task, but more than very basic skill (stage 2 on the Mapping form).

Map 3.6: Organises the flow so that a reader will understand

A similar decision was made about Michelle's use of the rules of writing in completing this task (Map 3.7 below).

Map 3.7: Uses the rules of writing appropriately
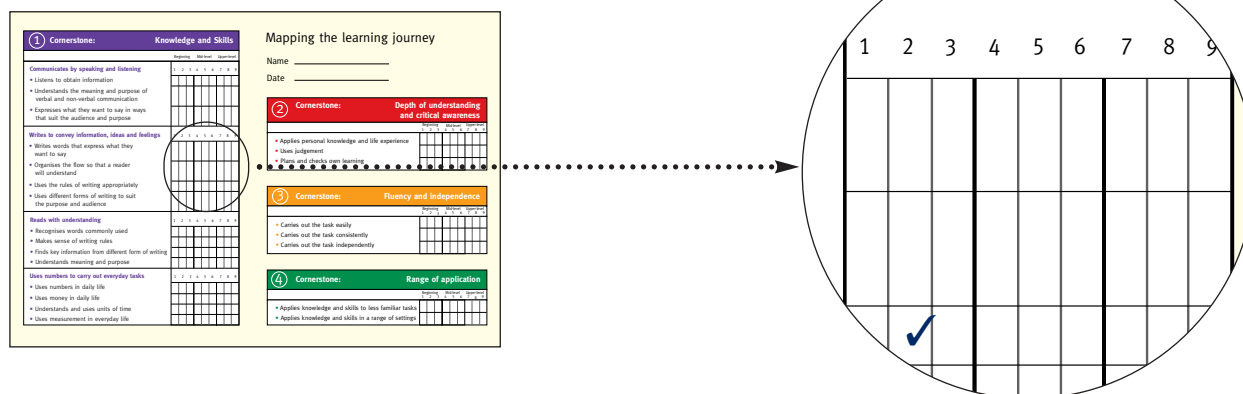
'Flow' in this case refers to format, which for an address is very specific. Michelle handled it with some proficiency (but not total proficiency). So she and Margaret placed her progress at 2 on the mapping form.

There are two other elements involved in the writing area: 'Writes words that express what s/he wants to say' and ' Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience'. As this was not an expressive piece of writing and there was no scope for Michelle to choose her own words, we cannot say anything about these (so again they have not been filled in).

In terms of the knowledge and skill that Michelle showed in this first piece, it seems she was able to manage the task, even if she did make a few mistakes. However, this does not mean very much until we know that it took her a long time to do it, that she did it with difficulty and that she needed a lot of help and encouragement. The knowledge and skills that are demonstrated in the actual writing only provide part of the picture. We need the rest of it to really understand how Michelle needs to work in the future.

We will now move on to the next writing task Michelle and Margaret decided to map for evidence of progress.

Sample 2: A more demanding cloze task

My name is Michelle McGuigan. I live in Harmonstown.

My address is Harmonstown Road, Dublin.

My brother's name is Seán.

I like dogs. My dog's name is Brandy.

My name is Michelle McGuigan.
I live in Harmonstown.
I like Dogs.
My dog's name is Brandy.

Name Michelle Mc Guigan
Address Harmonstown Road
Dublin

In this task, which was carried out several times over weeks after sample 1 above, Michelle was still working on writing her name and address. Although this was another cloze exercise, it was more demanding than sample 1, as Michelle had to insert whole words and not just letters. These were supplied but she still had to identify and transcribe them correctly. Again Michelle and Margaret mapped the completed task on the process cornerstones first and then moved on to map the knowledge and skills cornerstone.

Mapping the process cornerstones

If we consider **fluency and independence,** it is clear that Michelle had made progress. This was still a highly structured task. However, not all words were supplied – Michelle had to fill in a few from her own experience – and the format for the address was not shown either. Margaret told us that Michelle did this work more quickly than before, although it still took her ten minutes, and with no obvious signs of stress or anxiety. In fact, she did the whole thing on her own.

Map 3.8: Independence in carrying out the task
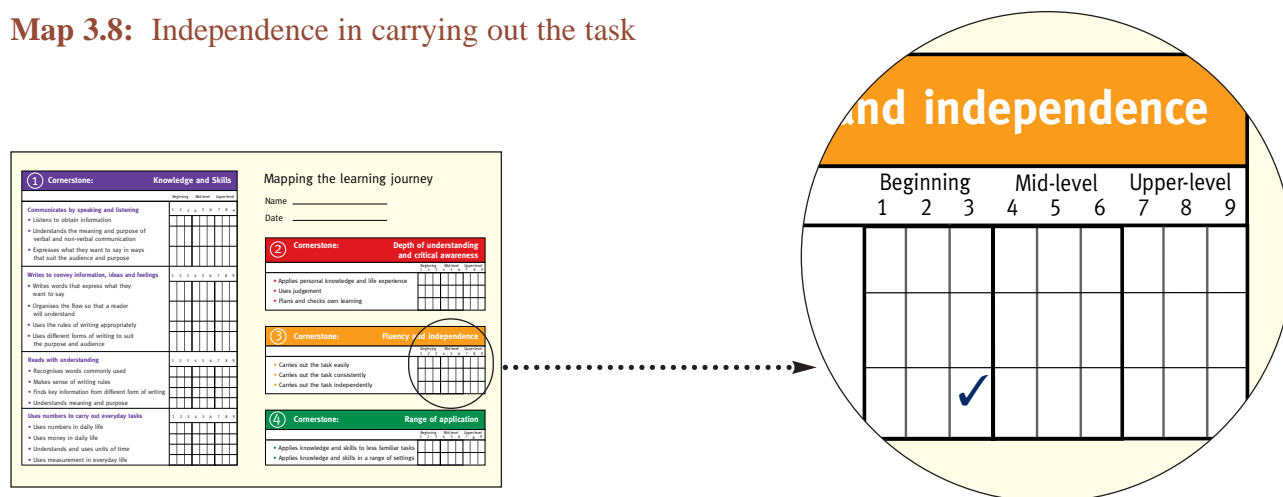
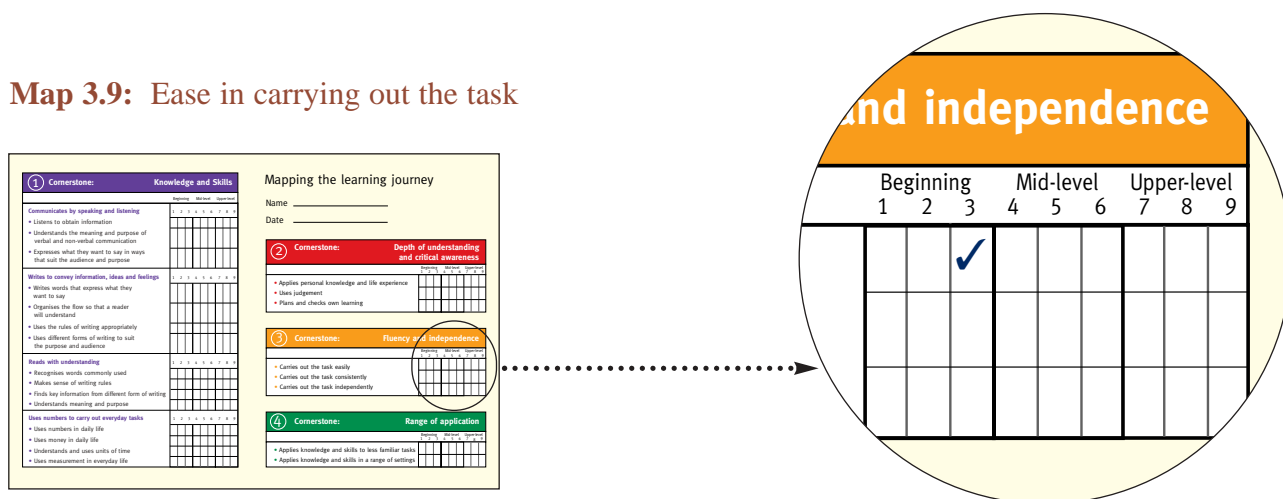Because of the progress Michelle demonstrated in how independently she could complete this task, she and Margaret decided to map her work at the upper end of beginning (3 on the mapping form). In a matter of weeks she could see that she had progressed in her independence from 1 to 3 on a beginning-level writing task.

Map 3.9: Ease in carrying out the task

We cannot see any real change in the **range of application** in this piece, as Michelle was still in the safe setting of the training centre, doing something she had done many times before – so it was left blank on the form.

Michelle and Margaret also did not map this exercise for **depth of understanding and critical awareness,** as the task did not show evidence of this (again, these were left blank on the form).

Mapping the knowledge and skills cornerstone

Michelle carried out this work with no mistakes. Although it was more difficult than sample 1, because of the extensive help built into it – most words needed were supplied – it was still at the **beginning** of the range of literacy tasks we would work on. We can say therefore that the work here demonstrates **knowledge and skill** at the top end of beginning (3 on the Mapping form), on both of these elements:

Map 3.10: Organises the flow so that a reader will understand
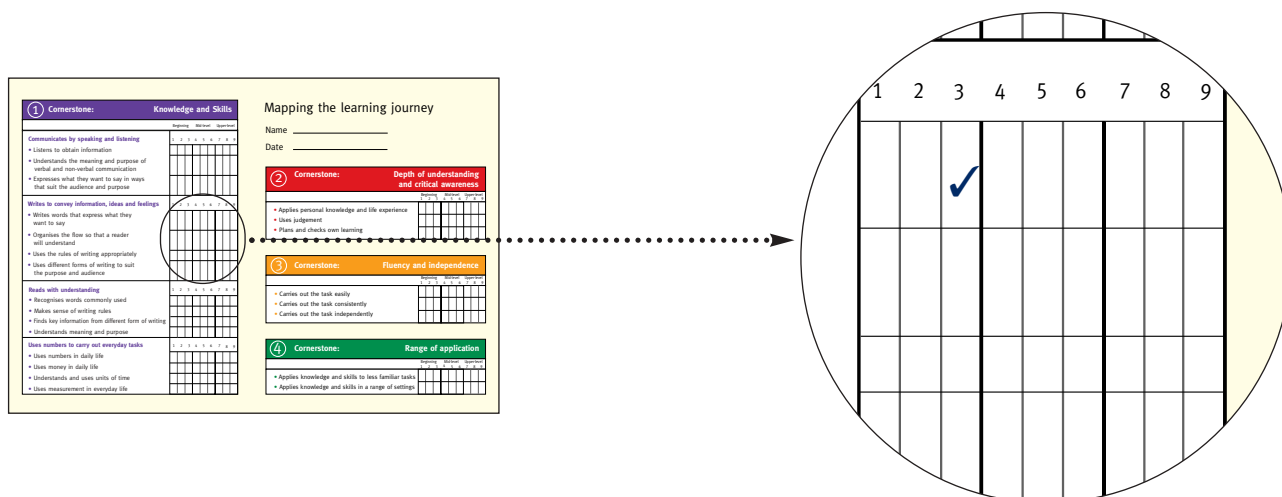
Map 3.11: Uses the rules of writing appropriately
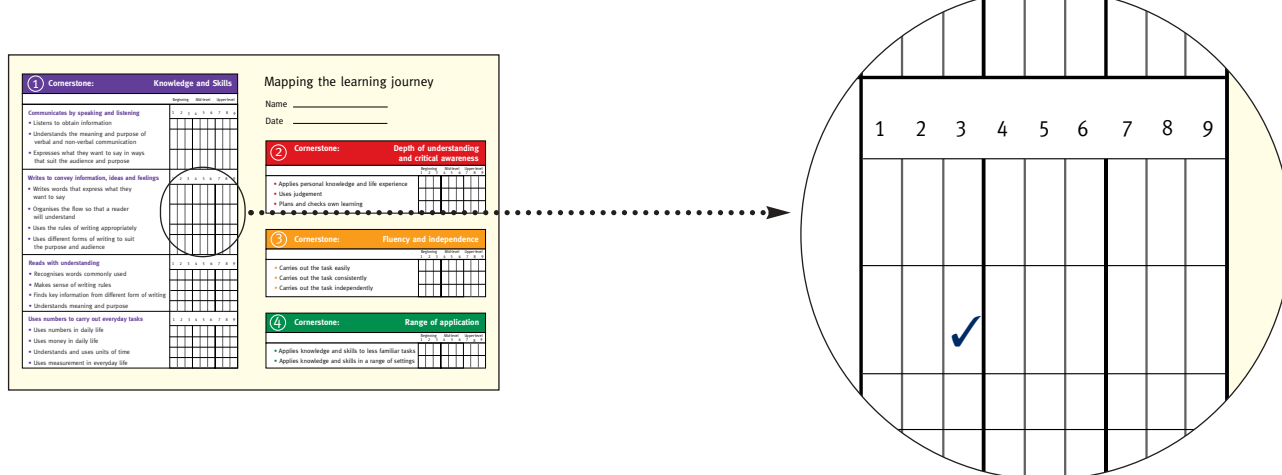
From Michelle's point of view, the improvement in the actual writing – producing an error-free piece of work – was significant. This time she spelled everything correctly and she wrote out her address in correct address format. However, it will be important for her in the future to be able to carry out this task by herself, with complete ease, so it is just as significant that she was able to do this work in a relaxed way and independently of her tutor. Michelle was ready to try sample 3.

Sample 3 – Filling in a passport application form

This is a page taken from a passport application form. Michelle wanted to go on holiday and asked Margaret to get the form and help her with it. Margaret, who was very aware that Michelle needed to be less dependent on her, said that she would certainly help but that Michelle would need to get the form herself from the post office. After much encouragement and persuasion, she did. Once again, they began by mapping the process cornerstones.

Mapping the process cornerstones

Because this is a rather complicated form, Margaret helped Michelle to find her way around it and in particular, showed her where to write her name and address. Although she had help with the reading, Michelle completed this writing task completely on her own. She did it, said Margaret, "in the same time I'd have done it myself". This time the task was not mapped for **knowledge and skill**. Michelle wanted to know how she was progressing in using her knowledge and skill in her daily life. Maps 3.12 and 3.13 show Michelle's progress on the **process cornerstone fluency and independence.**

Cornerstone 3 Fluency and independence

Map 3.12: Ease in carrying out the task
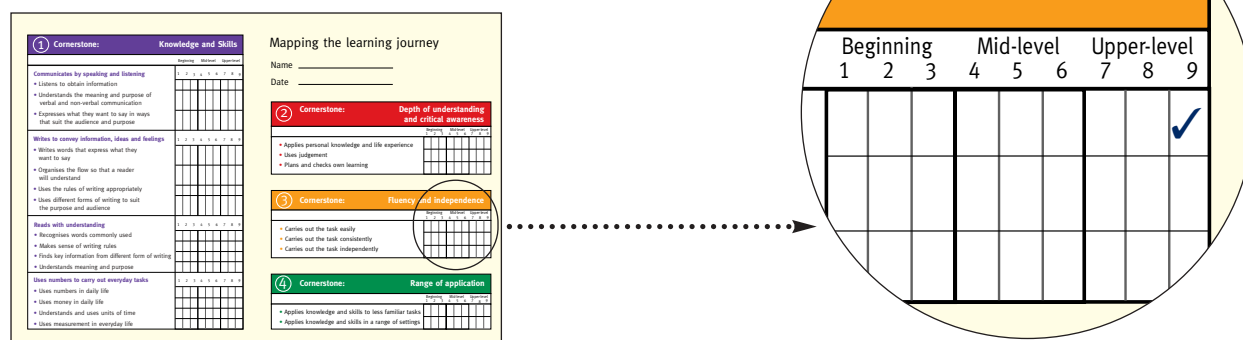
Michelle and Margaret placed her progress at the top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form). When we are thinking about what Michelle had achieved in relation to **fluency and independence,** we need to consider the whole situation:

❚ the task – filling in the passport form – was her own idea;

❚ it was generated from her own life circumstances;

❚ she got the form herself; and

❚ Michelle filled in her name and address with total proficiency.

As well as this, unlike the previous samples, there was no lead-up or structure, such as filling in blanks, to help with writing the full address.

Map 3.13: Independence in carrying out the task
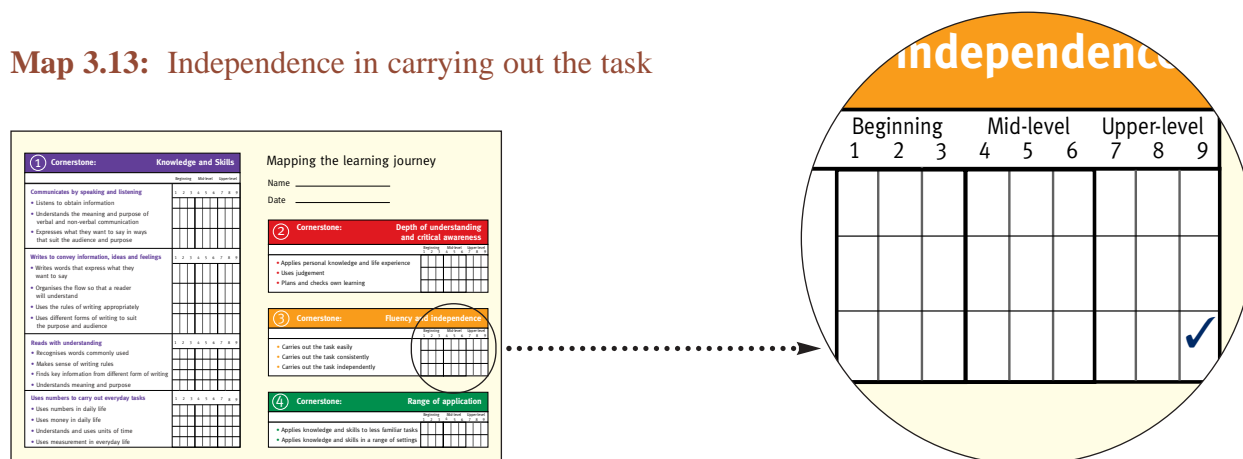
So she and Margaret once again placed her progress at 9 on the mapping form. If Michelle had been able to fill in the form in the post office instead of bringing it back to the training centre, we would have been able to notice very significant progress in independence. However, she was not yet ready to do this in such a public setting. At the same time, Margaret was aware of the need to expand the range of settings in which Michelle did her work. For this session, she took her into the centre manager's office and left her with a different tutor. Maps 3.14 and 3.15 below show Michelle's progress on range of application.

Map 3.14: Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks

The task itself was familiar, but the setting was a little, if not completely, different (mapped at 1 on the form).

Map 3.15: Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings

Margaret tells us that there was a period of nine months between the work that Michelle did in sample 1 and sample 3. Michelle's progress was at 6 on the mapping form. Michelle attended regularly at the training centre and worked on literacy for two hours every week, as well as other craft and vocational sessions. So the progress here is the result of consistent work over a period of time. Because we have the samples to compare and the background detail from Margaret, we can be sure that this is not something that Michelle did on one day and forgot the next. Map 3.16 below provides a final note on Michelle's progress in **fluency and independence** as shown by the task (9 on the mapping form).

Map 3.16: Consistency in carrying out tasks

Obviously, we needed a substantial time gap between the different pieces of work before we could say anything about this aspect of fluency and independence. Therefore it would not have been useful for Michelle and Margaret to map the work every week.

A final note on Michelle's story

One final piece of information that Margaret gave us indicated that Michelle eventually did reach the stage of being so comfortable with this writing task that she could carry it out in any setting. She told her tutor that one night when she was out with friends, someone passed around a book of raffle tickets. To buy one you had to fill in your name and address on the ticket stub, which Michelle did.   If we wanted to map this on **range of application,** this would show real progress.

Map 3.17: Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings
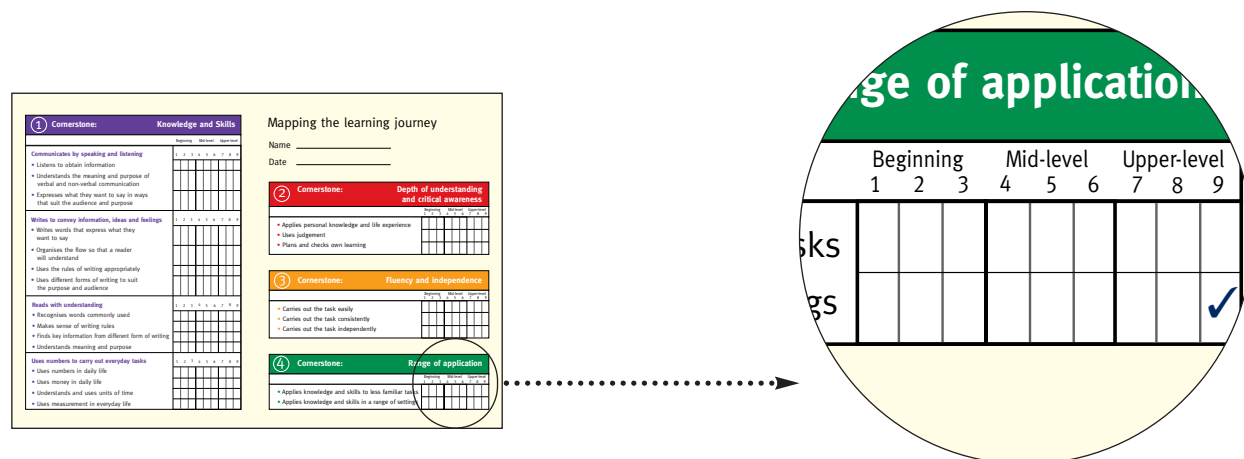
We could map Michelle's progress at the top end of the scale or 9 on the mapping form.

A lot more could be said about the progress that Michelle has demonstrated on the different conerstones we are concerned with here. For the moment, it may be useful to draw attention to a number of points that these examples help to illustrate:

▮ In relation to **level of difficulty** 'beginning', 'mid-level' and 'upper' indicate a range, not a single point. All of the examples here, in terms of the knowledge and skill they require, are 'beginning' tasks. Even so, some are easier than others.

▮ It is possible to be at an advanced stage in **fluency and independence** or **range of application** or **depth of understanding** even if the **knowledge and skill** is at a very early stage. So in the end, Michelle demonstrated an advanced degree of fluency and independence (9 on the Mapping form P.15) and a much lower degree of knowledge and skill (3 on the Mapping form P.11).

▮ The opposite is also true. Remember that for sample 1 Michelle seemed able to manage the writing task to some extent (2 on the Mapping form P.8), but she needed a lot of help to accomplish this.

▮ Some tasks may be basic, or advanced, in relation to the knowledge and skill they demand yet the demands they make on a person's fluency, range and understanding could be quite different.

▮ Not all elements and not all cornerstones are relevant all the time. It is important to identify those that can be demonstrated through a particular task; and those that are most important for the learner. For Michelle, **fluency and independence** plus **range of application** were very important.

Conclusion

This section provides an understanding of how **Mapping the Learning Journey** helped Michelle to get a clear picture of her individual learning profile. It described the stages in the teaching and learning process and the supports provided by **MLJ.** We presented Michelle's story as a case study and discussed the decisions made by Michelle and Margaret about what the evidence in her completed tasks said about her progress. We saw Michelle make significant progress in the process cornerstones while she worked on her writing skills. This section ends by reminding us that the framework is flexible and adaptable and so suitable for a range of learners working on different skills. The training that NALA will provide will include practical exercises on mapping samples of learners' work and will cover how this works in practice. Section 4 of this User Guide looks in more detail at how **MLJ** helps tutors and learners to manage the teaching and learning process.

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National Development Plan

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Mapping the Learning Journey

Section 4

How Mapping the Learning Journey helps tutors and learners to manage the teaching and learning process

Range of application

Fluency and Independence

Depth of understanding and critical awareness

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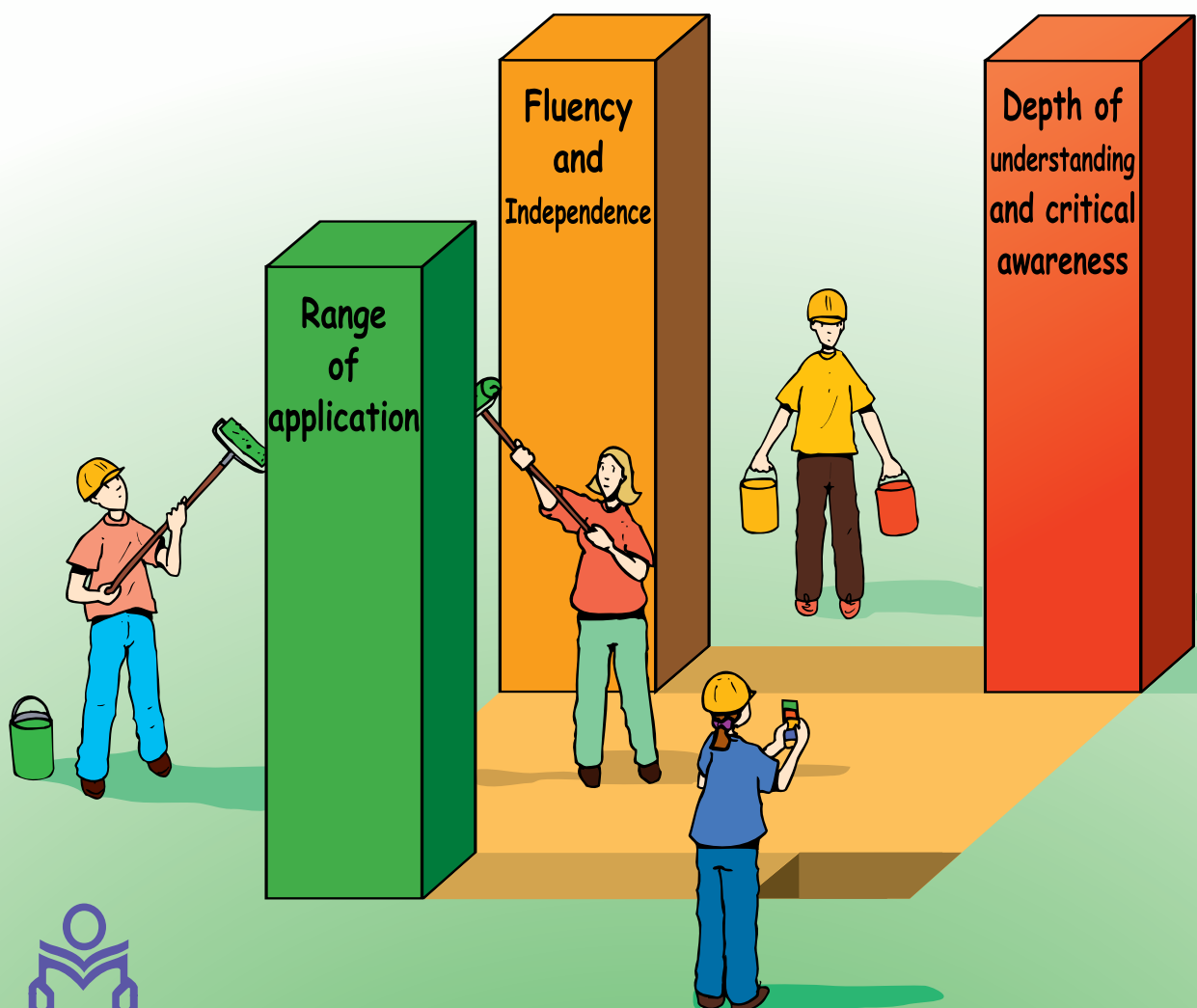
Section 4

Introduction

Section 4 of this user guide gives practical advice to tutors and learners on how to use the framework. This section begins with the guiding principles that were outlined in section 1. Tutors and learners who developed **Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ)** with us told us that there are several stages that the teaching and learning process goes through before you talk about progress. The teaching and learning process is managed by tutors and learners when they:

❚ plan learning;

❚ analyse difficulties; and

❚ review progress.

This section gives advice to tutors and learners on how best to use the MLJ framework to support them in managing the teaching and learning process. It includes:

❚ the guiding principles and how to apply them;

❚ managing the process of mapping which
   includes:

     ❙ planning lessons;

     ❙ analysing difficulties;

     ❙ reviewing progress.

❚ frequently asked questions;

❚ guidelines on creating and using mapping
   tasks; and

❚ a useful form for analysing these tasks.

Let's begin by looking at how to apply the guiding principles.

Translating the guiding principles into action

The guiding principles (see Section 1) are the values that direct the way tutors and learners work together. It is very important to understand how these values direct the way the framework is used. Below are some specific ways that tutors can translate these principles into action.

Learner-centred

Using MLJ can support the learner in three ways.

▌ It lets the learner see what progress they are making and where.

▌ If they are not progressing, it helps to identify blocks and find solutions.

▌ It provides a system for communicating about learning and learning goals.

MLJ exists to help the learner. It is not designed to supply statistics, to provide material for centre reports or to evaluate tutors. It helps tutors to plan and review the learning experience with different learners and this information helps organisers to manage the centre's resources. Individual learning plans and better organisation lead to a better experience for the learner.

The **MLJ** framework is not a curriculum; do not look on the cornerstones, areas of learning and elements as a set of topics that learners must cover. Rather, tutors and learners should use different parts of the framework to analyse the real-life tasks and activities that learners want to work on. Selecting areas of the framework that are relevant to the task or activity and to the individual learner, helps in planning work and reviewing progress. In this way, tutors can use the framework to help learners to achieve their particular goals.

Flexible and informal

Identifying learning and mapping progress is not something that the tutor does **to** the learner or **for** the learner. Using MLJ helps the tutor and learner discuss together where the learner is and where they want to go. Each learner has their own specific goals, strengths, weaknesses and preferences. So the discussion between the tutor and the learner will refer to areas of the framework that tutors and learners select for their current relevance to the learner. In this way, you can adapt the framework to suit the requirements of different people. You can also adapt the framework for the same learner over time.

Constructive

MLJ is not a test. There is no passing or failing. Learners do not get marks and they are not compared with each other but only with their own earlier work. The framework helps to identify learners' strengths as well as areas they need to improve. Learners who developed the framework with us said that seeing their progress over a period of time helps to motivate them.

Clear

Learners should know what the **MLJ** framework is for and how it works in their situation. The process of introducing the framework will vary, depending on the learning environment and on the learners themselves. Some learners may not wish to be overwhelmed by what may appear to be too much detail. However, tutors should help learners gradually become familiar with the framework and become more involved in it as a means of reviewing progress. The frequently asked questions further on in this section will help tutors to manage this.

Holistic

Because the framework includes the three process cornerstones **depth of understanding and critical awareness, fluency and independence and range of application**, learners get a much more rounded picture of their abilities than a simple statement of competence in knowledge and skills. These process cornerstones help them to see their progress in terms of applying their skills and knowledge. All of this information provides material for thinking about their own learning and the ways in which they learn. This was very important to the learners who developed the framework with us.

Managing the process of mapping

The learning environment and the needs of particular learners will result in variations in how the framework is used in practice. This section examines how the framework can help tutors and learners to:

▌ plan learning;

▌ analyse difficulties; and

▌ review progress.

The Mapping Form

① Cornerstone:	Knowledge and Skills		
	Beginning 1 2 3	Mid-level 4 5 6	Upper-level 7 8 9
Communicates by speaking and listening			
• Listens to obtain information			
• Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication			
• Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose			
Writes to convey information, ideas and feelings			
• Writes words that express what they want to say			
• Organises the flow so that a reader will understand			
• Uses the rules of writing appropriately			
• Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience			
Reads with understanding			
• Recognises words commonly used			
• Makes sense of writing rules			
• Finds key information from different form of writing			
• Understands meaning and purpose			
Uses numbers to carry out everyday tasks			
• Uses numbers in daily life			
• Uses money in daily life			
• Understands and uses units of time			
• Uses measurement in everyday life			

Mapping the learning journey

Name _____

Date _____

② Cornerstone:	Depth of understanding and critical awareness		
	Beginning 1 2 3	Mid-level 4 5 6	Upper-level 7 8 9
• Applies personal knowledge and life experience			
• Uses judgement			
• Plans and checks own learning			

③ Cornerstone:	Fluency and independence		
	Beginning 1 2 3	Mid-level 4 5 6	Upper-level 7 8 9
• Carries out the task easily			
• Carries out the task consistently			
• Carries out the task independently			

④ Cornerstone:	Range of application		
	Beginning 1 2 3	Mid-level 4 5 6	Upper-level 7 8 9
• Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks			
• Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings			

Planning

When an adult literacy learner starts work with a literacy service or group there is generally a process of discussion and planning that helps the manager and tutor to find out what the learner can already do as well as what they want and need to learn. It can take a long time – perhaps several weeks – for the tutor and learner together to get a clear picture of the learner's literacy needs and goals.

Tutors can use the mapping framework during this stage to analyse where the learner's strengths and gaps lie. This does not mean giving tests in the different areas of learning or mechanically ticking off specific elements of the framework. Rather, this initial assessment should be carried out in the normal way, by talking with the learner and observing what they can already do easily and where they have problems. During this process the tutor can keep in mind the different part of the framework – the four cornerstones, the four areas of knowledge and skill and the specific elements. These can act as signposts of strengths and weaknesses.

One of the first steps in this process involves exploring which area of knowledge and skill the learner wants to address, for example whether they need to work on their reading or writing or on some aspect of numeracy and what real-life tasks they hope to accomplish.

They may want to read to a child or grandchild, manage money and banking, meet the demands of their job or build their self-confidence.

By using the framework structure as a reference point, tutors can highlight how different categories of learning are often integrated in real-life tasks. For example, a learner who is focusing on numeracy may need to remember that many such tasks also involve a lot of reading.

One way of clarifying specific areas that need attention is to map a sample of a new learner's work, being careful to select a piece that is typical of the kind of life tasks they want to be able to manage. Alternatively, you may simply keep in mind the different parts of the framework when discussing a new learner's experiences and observing their work.

Remember that literacy work is not only a question of knowledge and skill. The three process cornerstones – fluency and independence, range of application, and depth of understanding – help tutors and learners identify strengths and weaknesses in how a learner completes literacy and numeracy tasks. For most learners, making progress in these aspects is at least as important as acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Analysing difficulties

A good time to use the framework is when learners are having difficulty making progress. Examining their work in relation to the four cornerstones should help to identify the problem. This may not be a question of skill at all but rather may relate to:

I depth of understanding and critical awareness;

I fluency and independence; or

I range of application.

Using **MLJ** to analyse a particular activity with the learner should identify specific elements that are causing problems. Tutors can then focus on these by devising a variety of exercises and teaching-learning activities and assessment methods.

Reviewing progress

Every so often in the learning process, tutors and learners together stop to reflect on what has gone before, what has worked well and what should come next. **MLJ** can be used to guide this process. Looking at samples of learners' work and using the concepts and questions provided by the framework will indicate the progress learners have made in the different areas.

To allow time for learners to make progress, it is better not to review work in this way too often. However, you should carry it out often enough for learners to remember their earlier work and to see how far they have come. While progression is an engaging part of teaching and learning, the length of time between **MLJ** reviews will depend on the situation and the learner, but we recommend using **MLJ** three times a year for most learners.

Question: **When should the tutor tell the learner about the framework?**

From the outset, learners and tutors discuss their goals and the steps they will take together to support the learner in reaching their goals. It may be useful to refer to the framework at this point as a tool that will be used later on to identify with the learner where they are making progress. Introduce the framework in a way that suits the particular learner. There is no need to explain all of the details of the framework and the form at the very beginning. Give the new learner time to identify their learning goals and find out how tuition works.

Question: **Why should the tutor tell the learner about the framework?**

Learners have the right to know how they are learning. One of the Guiding Principles of the framework is clarity – the framework should be clear to the learner. Adult learners need to be aware of what is going on and be able to take part in it. However, some people who had very negative experiences of assessment in the past may think that using this framework will be just another recipe for failure. This means that the tutor must be careful to explain from the very beginning what the framework is and, perhaps more importantly, what it is not. It may be useful to focus on the learner's individual learning plan and explain that the framework is a tool to see how well learners are progressing to achieving their goals.

Question: **What are the important messages to get across at the very beginning?**

Before introducing the structure of the framework and certainly before presenting the form, it is important to give a small number of important messages that will help learners to see the framework as a way of supporting their learning.

Tutors might want to say that the MLJ framework is:

- a system for helping the tutor and learner to plan work;
- a system for identifying areas of strength and weakness;
- a tool for the tutor and learner to communicate; and
- a support system for tracking progress.

At this point, tutors should also explain that the MLJ framework is not:

- a way of comparing learners with other learners;
- a system for giving marks, passes or fails;
- a set of topics or rules that describe what work the learner must cover; or
- a qualification.

Question: **How can the tutor give the learner a general idea of how the framework works?**

Here are specific strategies that tutors who developed the framework with us found useful in presenting the framework to learners for the first time.

▮ Make sure that the first mention of the framework is low-key and casual.

▮ Bring it up as a topic at suitable points in general conversation, for example if the learner wonders how they will know if they are improving.

▮ Start with what the learner wants to do – their own life tasks and general goals – and relate these back to the relevant parts of the framework, rather than the other way round.

▮ Be sure to highlight the process cornerstones, as learners can sometimes show progress on these even when their knowledge and skills are limited.

Question: **How can the tutor explain the finer detail?**

Tutors may want to avoid the word 'assessment' with some learners. The word makes some people think of exams and could cause unnecessary anxiety. Tutors could say that they have a system for keeping track of their progress that will involve both of you sitting down together from time to time to review their work. They will have their own form to keep a record of this, to see how far they have come and where they want to go. The important thing is to avoid jargon and to use plain English.

For example, some tutors have described 'assessment' in the context of this framework as:

▮ 'a way of finding out what you can do already and what needs work';

▮ 'a way of keeping track of your progress';

▮ 'finding out where you are improving and where there are gaps';

▮ 'a method for helping us to decide what to do next'.

Here is a selection of phrases that tutors have used to describe other aspects of the framework:

▮ Depth of understanding and critical awareness: 'Can you use your experience and knowledge to make good judgements?'

▮ Fluency and independence: 'Can you do this easily? On your own?'

▮ Range of application: Can you do this in different places? In different circumstances, for example, with people watching you?'

Question: **Should the tutor show the learner the form?**

At some point, yes. When tutors decide to do this will depend on the learner, their experience and how often you meet. The main thing is not to worry them. You could introduce some of the ideas first, then show learners extracts from the form that relate to what they are working on, then work up to showing them the whole form. Of course, some people will prefer to see the whole thing, straight away. Be guided by the learner's own attitude. Some tutors and organisers display a copy of the form on the wall before introducing it directly; in this way learners have become familiar with its layout before they actually use it.

Question: **What will happen to these forms when tutors have filled them in with the learner?**

That is up to you and the learner. You should keep a copy or a record to help plan in the future. However, treat these forms as confidential records, as you would with other records of adult literacy learners.

Question: **Do we have to use the whole framework?**

Not at all. Choose those cornerstones, areas of learning and elements that reflect the individual learning plans or learner's own goals, with what they are working on anyway. Rich and complex learning activities will address more of the framework than simple tasks. Be guided by what comes naturally and what the learner needs to examine, to make progress.
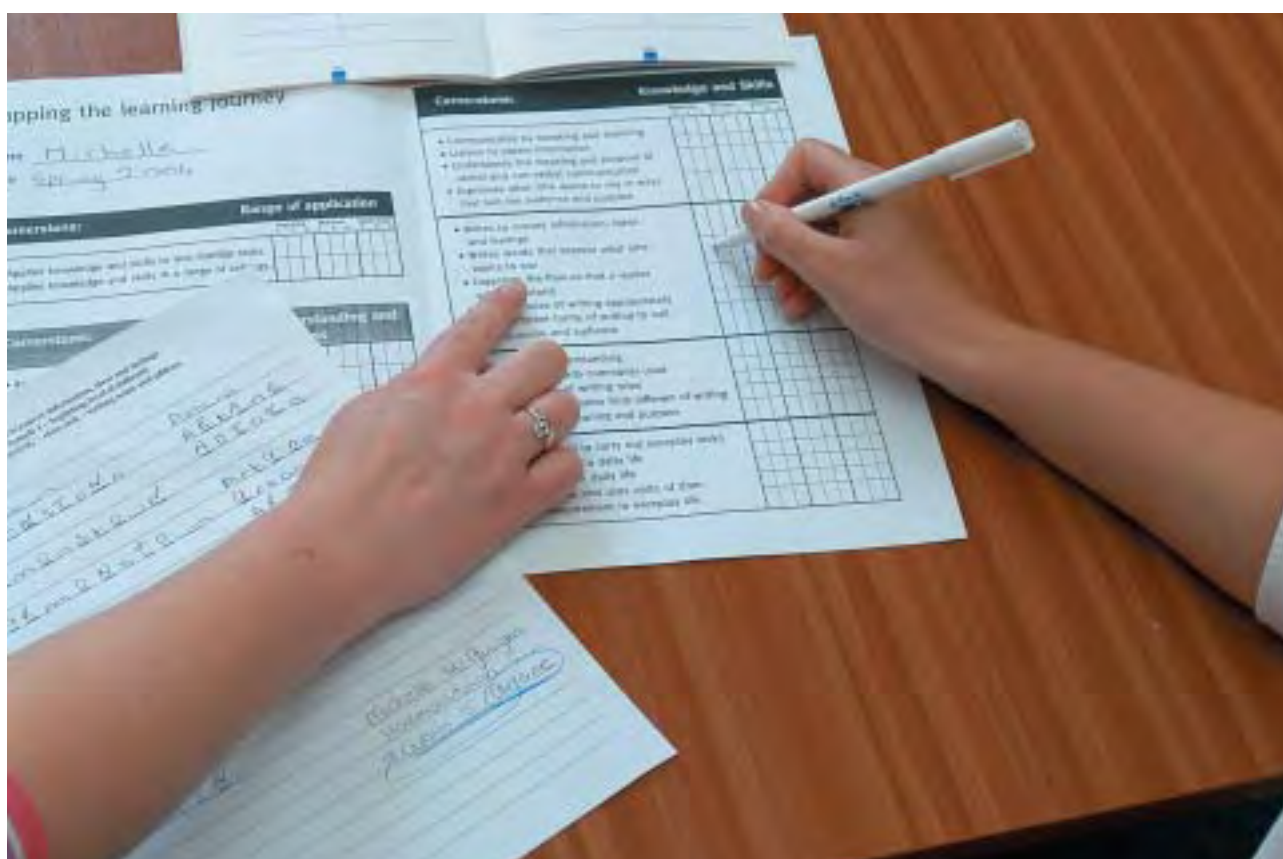
Question: **What makes an activity useful for mapping purposes?**

To use the framework effectively, use only tasks and activities that the learner has carried out in the period under review. These should be broad and interesting enough to allow the learner to show the range of what they know, what they can do, and with what degree of fluency and depth of understanding, **Mapping the Learning Journey** will be used as a framework to analyse them.

Some tasks are more informative, or 'richer', than others in the amount of information they can provide about the learners' achievement at a particular stage in their learning. A task or activity that is useful for mapping will generally:

- be, or be based on, a real-life situation;

- shed light on more than one cornerstone, not just on knowledge and skill;

- include enough of the learner's own work to demonstrate what they know and can do; and

- generate indicators of the stage the learner has reached.

Tutors remarked that using **Mapping the Learning Journey** in this way encouraged them to include the process cornerstones more consistently in the teaching and learning.

Question: **How often should we use the framework to map learners' work?**

Use it as a often as tutors and learners would normally stop to review progress. If you meet the learner every day, this will obviously happen more often than if you only see each other once a week or less. Don't make the gaps so long that you have both forgotten what you discussed in your last review, nor so short that there has been no time for any progress. Based on feedback from tutors who developed the framework with us, we estimate that three times a year would be appropriate for most learners.

Creating and using mapping tasks

The tutors who developed the framework with us noted that guidelines on creating and using rich tasks would be very useful. **Form 1** below is a quick and easy way for tutors to develop tasks that will allow learners to show progress. Ideally these tasks would allow learners to show progress on more than one cornerstone so that they can build a picture of the richness of their learning. A rich literacy activity or task should also allow learners to see how they are using their new knowledge and skills in their daily lives (this is where the process cornerstones are very helpful).

Form 1: Guidelines on creating and using mapping tasks

General Questions	Comment
▌ What area(s) of knowledge and skill is the learner working on? (speaking and listening, reading, writing, numeracy)	▌ Many tasks will cover more than one area of learning: for example, consulting a bus timetable to find out the time of a journey involves both reading and numbers.
▌ What process cornerstones would be important to the learner? (depth of understanding, fluency and independence, range of application)	▌ Good mapping tasks allow the learner to demonstrate progress in process cornerstones as well as knowledge and skill. For example, can the learner read the bus timetable at the bus stop as well as in the classroom?
▌ Within the chosen cornerstones, which elements should the task address?	▌ Some very simple tasks may address only one element of a cornerstone but most will cover several.
▌ What broad level of difficulty would the learner be able to work at within the knowledge and skill area? (beginning, mid, upper)	▌ The most useful information will come from a task that demands some effort but is within reach of the learner.
Questions about knowledge and skills	

▌ Does the task include the main areas and elements that the learner is working on?

▌ Is the task at an appropriate level of difficulty within the particular area of learning?

Questions about depth of understanding and critical awareness

❚ How would the learner be able to use their personal knowledge or life experience in completing the task?

❚ Does the task allow the learner to use their judgement about information and points of view?

❚ Does the task give any scope for self-monitoring?

❚ Would the task link to the learner's own learning plans?

Questions about fluency and independence

❚ How long do you expect a successful learner would take to do this task?

❚ Is the task at a level of difficulty that should allow the learner to complete it with some degree of ease?

❚ Does the task provide an appropriate amount of structure and guidance in relation to the learner's needs?

❚ Has the learner done similar tasks before?

❚ Will you be able to create opportunities for the learner to show consistency of performance over time?

Questions about range of application

❚ How familiar is this task to the learner?

❚ Are there opportunities to apply knowledge and skills to similar but different tasks?

❚ What are the usual settings where this learner might expect to carry out the particular task?

❚ Will you be able to vary the range of settings in which they can carry out the task?

❚ How can you identify a transfer of learning to real-life situations?

General questions

❚ What, if anything, will the learner produce in the course of working on this task (for example, a piece of writing)?

❚ What other indicators of the learner's progress will the work show (for example, discussion or performance)?

The checklist below guides tutors and learners in analysing the evidence of the learner's progress that the mapping task shows.

Checklist for analysing mapping tasks

Cornerstones covered   (tick appropriate cornerstone and area of learning)

• Knowledge and skills:

• Communicate by speaking and listening

• Read with understanding

• Write to convey information, ideas & feelings

• Use numbers to carry out everyday tasks

Process cornerstones

• Depth of understanding and critical awareness

• Fluency and independence

• Range of application

Elements covered (write in appropriate element and tick appropriate level of difficulty)

Element	Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level

Briefly describe the task or activity

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Cornerstone or area of learning and the evidence of progress in the completed task or activity

Cornerstone	Evidence of progress

14

Conclusion

This section shows tutors and learners how to apply the values or guiding principles underpinning this framework when talking about or making a note of progress. It answers the questions that tutors most frequently ask when thinking about how to introduce MLJ to their learners. It concludes with guidelines for tutors when developing and analysing mapping tasks.

The following section of this user guide (Section 5) gives samples of learners' work drawn from the research to develop MLJ. These samples show how tutors and learners mapped different pieces of work relating to each of the four cornerstones and areas of learning. They include work at all levels of task complexity and show different stages of progress across all learners. This should help to bring together the information given in this section and also Sections 2 and 3.

Notes

Notes

National Adult Literacy Agency

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Part of the Evolving Quality Framework

National Development Plan

European Union
Structural Funds

Mapping the Learning Journey

Section 5

Samples and commentaries

Range of application

Fluency and Independence

Knowledge and Skills

Depth of understanding and critical awareness

NALA
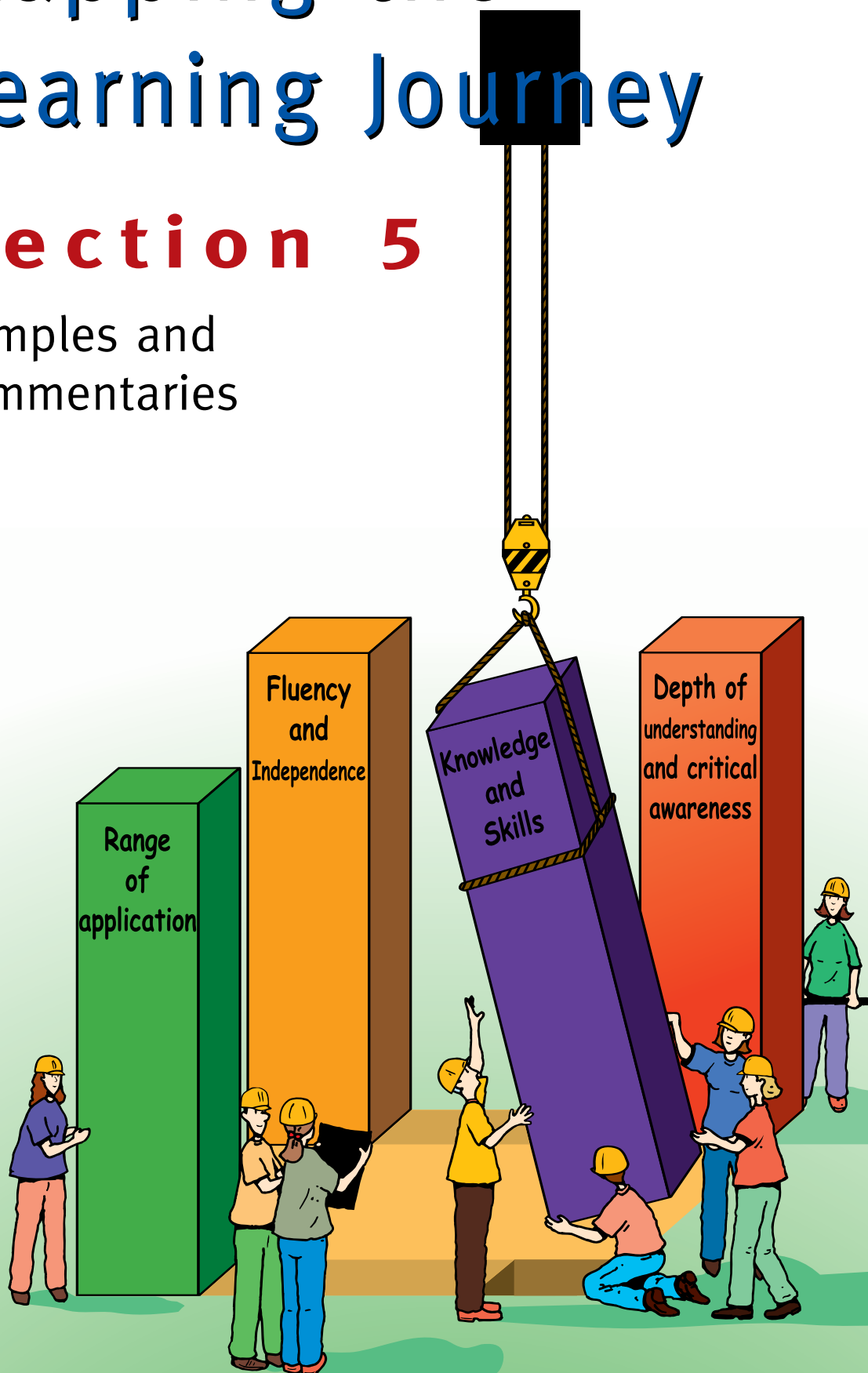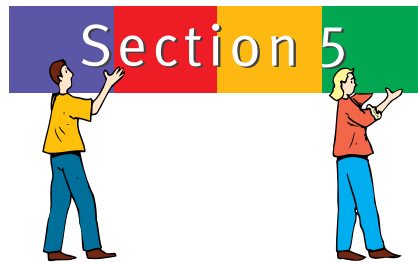
Section 5

Introduction

In Section 3 we demonstrated how Michelle (the learner) had mapped her work on the area of learning (writing, under the knowledge and skills cornerstone) she was working on and across the relevant elements of the three process cornerstones (depth of understanding and critical awareness, fluency and independence and range of application). Michelle was able to see where she had made progress across the four cornerstones by looking back over her completed recording forms and by noting that she was using her new skill in her everyday life (writing her name and address on a raffle ticket in her local pub).

Here in Section 5 we have taken the samples of learner's work from the pilot and validation stages of the framework's development. We include tasks on each of the four areas of learning. For each area of learning we have included tasks at each of the three levels of difficulty; beginning, mid-level and upper level. Our intention is to give tutors and learners an idea of what tasks at different levels of difficulty look like and how they might be mapped. This reflects the supports provided in the laminated sheets at the back of Section 2. The names and personal details have been changed to respect learners' right to confidentiality.

The samples show how tutors and learners mapped different pieces of work relating to each of the four areas of learning. As you read through the examples you will see that not every cornerstone is mapped. This is because the learners and tutors working on these tasks and activities concentrated only on those cornerstones that were relevant to the learners' goals and where the learners were at in their lesson plans.

You will see, as you read on that this section comes in four parts. Each part relates to a specific area of learning. The areas of learning are presented in sequence according to how they appear on the mapping form. Each part of this section begins with a general overview and moves into a discussion of samples of work at each level of difficulty before moving on to the next area of learning. A conclusion at the end of this section reminds us of the purpose of this section and the key points to take from the discussion of the samples of learners' work.

Remember from Michelle's progress maps that the knowledge and skill, for example, in writing name and address is limited. She can only do it so well and no better in content terms. It was possible, however, for Michelle to move from total dependence on her tutor to complete independence; from an ability to only do this in a single setting, the training centre, to all places, for example, the pub. So on the other 'process' cornerstones it is possible to progress further along the scale on the same task or activity. This allows us to think of 'progress' as being more than just about content, and so show learners' achievements on many dimensions. This is what we mean by a spikey profile (referred to in Section 2) and is reflected in the examples given here in Section 5.

Communicates by speaking and listening

Three samples of work are presented here representing the three levels of task difficulty. The discussion on each sample begins with a description of the task or activity and the name of the tutors and learners who were working on them. The task or activity is then presented and the level of difficulty is summarised. Then we discuss how the tutors and learners mapped the task and what cornerstones and elements were relevant to the learners' goals and where they were at in their lesson plans.

Sample 1 – Beginning-level: giving directions

The task described

The context for this activity was a visit that the tutor, Anna, had organised for her group to the Four Courts in Dublin. Although all of the learners had grown up in Dublin's north inner city and had often passed the Four Courts, they had never actually been inside. They planned to walk there from the training centre, just off the North Circular Road. This provided an opportunity for the group to practise giving and receiving directions to and from a very familiar location.

Anna, the tutor, eventually asked learners to produce a set of written directions. The piece of writing presented below was produced by Peter (one of the learners), after substantial preparation. This preparation involved discussion and questions and answers, both with and without visual aids.

According to Anna, it took Peter about 45 minutes to complete the whole activity, of which 20 minutes were spent on the discussion and 25 minutes were spent on the writing.

To decide on the level of oral proficiency involved in this task, Peter and Anna analysed the oral skills demonstrated in the discussion leading up to the writing exercise. Although they could of course have mapped the piece of writing as well. For the moment we only use it to indicate the scope of the verbal task.

Anna tells us that Peter was already quite familiar with sequencing and also with sentence structure, as they had been working on different, but related, small-scale exercises. These include practising putting phrases and sentences in the correct order. Peter did very well on this beginning level speaking and listening task.

<div style="background:#3a4a9f; color:white; padding:8px;">

Level of difficulty

</div>

This is a beginning-level speaking and listening task because it involves:

▎ uncomplicated directions;

▎ subject/locality that is very familiar to the learner; and

▎ concrete and direct information.

Giving instructions/directions

Choose from one of the following:
1. Give directions from Busáras to Grafton Street.
2. Give directions from Heuston Station to the Mater Hospital.
3. Give directions from the Mater Hospital to Jervis Street Shopping Centre.
4. Give directions from Stephen's Green Shopping Centre to Heuston Station.
5. Give directions from O'Connell Street to Christ Church Cathedral.
6. Give directions from the Mater Hospital to the Four Courts.

Instructions on how to

Number	Instructions on how to get from: Mater Hospital to: Four Courts
1	Walk to N.C.R. Turn Right and walk to second set off Traffic Lights and take Left
2	On PhiBsBoro Road Walk straight to Broadstone and ~~x~~ through Constitution Hill.
3	go on to North King street and straight on to the ~~x~~ Quays
4	Take a Left and First Left again. You are at Four Courts.
5	
6	

Mapping the cornerstones

Peter and Anna were only interested in mapping what was relevant to Peter's learning goals and where he was at that time in his lesson plans. So they left the rest of the form blank. Peter and Anna began by mapping this piece of work against the relevant process cornerstones and then moved on to knowledge and skills. They began by looking for evidence of Peter's depth of understanding and critical awareness in relation to this beginning-level task.

Process cornerstone 2
Depth of understanding and critical awareness

To prepare for producing the written directions, Anna and Peter together discussed the route to take to the Four Courts. They also talked about the best way to give instructions and directions: that they should be clear, simple, accurate and, especially, in the correct order. Anna then drew the directions on the board and together they talked through the sequence. After this they removed the visual aid and Peter explained the route verbally. Only then did he start work on the written task.

To take part in this discussion and to be able to give accurate directions, Peter had to draw on his prior knowledge of the locality. This meant that giving these particular directions did not place great demands on his memory (he already knew the street names), although he did have to be careful to get the steps in the right order.

Map 5.1 Applies personal knowledge and life experience
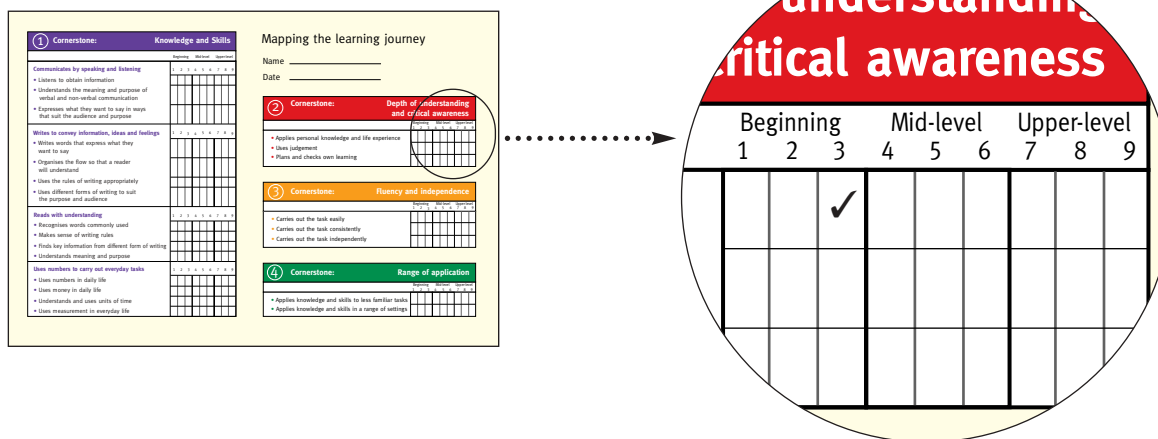
Giving directions to a nearby location involves some sequencing but because the place is very familiar to the learner and the directions are not very complicated, as a spoken activity, this task is at the 'beginning' level of difficulty. Anna tells us that Peter was able to give an effective verbal explanation of how to get to the destination – that he carried out this fairly simple task as well as it could be done. So Peter and Anna decided to place Peter's progress at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

We know from what Anna has told us that Peter had quite a lot of support in completing this task. His verbal explanation came after a lengthy discussion – about 20 minutes - about the actual directions, how to give directions and even a visual aid showing the route. After all this practise he did give the instructions on his own – but because of the support he got, there is no evidence that he would be able to do this completely independently. That said, he needed help with only some parts of the task, which moves his performance into the mid-level.

Map 5.2 Independence in carrying out the task
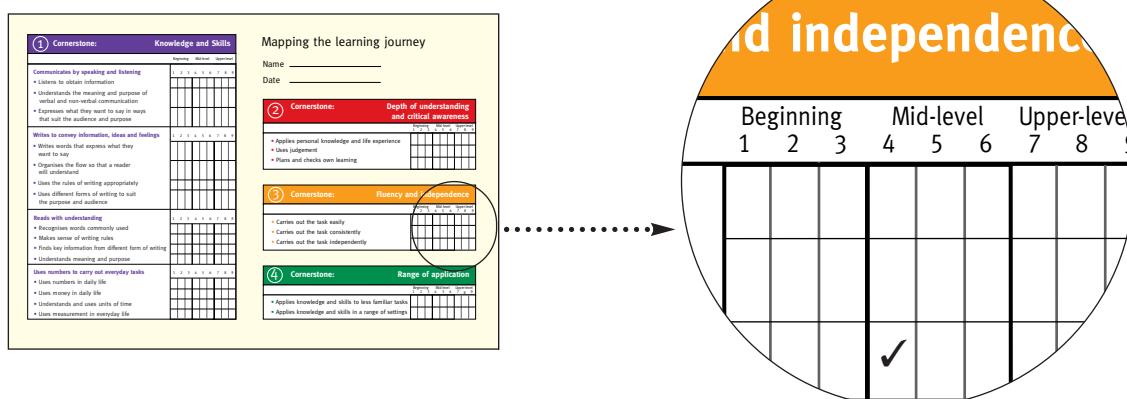
Taking all of this into account, Peter and Anna decided to place his progress at the bottom end of mid-level (4 on the mapping form).

Process cornerstone 4
Range of application

We know that the route to the Four Courts was familiar and that Peter was familiar with sentence sequencing and structure. The task required Peter to practise giving and receiving directions to and from a familiar location and he performed very well on it. Therefore, he decided with Anne to place his progress at the top level of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Map 5.3 Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks
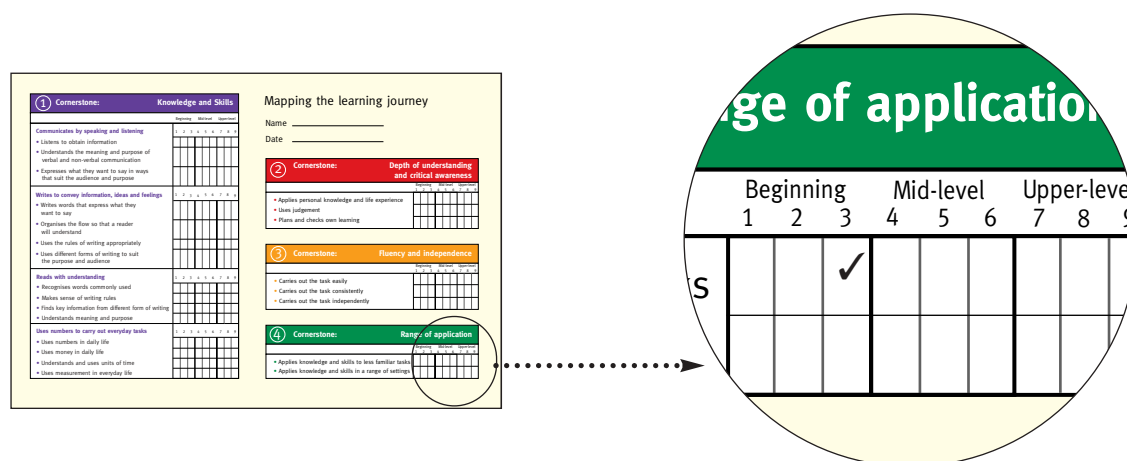
Because all of this work was carried out in the training centre we have evidence only that Peter was able to apply his knowledge in a familiar setting, but he did this well.   So again, he and Anna decided to place his progress at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Map 5.4 Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings
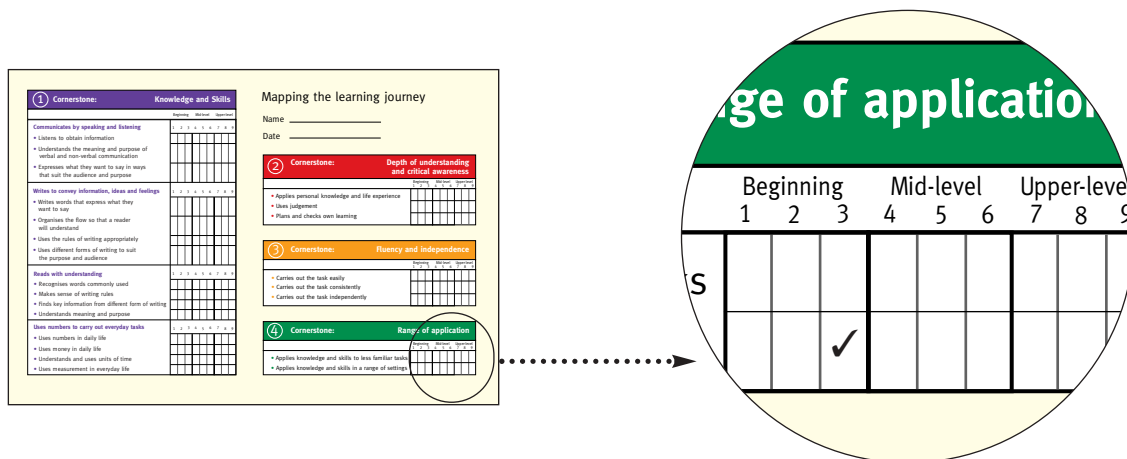
If he had given the same directions to someone who stopped him in the street to ask the way, or even to a tutor in the centre who was less well-known to him, this would indicate that he was now using these skills in a wider range of situations. However, it appears that he is not yet at this stage – which suggests an area which future work could address.

Peter and Anna then mapped this task for evidence of progress in knowledge and skills.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

Peter and Anna were only interested in the oral demands of this task. So they mapped it against the relevant element of communicates by speaking and listening. Peter had given and received the directions to and from the Four Courts very well so he placed his progress at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Map 5.5 Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose
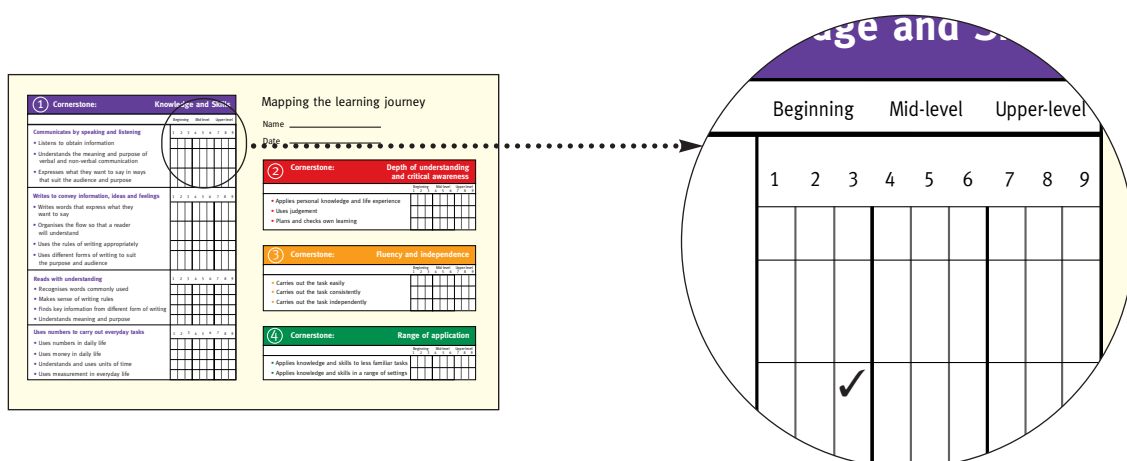
This was a rich activity as it allowed Peter to progress across all four cornerstones. Overall, we have seen that Peter has a spikey profile in terms of how well he completed this task across the relevant elements of the four cornerstones. He is at the upper level of beginning (3 on the mapping form) on most elements but actually reaches the beginning of mid-level (4 on the mapping form) in his independence in completing the task. This suggests that Peter might be ready to begin working on mid-level tasks. An example of a mid-level speaking and listening task is presented next.

Sample 2 – Mid- level: topping up call credit

The task described

The purpose of the activity in this sample was to give the learner, John, practise in topping up the credit on his mobile phone. John had never done this for himself and he wanted to spend some time with his tutor Michael, in becoming familiar enough with the task so that he could eventually do it on his own.

In order to accomplish this task and make the best use of the support available, John had to listen carefully to very specific verbal instructions which were coming from two different places: the guidance provided by Michael, who directed him to look at the receipt for his phone card and showed him where to find the numbers to key in; and also, the electronic guidance from the phone itself, which was provided when John keyed in the correct access code.

As a task involving listening and acting on instructions, there is quite a lot going on here at the same time. In the first place, there are several actions – numbers to key in – which have to be performed in the correct sequence and at one stage these also have to be checked. Secondly, the fact that one of the sources of the verbal instructions is an electronic medium makes this even more difficult, as John cannot ask it for clarification and feedback. He can ask his tutor, though, and although this provides another source of support, it also means that he has another set of instructions to attend to and he has to think of the most relevant questions to ask.

Despite the instructions given, John had problems in locating the hash sign. The telephone guidelines describe where to find this and his tutor Michael also pointed it out, yet he still had difficulty locating it quickly enough to keep up with the electronic instructions. This indicates that his listening and checking skills have not yet reached the stage of total proficiency for a mid-level task.

All of this indicates that this task is at the mid-level of difficulty.

This is a mid-level speaking and listening task because it involves:

❚ following instructions from two different sources;

❚ acting on directions using technology; and

❚ asking questions to check for understanding.

John gets help on how to top up his mobile phone call credit from his tutor and from the electronic guidance on the telephone.

Mapping the cornerstones

John and Michael only mapped those elements and cornerstones that were relevant to John's goals and lesson plans. So they only mapped this piece of work against two cornerstones, fluency and independence and knowledge and skills.

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

We know from Michael that John had some difficulty in locating the relevant buttons on his key pad. He showed limited proficiency in topping up his call credit.

Map 5.6 Independence in carrying out the task
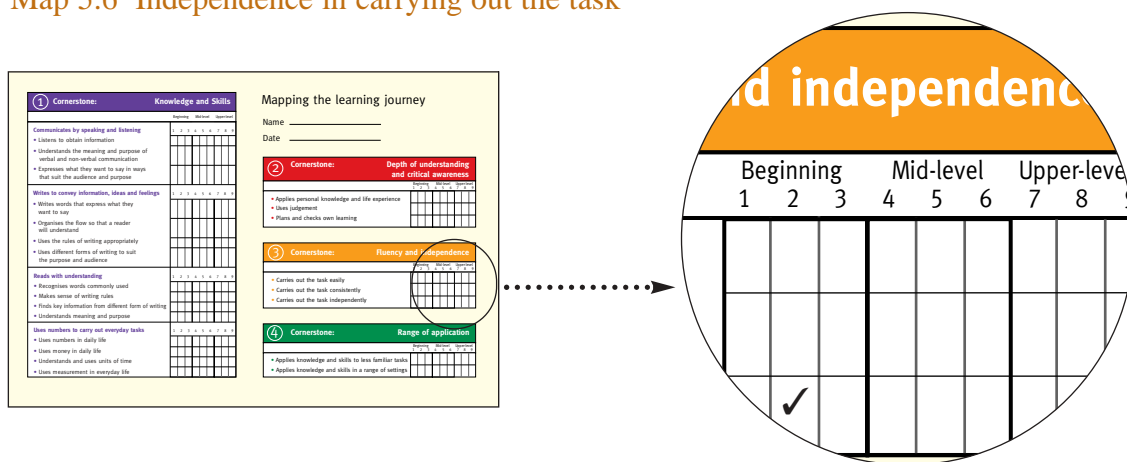
Clearly, this task is not just a question of listening: the learner needs to act, and to do this he must be able to find his way around the equipment – in this case, the key-pad – and become familiar with the routines and the sequence in which the physical actions must be carried out. To do this efficiently, John will need to develop a greater ease and flow than he has at present, as he is still grappling with what needs to be done. As a result John and Michael decided to place his progress at the middle of proficiency (or 2 on the mapping form).

Map 5.7 Ease in carrying out the task
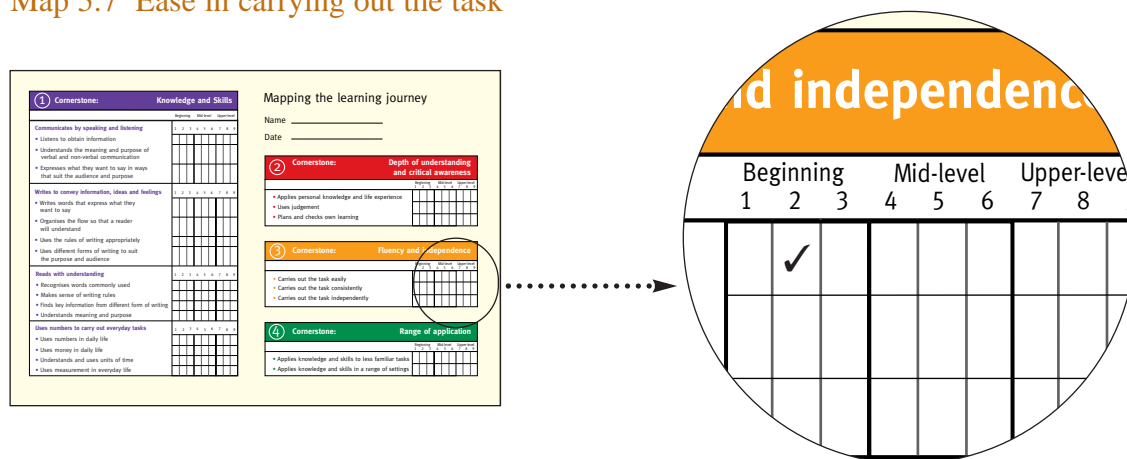
Eventually, these movements should become almost automatic but we can see that because of the support he needed in the form of detailed verbal instruction and also, because of his hesitation, John is not there yet. When he has learned the lay-out of the equipment and knows which steps to follow, it will be useful to focus on the fluency with which he responds to the instructions as they are given. Once again, he shows some but not total proficiency in completing the task so he and Michael place his progress at the middle (or 2 on the mapping form).

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

John and Michael decided to map his progress against the most relevant elements of speaking and listening. These were: listens to obtain information and understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication.

This task demanded that John listen very carefully to specific verbal instructions from two different sources. Because he had some difficulty with this he and John decided to map his progress at the middle range of proficiency.

Map 5.8 Listens to obtain information
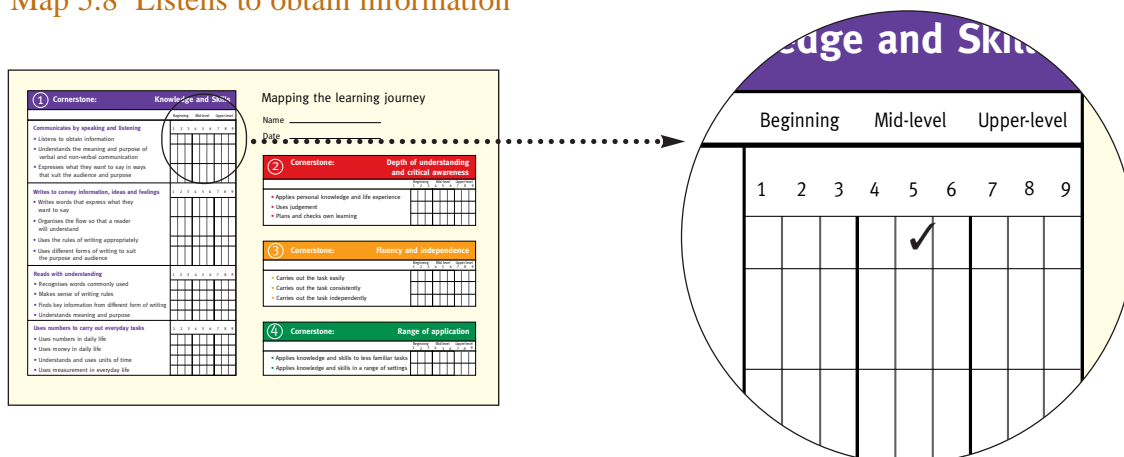
John had to interpret both verbal instructions from Michael and the electronic guidance on his phone and gestures from Michael for locating the relevant buttons on his key pad. He experienced some difficulties with this so mapped his progress at the middle range of proficiency.

Map 5.9 Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication
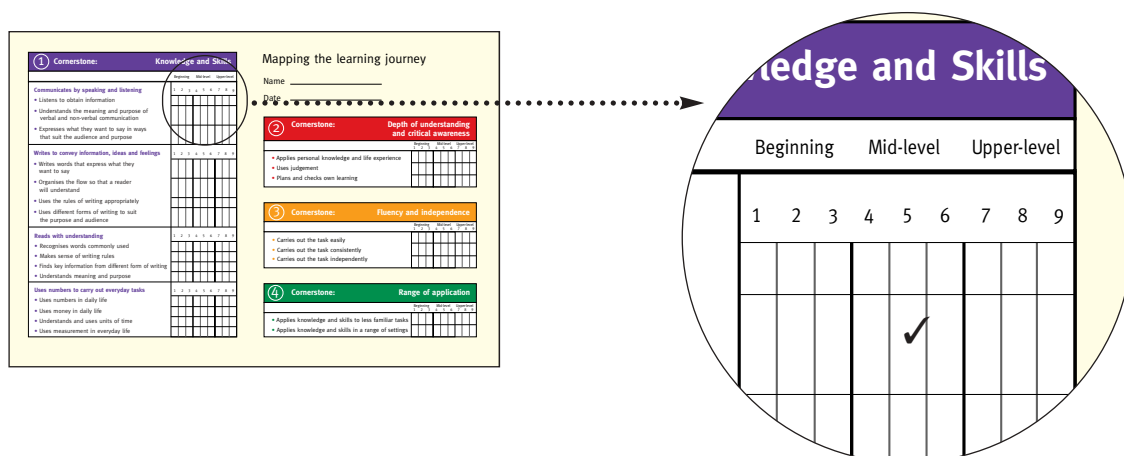
John's progress profile has been spikey on this task. He has shown that his fluency and independence will progress with practise. The task did not allow for depth of understanding and critical awareness or range of application to be mapped so John and Michael left them blank.

Sample 3 – Upper level: preparing for a job interview

The task described

A series of discussion activities and role play was designed to help Emer, the learner, prepare for a job interview. The review below focuses on Emer's participation in discussion and role play activities. Her workshop group agreed to discuss aspects of interview techniques and advise her on these. This initial preparation took up most of a morning session. The rest of what was spent on two role plays in which Emer and the tutor from another group acted out the interview and then got feedback from the group. These learners were already used to discussion activities and role plays, but this was the first time Emer had ever acted out a job interview.

Much of the group discussion that took place during the lead-up to the role plays focused on different types of verbal and non-verbal behaviour, such as posture, tone of voice and eye contact, and the impact which these can have in a formal situation such as an interview. Group members did not always have the same opinions, which meant that Emer had to listen carefully and decide which views were most useful for her needs. This is a high-level communication task, as it involves both following different arguments and making judgements about their usefulness.

Level of difficulty
This is an upper-level speaking and listening task because it involves: ▌ following a discussion in a group; ▌ selecting relevant information from discussion; ▌ receiving and acting on feedback; and ▌ adjusting verbal and non-verbal behaviour to achieve a specific effect.

Emer gets help from her group on how to behave at a job interview.

Then she practices good and bad interview techniques in a role-play with a tutor whom she knows only to see around the centre.

The group then give her feedback on how she performed in both cases.

Mapping the cornerstones

Emer and her tutor Janice mapped Emer's progress in interview techniques on two cornerstones. They first looked at the process cornerstone range of application. Then they looked at the knowledge and skills cornerstone under communicates by speaking and listening. They left the other areas of the mapping form blank because they were not relevant to Emer's learning plan.

Process cornerstone 4
Range of application

Emer's tutor Janice suggested that it would help if Emer had the opportunity to practise her interview technique in a slightly less familiar situation than in their usual training room. She asked another tutor in the centre, who was unknown to her own group, if she would take the part of the interviewer. She got permission from the centre manager to conduct the mock interview in his office, so adding to the air of formality. Although this situation was not totally unfamiliar, it was somewhat new to Emer.

This allowed her to practise not only the skills involved in an interview, but to experience this in a slightly different environment from the usual. So she mapped her progress on range of application as follows.

Map 5.10 Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks
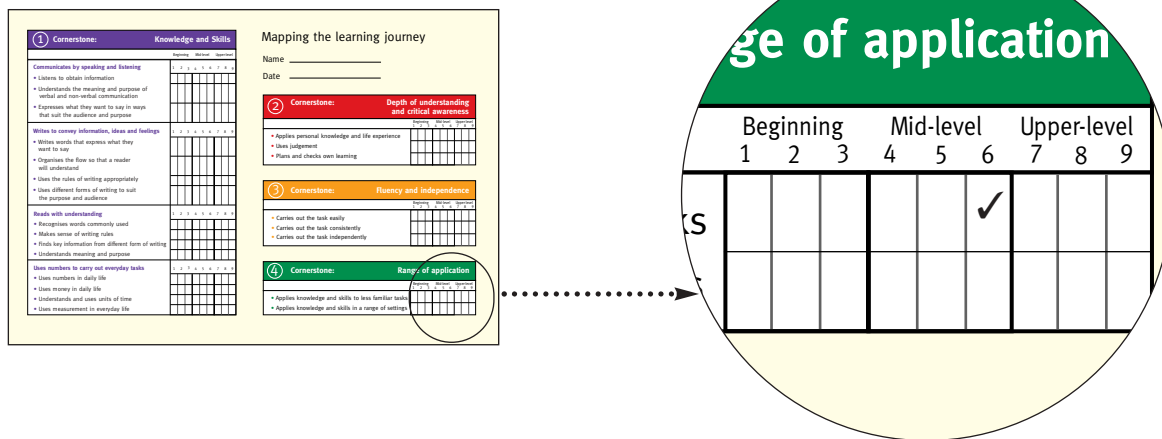
Emer achieved good proficiency in her speaking and listening skills in the less familiar task of a mock formal interview with someone who was unknown to her. So she and Janice placed her progress at ready to move on to the top end of the progress scale (6 on the mapping form). Emer and Janice then talked about how well Emer had applied her knowledge and skills in the new setting of the manager's office.

Map 5.11 Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings
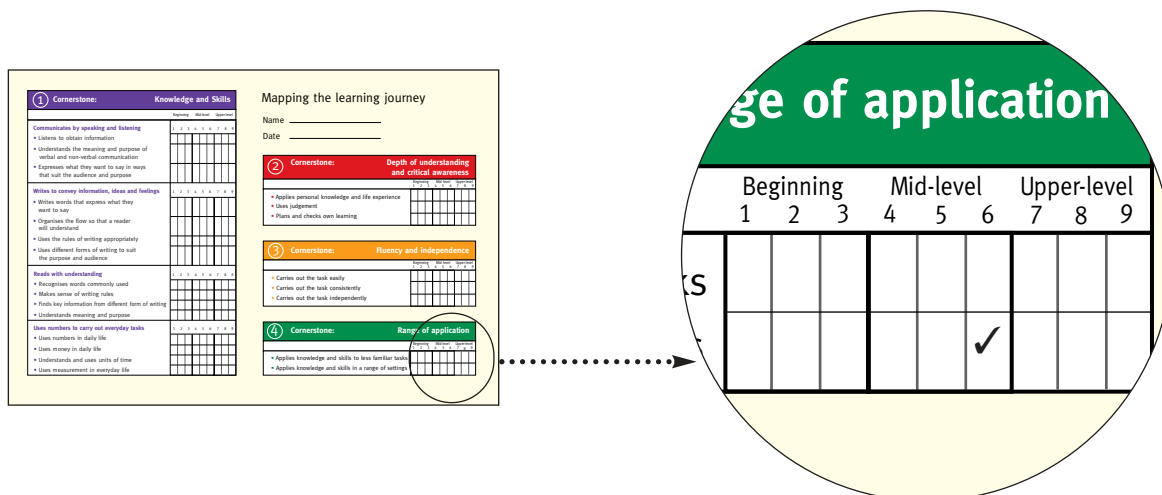
Once more they agreed that Emer had performed well in the unfamiliar and very formal surroundings of the manager's office so they placed her progress at ready to move on to the top end of the progress scale (6 on the mapping form). Emer and Janice then moved on to look at Emer's progress under the knowledge and skills cornerstone.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

Much of the group discussion which took place during the lead-up to the role plays focused on different types of verbal and non-verbal behaviour, such as posture, tone of voice and eye contact, and the impact which these can have in a formal situation such as an interview. Group members did not always have the same opinions, which meant that Emer had to listen carefully and decide which views were most useful for her needs. This is a high-level communication task as it involves both following different arguments and making judgements about their usefulness. Becaus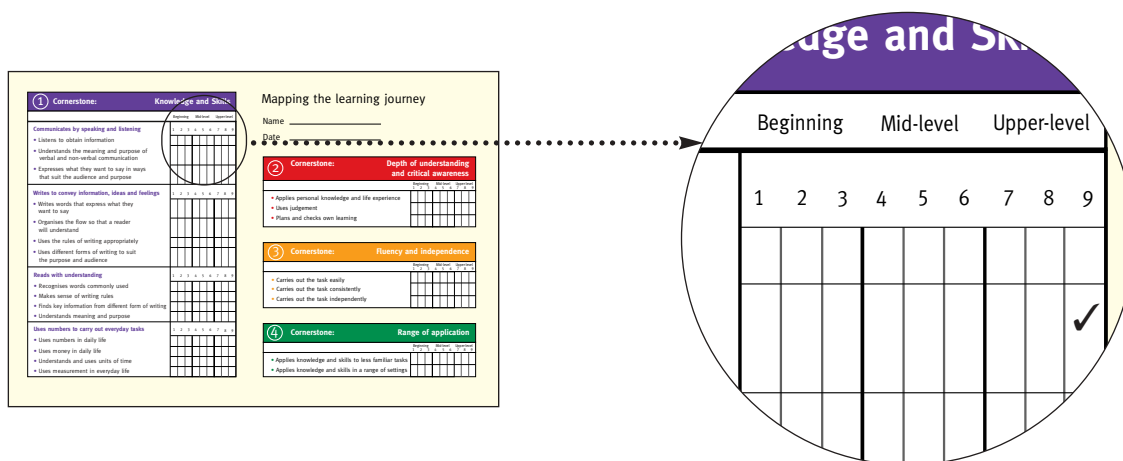e Emer performed very well at this, she and Janice agreed that her progress was at the top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Map 5.12 Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication

After the lengthy discussions on what to do and what not to do during an interview, Emer acted on the group's suggestion to try one role play doing everything wrong. After this 5-minute sketch the group then gave Emer feedback on the impact of her hesitation, vague answers, looking at the ground and slouching. Then she repeated the role play, this time doing her best to express herself well and convince the interviewer why she was good for the job. She and Janice agreed that she was again at the top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Map 5.13 Expresses what s/he wants to say to suit audience and purpose
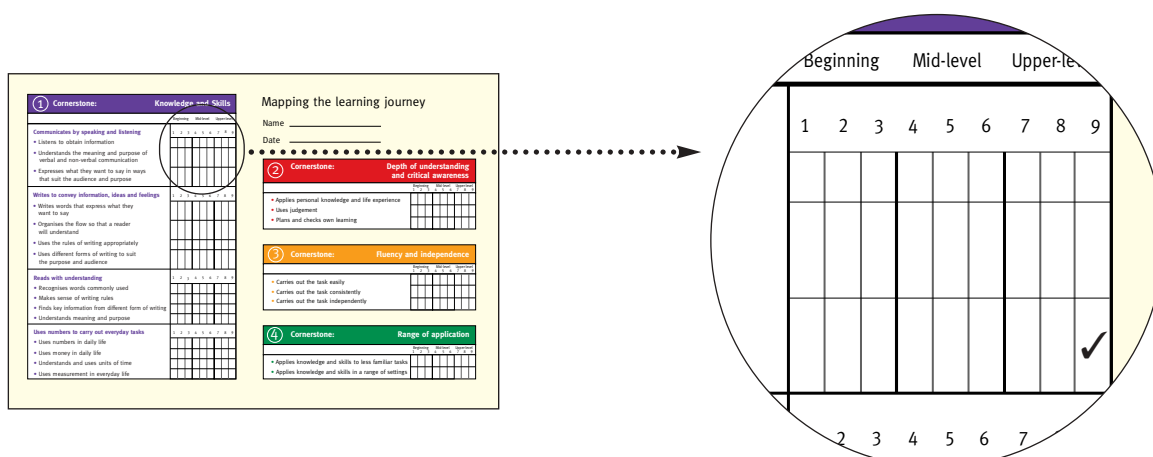
All of this involves self-expression at a high level, as Emer was clearly able to monitor her own behaviour and adjust it in the light of feedback from the group. The contrast between the 'bad' and the 'good' interviews showed that she had an understanding of the effect of different types of verbal and non-verbal communication and was able to modify these for different purposes.

Emer once again placed her progress at 9 on the mapping form. Her consistency in completing this upper level of difficulty task with total proficiency shows that she is ready to attempt a speaking and listening task equivalent to the level of difficulty expected at FETAC Foundation Level. However, she has also shown that she needs more practise in her range of application. The task did not allow Emer and Janice to note Emer's progress on fluency and independence and depth of understanding and critical awareness, so they left them blank on the form.

This analysis has dealt with Emer's communication skills, but it is worth remembering that this was a group discussion and that in any group activity it is possible to focus on the work of any individual in the group, for example, the effectiveness with which another learner listened to the others and gave constructive feedback. If the work involves an element of performance, such as discussion, it is difficult for one tutor to observe more than two people on a single occasion.

In such cases it would be useful to have the assistance of another tutor, having agreed in advance on the areas of learning and cornerstones that are of interest at that point. Other group or team activities can involve tasks that are not all happening at the same time, for example, when different members of the group have different jobs to do which are then fed back into the whole team activity. This makes it easier for the tutor to use a team activity to analyse the progress of individuals within the group.

We have seen how three learners, Peter, John and Emer, who were working on tasks at beginning, mid-level and upper level of difficulty on the same area of learning (communicates by speaking and listening) mapped their progress with their tutors. We have seen that all three had spikey profiles and that this resulted from differences in their progression among the four cornerstones.

We will now move on to see how another three learners and tutors mapped progress across writing tasks of varying difficulty.

Sample 1 – Beginning level: notes for a diary

The task described

This first sample of writing comes from a worksheet that was devised to allow the learner to practise keeping notes that would be typical of those he might make in a diary. Like many writing tasks, this one is closely bound up with reading and the learner, Mark, has to follow the instructions, which direct him to make a note beside each day of the week of personal tasks he will carry out. There is a list of phrases supplied that Mark can use or even copy directly to complete the task. However, he opts to write in his own items for the week.

Because this is a worksheet and not an actual diary, the format is somewhat more guided and predictable than it would be in real life. The notes that Mark produced here give us some indication of his proficiency in writing.

Level of difficulty

This is a beginning-level writing task because it involves:

▌ very familiar words;

▌ short, familiar phrases only;

▌ phrases supplied to help writer; and

▌ a simple format (list layout).

Keeping notes

Fill in a date and a note for each day.
Use the list below or write your own.

Monday _go to Shop After work_

Tuesday _Dentists – 4-15 P.M._

Wednesday _start work at 9 o'clock_

Thursday _BANK After work_

Friday _HALf day – finish at 1 P.M._

Useful phrases

Doctor 3 o'clock	Shopping
Visit Mr, Daly 10 a.m.	Do Mrs. Ryan's Garden
Dog to vet	Day off
Start work 7 a.m.	Overtime worked – 6 to 10 p.m.

22/06/02

Mapping the cornerstones

Mark and Jack began by mapping the process cornerstones. This task did not allow Mark to show progress in depth of understanding and critical awareness or range of application so he and Jack left these blank on the form. They began by mapping process cornerstone 3 – fluency and independence.

Then they mapped Mark's progress in the knowledge and skills cornerstone under writing, again only filling in those elements that were relevant to Mark's learning plan.

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

The way Mark worked on this sample provides some evidence of his ability to write with some degree of autonomy. His tutor, Jack, said that Mark was able to carry out this writing activity completely on his own. Jack simply handed him the sheet and left him to work on it for about ten minutes.

Map 5.14   Independence in carrying out the task
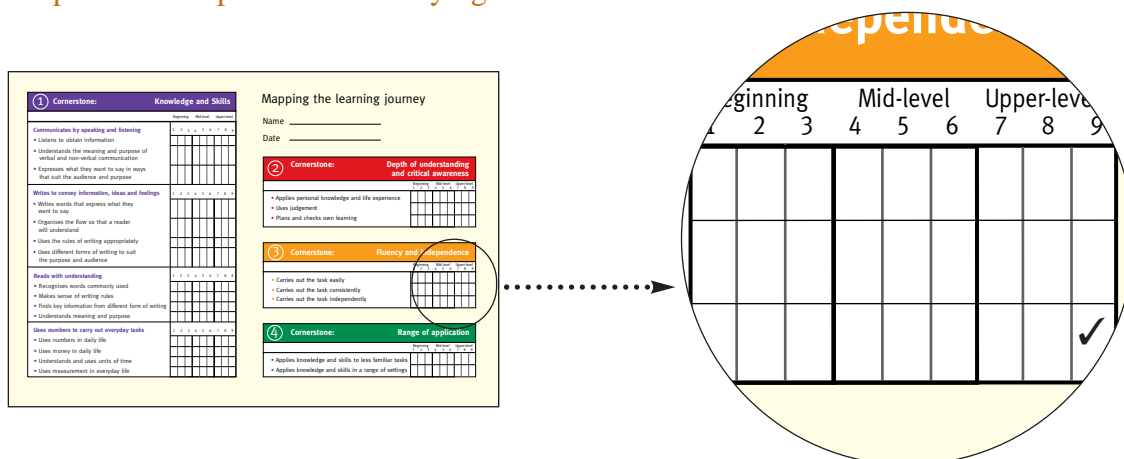
Because of this, they both agreed that Mark was at the top end of the scale for this element of fluency and independence (9 on the Mapping form). Mark and Jack then mapped his progress in knowledge and skills.

Process cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

This is a simple piece of writing. The vocabulary consists mostly of common words that Mark would encounter and use in his daily life. The lay-out he uses is uncomplicated: although these are phrases or half-sentences rather than single words, this is in effect a 'to-do' list written out to a supplied format. All of this indicates that as a writing activity it is quite basic, although not as basic as those tasks that require only one word or even a few letters to be inserted into a space provided. In these cases, where evidence of actual writing is very limited, it would most likely be possible to map using only one or two elements: 'uses the rules of writing appropriately ' and possibly ' writes words that express what s/he wants to say'.

However, this practise diary entry provides evidence of a wider range of writing abilities and Mark and his tutor Jack were able to map it on at least three of the four writing elements.

Map 5.15 Writes words that express what s/he wants to say
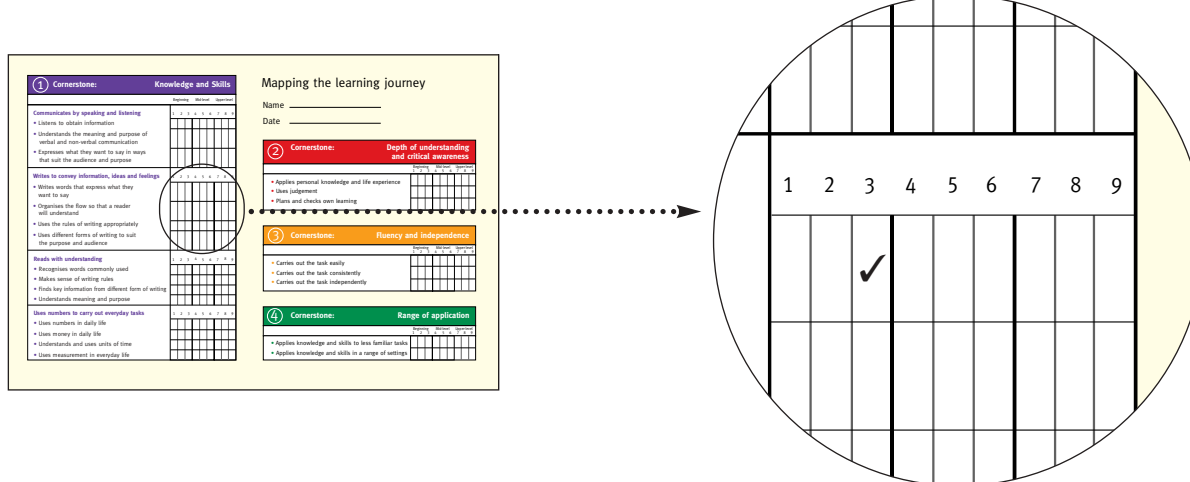
Mark's choice of vocabulary, though basic, was indeed appropriate for what he wanted to remember about the coming week. Because of this evidence he and Jack decided to place his progress at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Map 5.16 Uses the rules of writing appropriately
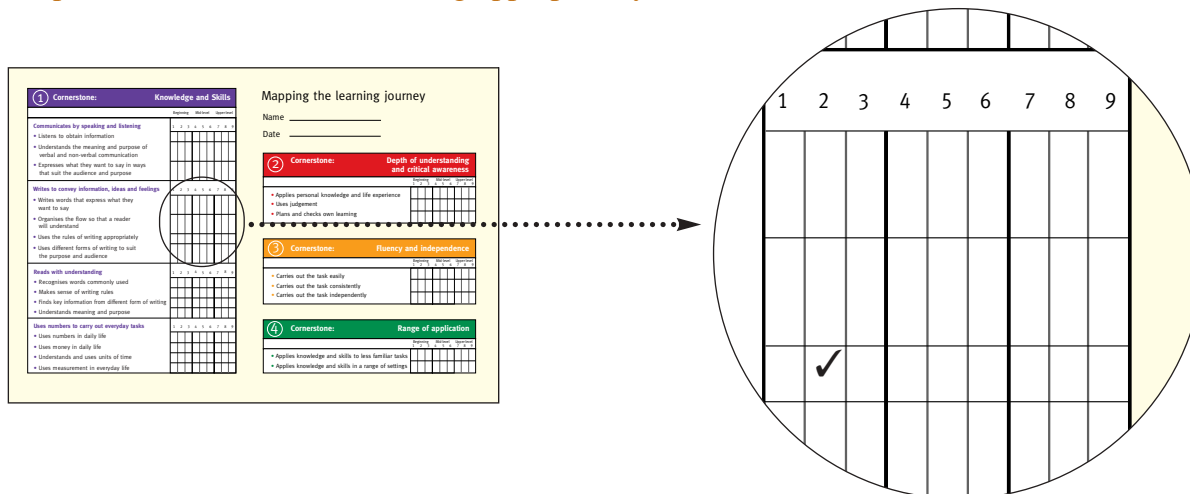
He had enough grasp of rules such as spelling and how to structure a phrase to ensure that his notes were completely legible.

That said, he did misspell a word – 'after' – and did not seem to distinguish between upper and lower case 'p', 's', 't' or 'r'. Nor did he use full stops at the end of his phrases, although he does for the abbreviation 'p.m'. He also handled the more difficult apostrophe – o'clock – correctly. So he is somewhat, though not completely, confident with the very basic rules. He therefore agreed with Jack that his progress on this element of writing was at the middle of beginning or 2 on the mapping form.

Although this is really a list written out in a supplied format, Mark did show some evidence of organisation and flow in his writing, as he had to sequence the words in a way which makes sense to the reader.

Map 5.17 Organises the flow so that a reader will understand

He completed this with great proficiency and so placed his progress here at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Finally, although the format is basic – a list of half-phrases in note form appended to the relevant day of the week – it is appropriate for its purpose, which is a personal record of what to do for the coming week; and also, for its audience, Mark himself. There is no danger that Mark will not be able to read his own writing or find that some task has been allocated to the wrong day. This is therefore a fairly basic task, for the most part, accomplished well.

Map 5.18 Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience

Again because of the evidence of proficiency on this element supplied in the task, Mark and Jack placed his progress at the top end of beginning or 3 on the mapping form. With a bit more practise on using the rules of writing appropriately, Mark has shown that he is ready to begin a mid-level writing task.

Sample 2 - Mid-level: visit to a Georgian house

The task described

Number 29 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin, is a restored Georgian house that is open to the public for guided tours. Maeve, the tutor, arranged for her reading and writing group to see around the house and afterwards asked them to write something about it. This sample shows one piece that Katie, the learner, produced after the visit. Maeve tells us that although Katie had already practised writing words, phrases and even sentences, she had never before written at this length, nor without much support.

Sample 2 – Mid-level: visit to a Georgian House

No. 29

What was the kitchen like?

The Kitchen Was Very Big
it had Lots of old Furniture.
it hard ~~lots~~ of Bole's or ~~Tea~~ ~~Plate~~ on it
~~Lest~~ Bowls Rolling Pin
Lots

What was the housekeeper's room like?

It hard a Bed a Widon in it
and a Tadle. Window

What was the living room like?

With I saw a TaBLE
~~Wet~~ ~~What~~ a Box on it. it Was a Tea
Box ~~Be~~ Der Was a Mirror and a bit of
Wood Be Side it.
it was for her Mekup

What was the bedroom like?

It was high a small

What was the children's room like?
two
it harde to Beds in it
and two Big Houses the Toys to pLey with it

Mapping the cornerstones

Katie and her tutor Maeve filled in only those sections of the mapping form that were relevant to the evidence of progress provided by the task. In this case they began with the process cornerstones and mapped fluency and independence and depth of understanding and critical awareness. They left range of application blank as it was not applicable to Katie's learning plan. In knowledge and skills they focused only on the elements of writing that were relevant to the task.

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

The many crossings-out and corrections, which makes this page look rather untidy, were actually instigated by Katie herself who was clearly able to tell by this stage when she had probably made a mistake. This indicates a degree of autonomy in her work.

Map 5.19 Independence in carrying out the task

Because of this Katie and Maeve mapped her independence at the top of mid-level or 6 on the mapping form. Katie then wanted to look at her progress in depth of understanding and critical awareness.

Process cornerstone 2:
Depth of understanding and critical awareness

Katie is obviously drawing on her personal experience, gleaned from the visit to number 29, in this piece of writing. She uses her knowledge and applies it to a new task; and also on her knowledge of spelling, punctuation and how sentences work.

Map 5.20 Applies personal knowledge and life experience
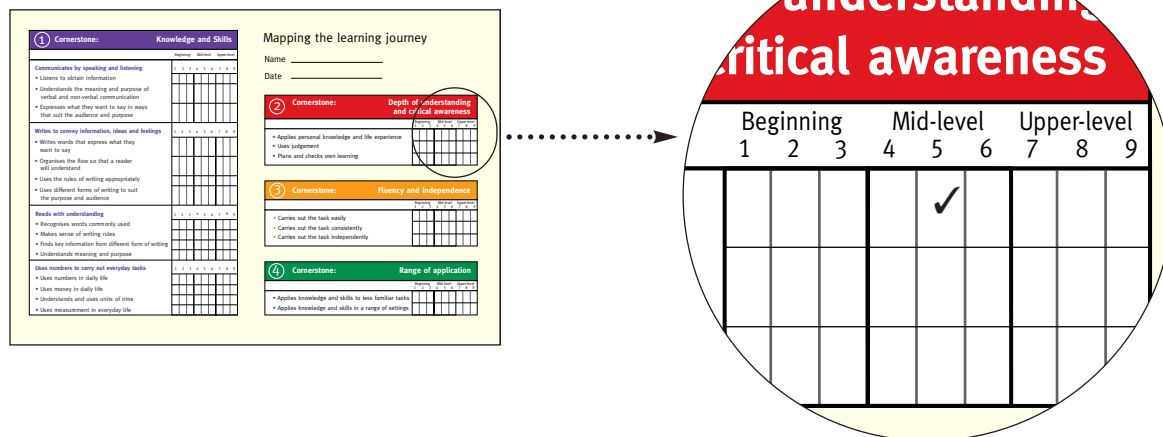
Katie achieved some but not great proficiency in applying her personal knowledge and life experience so she and Maeve agreed that her progress was at the middle stage of this mid-level task (5 on the mapping form). They then moved on to look at Katie's progress under knowledge and skills.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

In this task, the questions do provide Katie with some guidance and support as to what she might consider when recalling her visit to number 29. This is less advanced than an open invitation to simply write about the visit. At the same time, the questions are open enough to give Katie the opportunity to make a personal contribution to the content. There are many different aspects of the house that she could have chosen to describe, even in answers to these questions. This potential for having a personal input makes this a more difficult task than the fairly predictable content which would be generated, by supplying captions to a picture story, for example.

Map 5.21 Writes words that express what they want to say
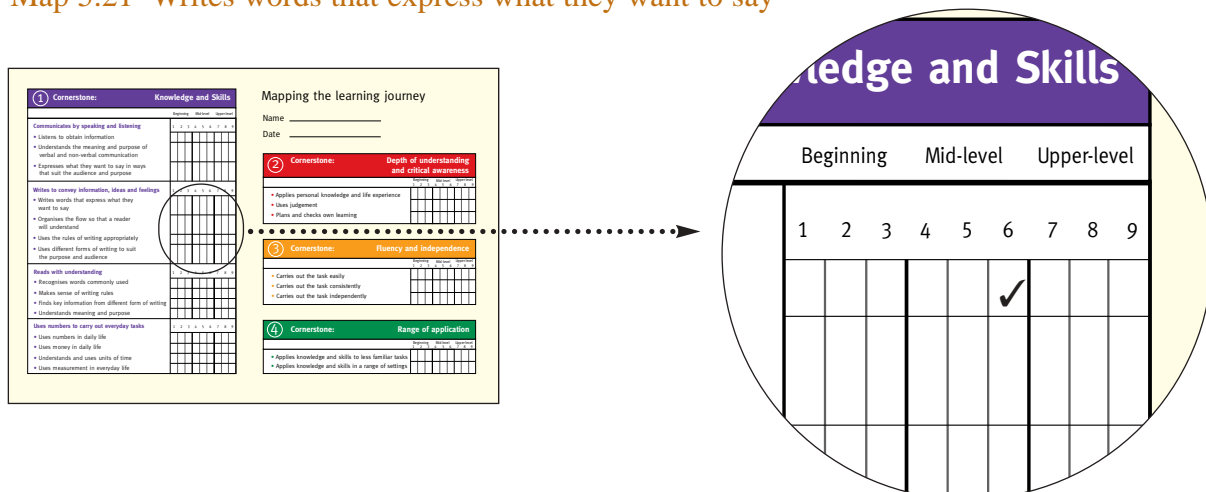
Katie showed great proficiency in expressing what she had to say so she and Maeve agreed that her progress was at the top end of mid-level (6 on the mapping form).

Map 5.22 Organises the flow so that a reader will understand
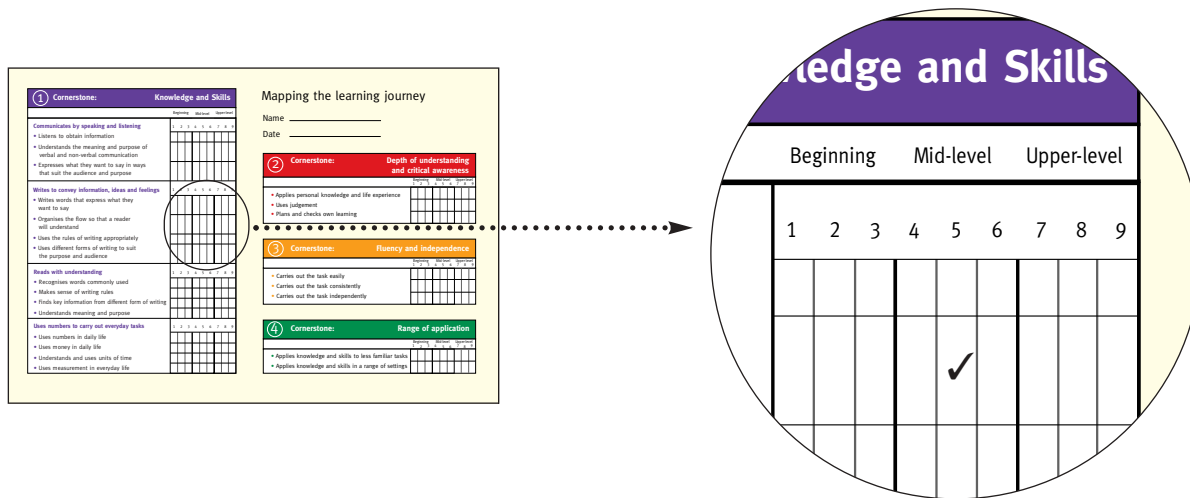
In this case, Katie not only chooses the right words to convey what the rooms were like; she also uses some descriptive words and expands on the bare detail. Sentences are correctly structured and there is even a degree of progression from one to the next, although this is somewhat disjointed. Nevertheless, the flow is easy to follow so they agreed that her progress was at 5 on the mapping form.

Map 5.23 Uses the rules of writing appropriately
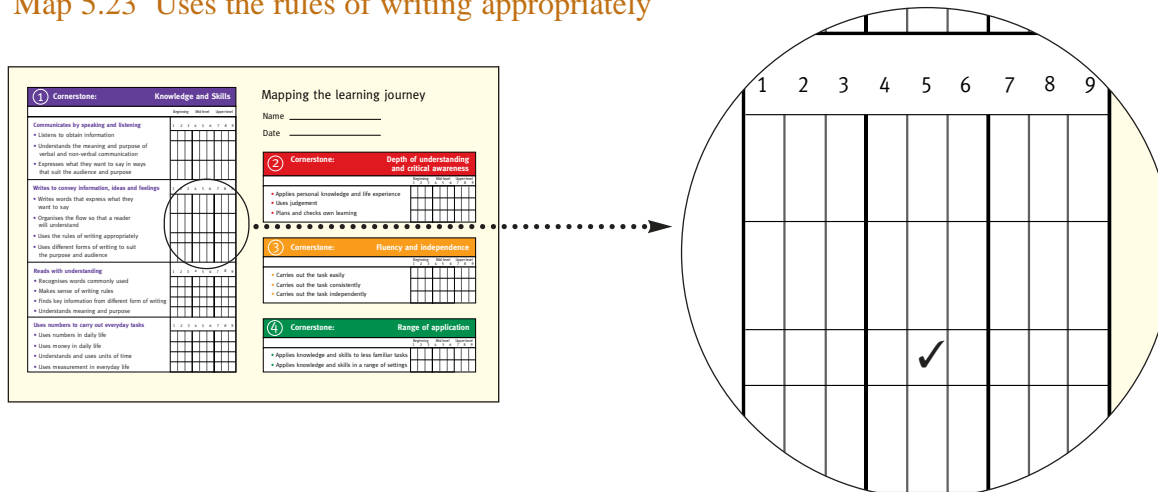
Katie and Maeve agreed that she showed some but not great proficiency on this writing element and so placed her progress at 5 on the mapping form.

Map 5.24 Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience

Her spelling and punctuation are not perfect, but not so poor as to make her comments difficult to understand. And the format and tone are quite appropriate to the context, which was to make a note of things in the visit that she remembered. So Katie and Maeve agreed that Katie's progress was at 6 on the mapping form. Katie's proficiency in completing this task has shown that she is moving towards approaching an upper-level writing task. The upper-level sample of writing below is an example of one of the more demanding activities, free writing.

Sample 3 – Upper level: writing about the lotto

The task described

The piece of free writing below is a demanding activity. This means that apart from the initial idea – in this case, a fantasy about what the learner, Anne Marie, would spend money on if she won the lotto – the writer is left completely on her own to decide on the content and format.

Level of difficulty

This is an upper-level writing task because it involves:

▌   some less usual words and some description;

▌   sentences that are longer and more complicated;

▌   a continuous flow of sentences and paragraphs; and

▌   free writing – almost total learner input.

Imagine you won the lotto

If I won a Million pounds

The first thing I would do when I recieve My win fall would be to ~~by~~ buy a ~~big~~ ^{big} house in the Country with a large garden for my children. A car would be my next priority, A B.M.W ~~wagon~~ preferably. I would Need to take some driving ^{Preferably} ~~lessay~~ lessons.

Next on my list is ~~my~~ a holiday in Australia blue skies, sandy beaches and ~~got~~ great night life, My children will Enjoy ~~the~~ their first flight. If I have money left I will invest some in savings Bonds for my children future I would like to spend ~~some~~ a little on a drama course for my daughter.

Mapping the process cornerstones

Again Anne Marie and her tutor, Janice, began by mapping the relevant process cornerstones. In this case the only relevant cornerstone was fluency and independence. They then moved on to map the relevant elements of writing under the knowledge and skills cornerstone.

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

Given the lack of supplied structure within the format of this activity, unlike the last two writing tasks (Mark and Katie's work) that had format and questions to guide the learner – we can say that Anne Marie produced this piece quite independently. Her tutor Janice confirms this, and says that the only help Anne Marie got was the spellings of a very few words: 'preferably' and 'priority'.

Map 5.25 Independence in carrying out the task
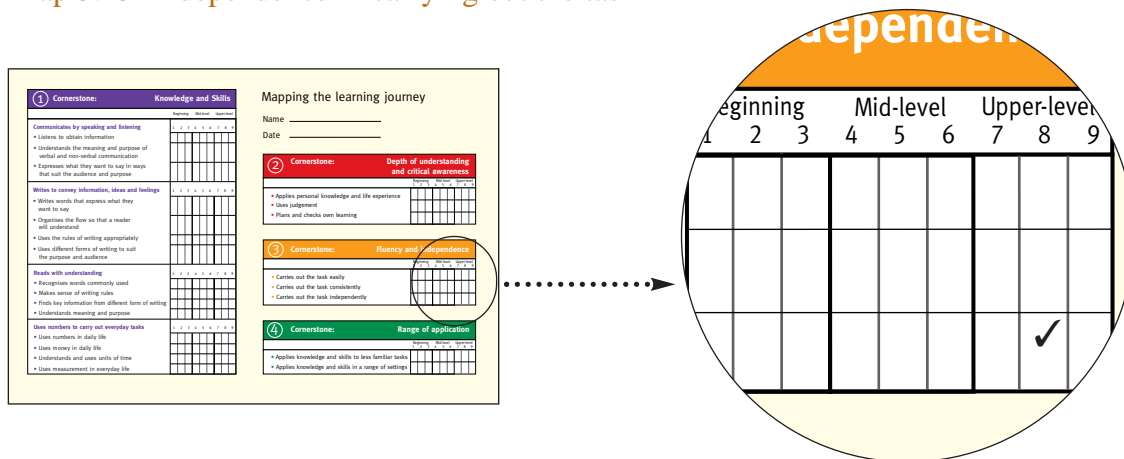
So Anne Marie and Maeve placed Anne Marie's independence in carrying out the task at the middle of upper level (8 on the mapping form). Maeve and Anne Marie then moved on to map Anne Marie's progress in writing content.

Cornerstone 1
Mapping the knowledge and skills cornerstone

Even though the fifteen lines are not perfect, this is a substantial amount of continuous writing. There are a few spelling errors: 'winfall' for 'windfall' and 'litt' for 'little', for example; and some slips of punctuation where some full stops are missed. That said, the spelling and punctuation are good and the sentences are somewhat more complex than the basic subject-verb-object structure. Anne Marie also corrects some of her own mistakes, for example replacing 'by' with 'buy'.

Map 5.26 Uses the rules of writing appropriately

Anne Marie showed some but not total proficiency on this element so she placed her progress at 8 on the mapping form.

Once supplied with the title, Anne Marie has to decide on how she would spend the money, which means that the content here is generated by Anne Marie herself. This gives her the opportunity to show how well she can select and use words to express her own ideas and also, whether she can create a coherent sequence that the reader can follow easily.

Map 5.27 Writes words that express what s/he wants to say

Maeve and Anne Marie agreed that she had shown great proficiency on this element of writing and so placed her at the top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Anne Marie's ideas flow logically from first priorities to later options and she manages to convey the atmosphere of her fantasy holiday in Australia by her choice of descriptive words. She even pays attention to stylistic features: in line 2 she replaces 'large' with ' big', probably to avoid repeating 'large' which she uses in the next sentence.

Map 5.28 Organises the flow so that a reader will understand
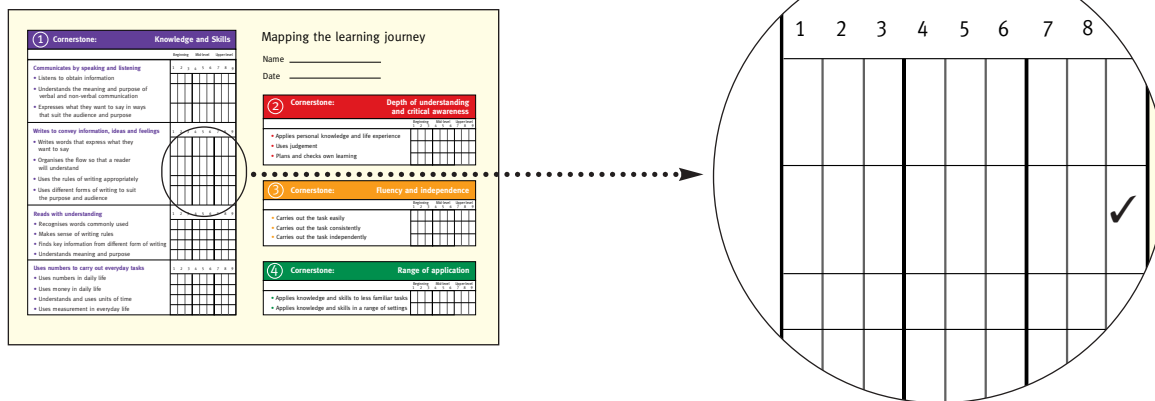
Again she shows great proficiency so her progress on this element was at the top end of upper. Anne Marie is very nearly ready to move on to a task at FETAC Foundation level of difficulty.

Reads with understanding

Sample 1 – Begining level: reading labels

The task described

The first piece of reading contains a set of labels taken from the packaging of common household items such as tea, soup and salt. The learner, Angela, has to identify each of the items by reading the labels. She shows that she is able to do this by writing the one-word answer in the space provided.

As a reading activity, this is essentially a word-recognition task. It is complicated slightly by the fact that the words that Angela has to recognise are not the actual items – bread, beans, cereal – but rather, their brand names which are found on the packages – Pat the Baker, Batchelors, Kelloggs. These are groceries which are in common use and it is likely that Angela would be familiar with them from her personal experience. Indeed Maureen, her tutor, tells us that this is true.

Level of difficulty

This is a beginning-level reading task because it involves:

❙   single words/short phrases only

❙   household items, therefore very familiar

❙   support from simple graphics and logos

❙   word-recognition only

What are these well-known products?

1

2

3

4

5

6
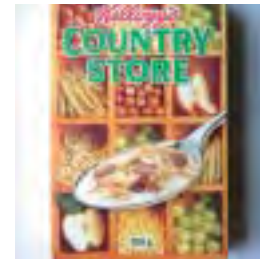
7

8

9

1. BISCUITS
2. BREAD
3. POWDER
4. BEANS
5. BAR
6. FACE CREAM
7. CEREAL
8. TABLETS
9. CRISPS
10.
11.
12.

Mapping the cornerstones

Angela and Maureen mapped this task first on all three process cornerstones and then on the knowledge and skills cornerstone under the relevant elements of reading.

Process cornerstone 2
Depth of understanding and critical awareness

The familiarity of the brands gives Angela an opportunity to show some of her prior experience, in this case the very specific and concrete knowledge of the brand names of things found on many shopping lists.

Map 5.29 Applies personal knowledge and life experience
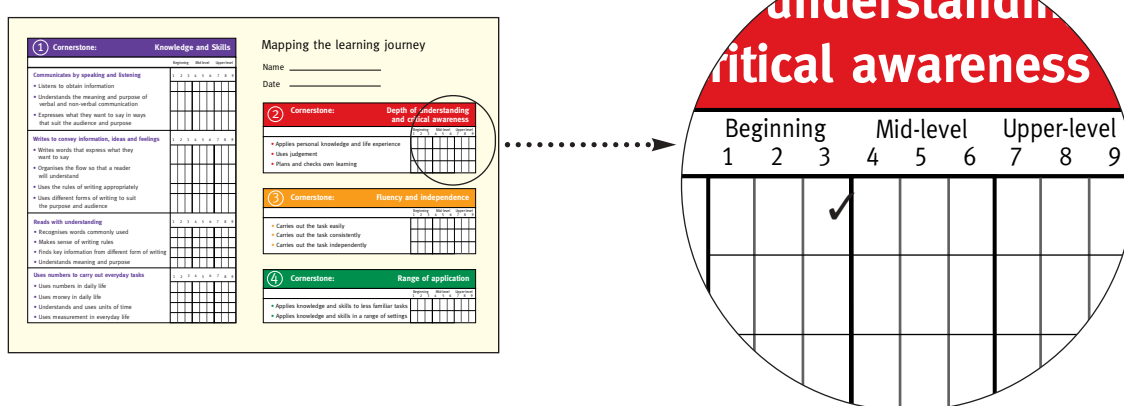
Because of this she agreed with Maureen that her progress on this element of depth of understanding and critical awareness was at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

In this case, Maureen tells us that Angela carried out this activity on her own with no help at all. Therefore, although it is a simple task, it is clear that Angela is very comfortable with these words and labels, which means that for this activity, she is high on independence.

Map 5.30 Independence in carrying out the task
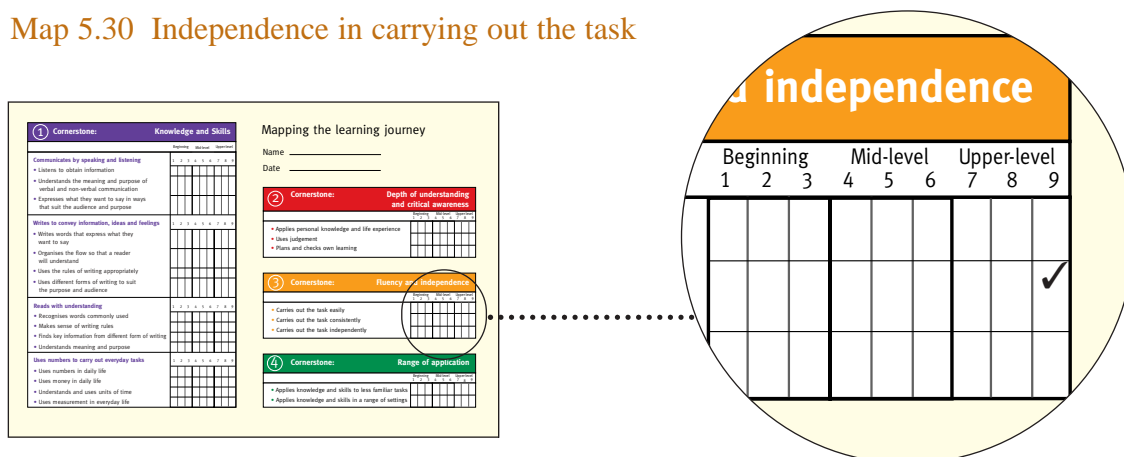
With all this in mind Angela and Maureen agreed that her proficiency on this element of fluency and independence was at the very top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Process cornerstone 4
Range of application

As this task was carried out in the training centre, which was a very familiar setting, although Angela got everything right, evidence of a wider range of application is low. If she had picked these items out from the shelves of her local supermarket, this would indicate that she was able to apply the same skills in real-life, public situations.

Map 5.31 Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings
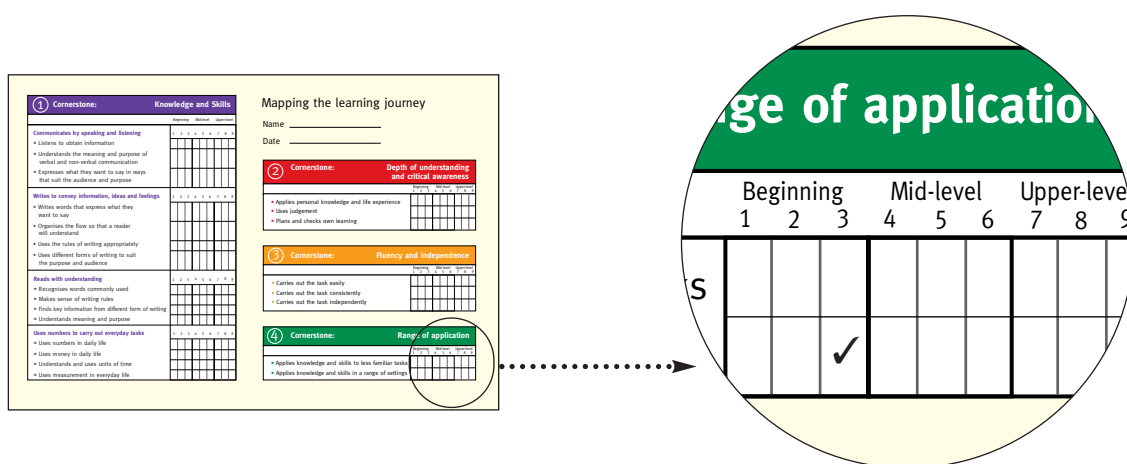
So Angela and Maureen placed her degree of proficiency on this element of range of application at 3 on the mapping form.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

The actual reading skill involved here is at a basic level, even though some of the words – 'Mikado', for example, or 'Paracetemol' – are not in themselves very easy. However, they are so familiar that it is likely that most people, if not from shopping at least from TV advertisements and from billboards and general knowledge, could be expected to recognise them on sight. Angela is also supported by the graphics and in some cases by logos which act as signifiers of the products, especially in advertisements.

Reading tasks that consist of single words or lists of single words or very short phrases do not usually give the learner much scope to show how well they can grasp meaning or handle the rules of reading and writing, such as punctuation. However, they can tell us about the reader's ability to recognise vocabulary.

Map 5.32 Recognises words commonly used
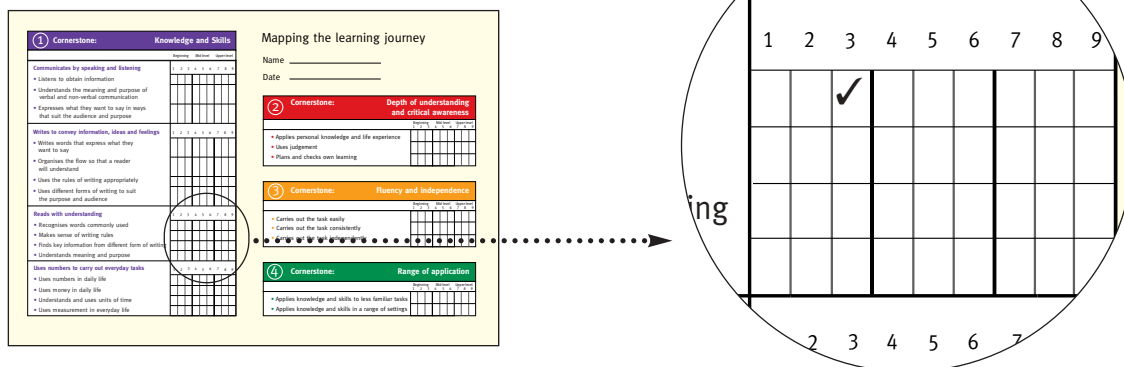
So on this element of reading Angela has shown great proficiency at a beginning level (3 on the mapping form). We have included a second beginning level reading task below to illustrate how a tutor (Fiona) and learner (Maria) mapped progress on a more difficult beginning level task than reading labels.

Sample 2 – Beginning Level: reading sentences

The task described

This second sample is also a beginning-level reading task but at a higher level than the reading of labels. Taken together, these two pieces show that 'beginning' – and indeed, the other levels as well – describe a range of difficulty, rather than a single point. There are easier and harder reading tasks, even within the beginning level.

This set of sentences comes from a worksheet that was specially designed to give Maria practice in reading full sentences aloud and responding to the punctuation – the capital letters and the full stops. She is not being asked to use these, in the sense of writing them or even inserting them into unpunctuated passages, but rather, simply to show that she knows the effect that these basic conventions have on words which are grouped together. This is made much easier by the format: every sentence starts and finishes on the same line, which reinforces the impact of the capital letter/full stop.

Task level

This is a beginning-level reading task because it involves:

❚ understanding less familiar vocabulary;

❚ Responding to capitals and full stops, with support of format (line end); and

❚ Short sentences, very simple in structure.

Ann works in Dublin.

Ann will go to Dublin on Monday.

She will go on the train at 7.30.

Ann will get into work at 9.00 a.m.

She will go home from work at 5.30.

Mapping the cornerstones

Maria and Fiona mapped this task only on the relevant elements of reading under the knowledge and skills cornerstone. They left the rest of the mapping form blank as it was not relevant to where Maria was at in her learning plan.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

This is clearly a more advanced reading task than the grocery labels as it contains not just single words or even phrases, but whole sentences. Even so, these are all simple sentences. The words used are all familiar and Maria would recognise them on sight. As well as this, the sentences all follow a very simple structure, with none of the complicated clauses or descriptions that make extra demands on a reader.

Map 5.33 Recognises words commonly used
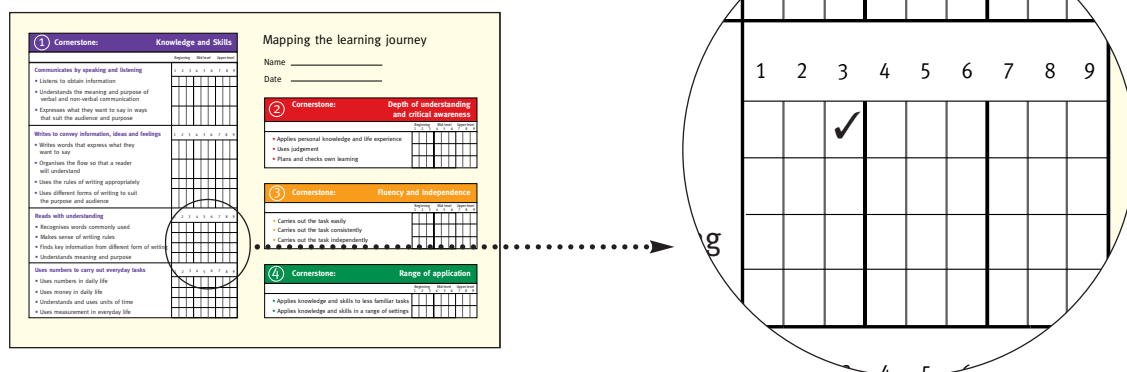
Maria showed great proficiency at a beginning level in recognising common words so she placed her progress at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form).

Map 5.34 Makes sense of writing rules
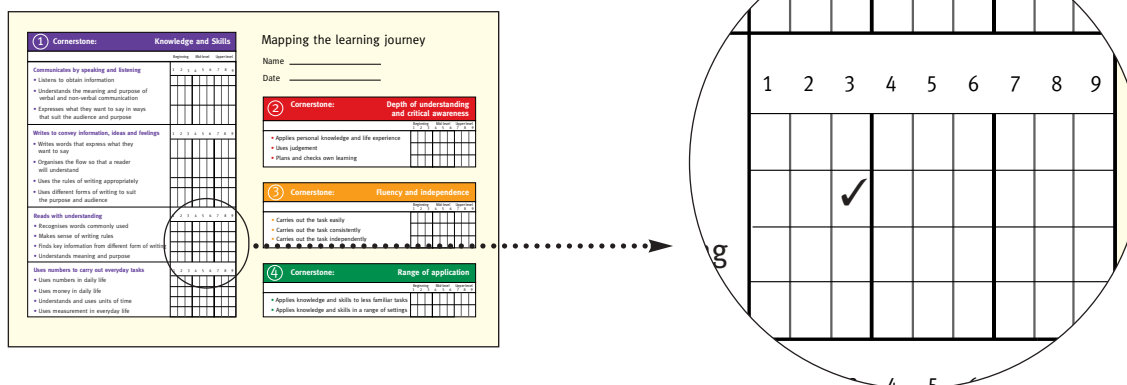
Fiona tells us that Maria was able to read the sentences aloud and stopped at the end of each sentence, which indicates both that she could read the actual vocabulary and also, handle the rules of punctuation mentioned. So she and Maria decided that Maria once again showed great proficiency at a beginning level and they placed her at 3 on the mapping form.

Map 5.35 Understands meaning and purpose
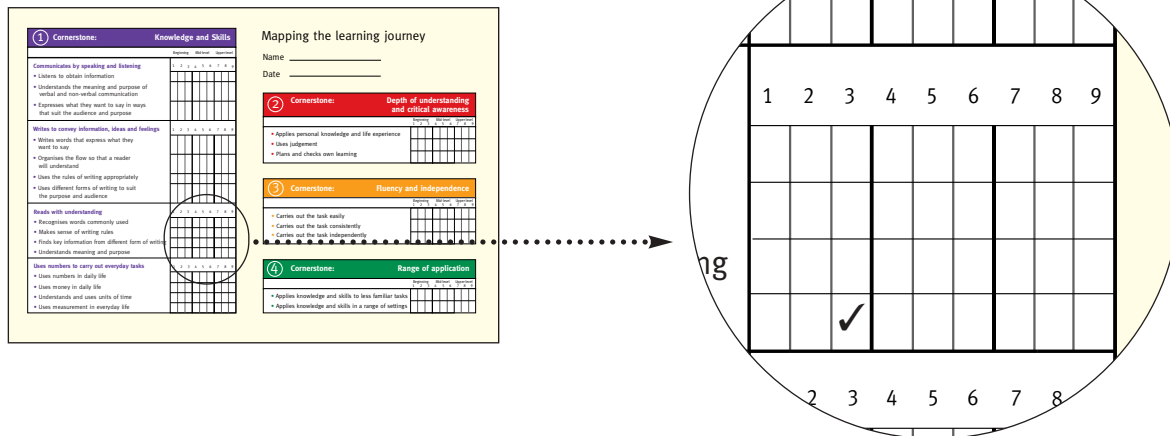
Maria also correctly answered questions about the piece. This indicated that she was able to follow the meaning as well.   Once more they agreed that Maria's progress on this element of reading was at the top end of beginning (3 on the mapping form). Therefore, although it is less rooted in real-life activity, as a piece of practice reading this task provides evidence of several aspects of Maria's skills: her grasp of vocabulary, punctuation and meaning at a beginning level.

Sample 3 – Mid-level: looking up a catalogue

The task described

Brian, the learner who read this next piece, has a daughter who is interested in music and especially in the drums, which she plays. His tutor, Sean, found a sales catalogue for children's toys that included musical instruments and photocopied a page that describes a range of toy drum kits and their prices.

Level of difficulty

This is a mid-level reading task because it involves:

❙ some specialised vocabulary;

❙ format and phrasing specific to a sales catalogue;

❙ using a range of strategies and context clues to get facts and meaning; and

❙ mixed level of difficulty, the most demanding parts at mid-level.

1. €29.99
Digital Drumset with Stool
Includes a sing-s-long microphone. Colour lights flash while you play. 8 diffewrent rythms. Record and play back facility. Batteries required.

2. €54.99
Junior Drum Set
Top quality drum kit. Set includes bass drum, large and small tom-toms, cymbal, footpedal, chair and 2 drum sticks required.

3. €4.99
Tamber Drum
Includes drum stick

4. €34.99
Golden Drums
Features bass drum, two tone drums and cymbals. Professional pedal drum and drumsticks. Tom-tom drum with individual stand, snare case with individual stand and stool. Realistic finish and sizes.

5. €14.99
My first Band Drum Set
Includes bass drum, small drum, 2 tone drums, cymbal, footpedal, chair and 2 drum sticks.

6. €14.99
Jungle Drums
Features bass drum, two sounds attach drums and cymbal. Tom-tom and snare case with individual stand. Professional footpedal and sticks. Stool included.

1. How much does (item) number two cost?
2. How much will 'My First Band Drum Set' cost?
3. What (features) are on the 'Golden Drums'?
4. What is the total price of (items) no. 2+6?
5. If you were to buy the 'Tambor Drum' at £4.99, what (else) is (included) in the price?

1. Item number two will cost you £54.99
2. My first Band Drum Set will cost £14.99
3. Golden Drums features bassdrum two tone drum and cymbals
4. ~~The total cost of items 2+6 are~~ £76.98
5. drum sticks are included in the price

Excellent Work

Mapping the cornerstones

Brian and his tutor Sean mapped this task only on those cornerstones and elements that were relevant to Brian's learning plan. They began by looking at the process cornerstones – depth of understanding and critical awareness and fluency and independence. Then they looked at the relevant elements of reading under the knowledge and skills cornerstone. They left the rest of the mapping form blank.

Process cornerstone 2
Depth of understanding and critical awareness

Brian and his tutor Sean began by looking at the process cornerstone – depth of understanding and critical awareness.

Map 5.36 Applies personal knowledge and life experience
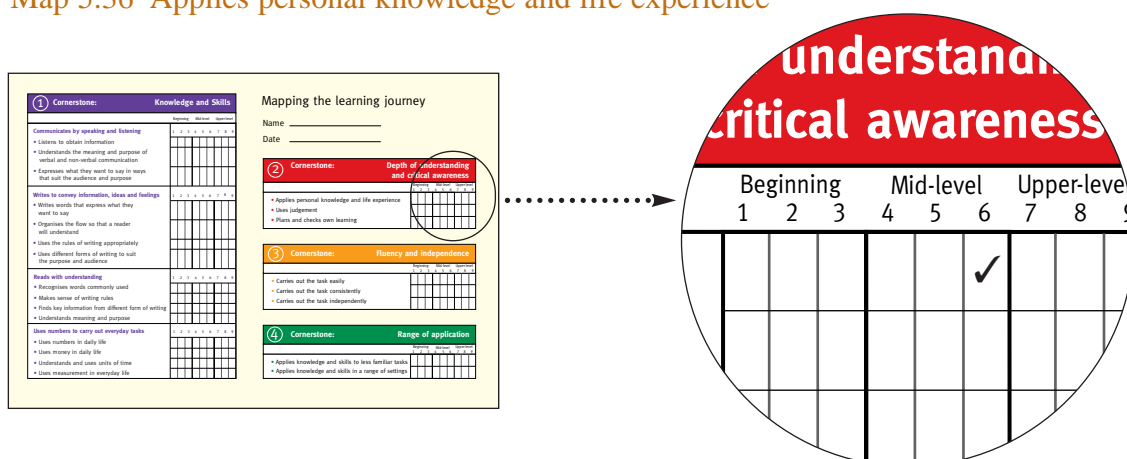
Brian showed great proficiency in completing this mid-level task under this element so he and Sean agreed that his progress was at the top end of mid-level or 6 on the mapping form.

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

The page accompanying the catalogue extract contains a list of five handwritten questions that Sean devised to allow Brian to demonstrate his ability to use this page for practical purposes. These questions are of varying degrees of difficulty.

The first two ask Brian to locate specific pieces of information, the prices of drum sets. However, questions 3 and 4 place more demands on his reading skills, firstly in the vocabulary contained in the questions themselves. Sean asked Brian to read the questions aloud before trying to answer them and was able to see that some words –' item', 'features', 'included' - were difficult for him.

In fact, if Sean had not been there to help him with these key words, Brian would probably have got stuck at the stage of figuring out what the questions were asking him to do. He was able to manage some parts of the task on his own, but he still needed crucial support to understand the questions. He agreed with Sean that his handling of the task was not very independent.

Map 5.37 Independence in carrying out the task
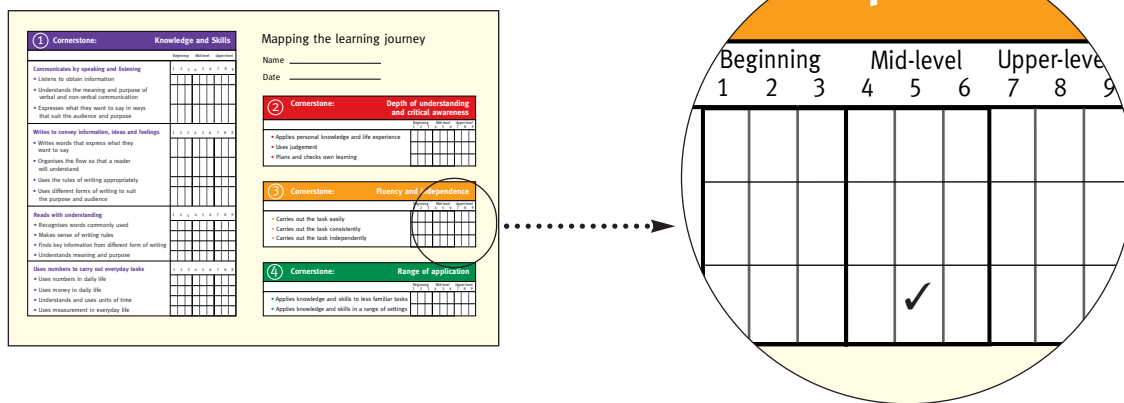
Brian showed that he had some but not great proficiency in carrying out the task independently so he agreed with Sean that his progress was at point 5 on the mapping form. Even so, his difficulty seems to have been not so much with the page or the questions as a whole, as with a few key words – he needed some help with a few parts of the task. If he spent some time learning these we could expect to see an improvement in his independence in other similar tasks.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

It is clear that this activity makes reading demands at different levels of difficulty. Locating a specific piece of information that is supported by graphics or visuals – in this case, photographs and captions – is a fairly basic task. Extracting the meaning from partial sentences – which questions 3 and 4 demand – is more difficult. As well as this, the actual vocabulary used to describe the drum-kits is specialised, although given Sean's particular interest in the drums, he probably knows most or all of these words. All of this indicates that the most difficult parts of the task are at mid-level – and if we consider the whole task as information about Brian's proficiency, we can think of this overall as an activity of a mid-level of difficulty.

Map 5.38 Recognises words commonly used
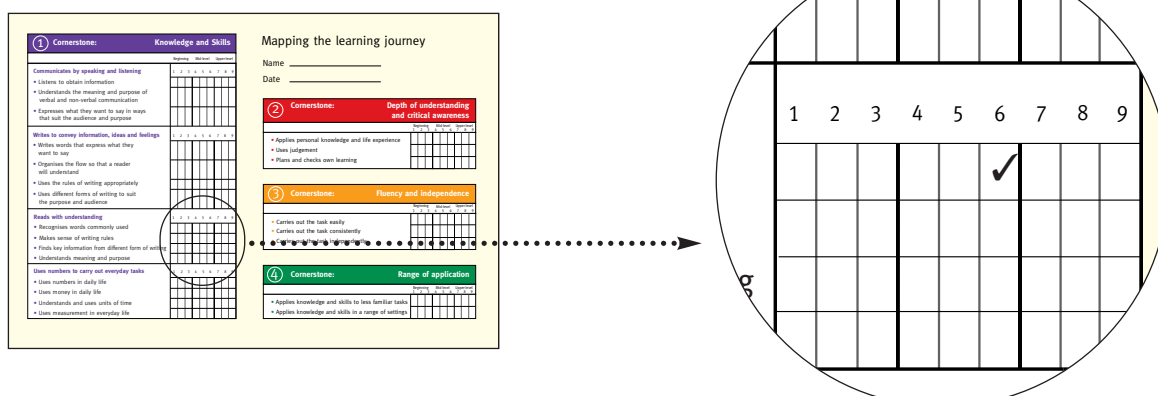
Brian showed great proficiency in recognising common words so he and Sean agreed that his progress was at the top of mid-level or 6 on the mapping form.

Map 5.39 Finds key information from different forms of writing
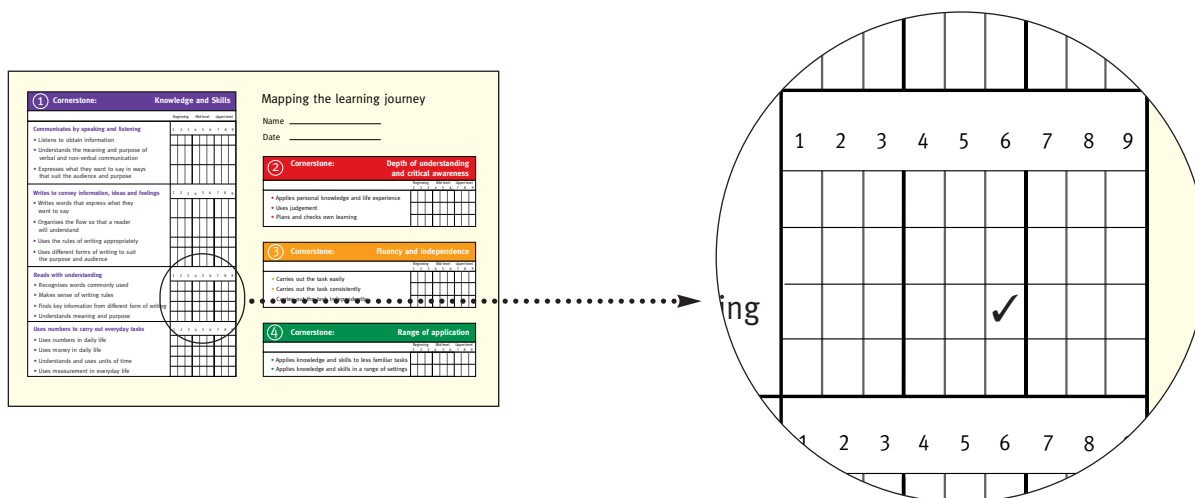
Sean and Brian also agreed that Brian showed great proficiency at mid-level in finding key information on the catalogue page. So again they placed Brian's progress at 6 on the mapping form.

Sean was able to give another interesting insight into the way in which Brian approached the more difficult reading tasks in questions 3 and 4. Instead of depending totally on the short written descriptions of the drum-kits, Brian used the photographs and his own knowledge of what they should include, to get the correct answers. He was therefore using a range of strategies – reading actual words, being guided by the format, the captions and photographs, as well as personal knowledge – which combined to give him the correct information. So Brian showed great proficiency in finding key information at mid-level (6 on the mapping form).

Finally, it is worth noting that questions 4 and 5 could be mapped for numeracy as well as for writing. Sean tells us that Brian did the sums instantly in his head and got the right answers with no problem. This is an example of the 'spikiness' of many people's proficiency in such tasks – that is, strengths and weaknesses can be very specific, rather than 'across the board'. If Brian had been left to himself to work on the addition of prices, he might not have managed it, not because of lack of proficiency with numbers but because of a specific gap in the reading of certain words. Because many or most real-life activities are made up of a combination of different areas of knowledge and skill, it is important to have a way of identifying what the particular problem might be in a real-life task.

Sample 4 – Upper level: reading about a rescue

The task described

This short article was taken from an evening newspaper and gives an account of a sea rescue that took place off the west coast.   Although it is a short passage, it has several features that make it difficult rather than easy for Peter, the learner, to follow.

Level of difficulty

This is an upper-level reading task because it involves:

❚ columns and small print;

❚ long sentences and paragraphs;

❚ support from graphics and logos; and

❚ word-recognition only.

Four rescued after boat capsizes

FOUR people have been saved in a dramatic sea rescue off the Cliffs of Moher in Co. Clare after their boat capsized.
The woman and three men were picked up after they made a call from a mobile phone to the Coast Guard.

A Navy spokesman said the vessel had been close by when it overheard the coast guard discussing the rescue operation and went immediately to their aid.
The four locals spent 30 minutes in the water when their rigid inflatable boat turned over.

Mapping the cornerstones

Two process cornerstones were relevant to Peter's learning plan – fluency and independence and range of application. Peter and his tutor, Frank, also mapped Peter's progress in relation to the relevant elements of reading under knowledge and skills.

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

Worth noting is the degree of fluency and independence with which Peter carried out this task. He did stumble when reading aloud but only once or twice; and he was able to do all of this with no real help from his tutor.

Map 5.40 Ease in carrying out the task
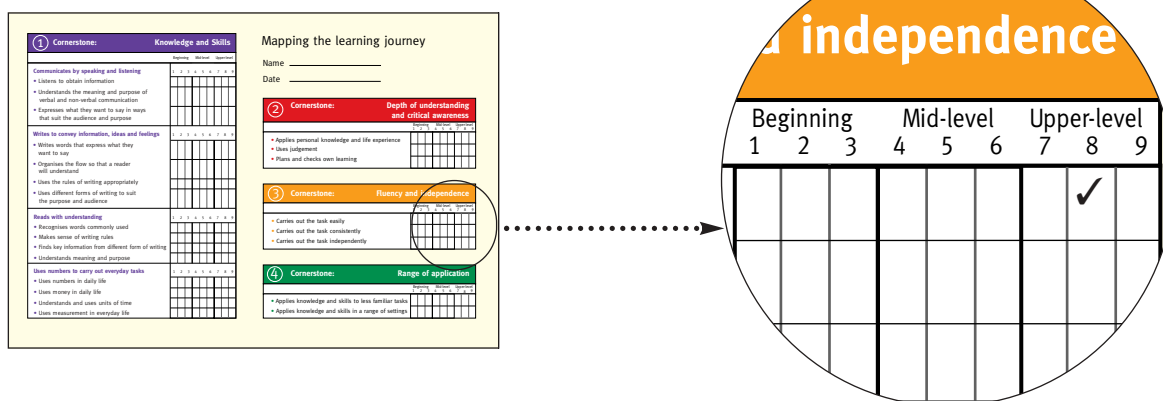
Peter showed some but not great proficiency at a high level in his ease in carrying out the task so he and Frank agreed to place his progress at 8 on the mapping form.

Map 5.41 Independence in carrying out the task
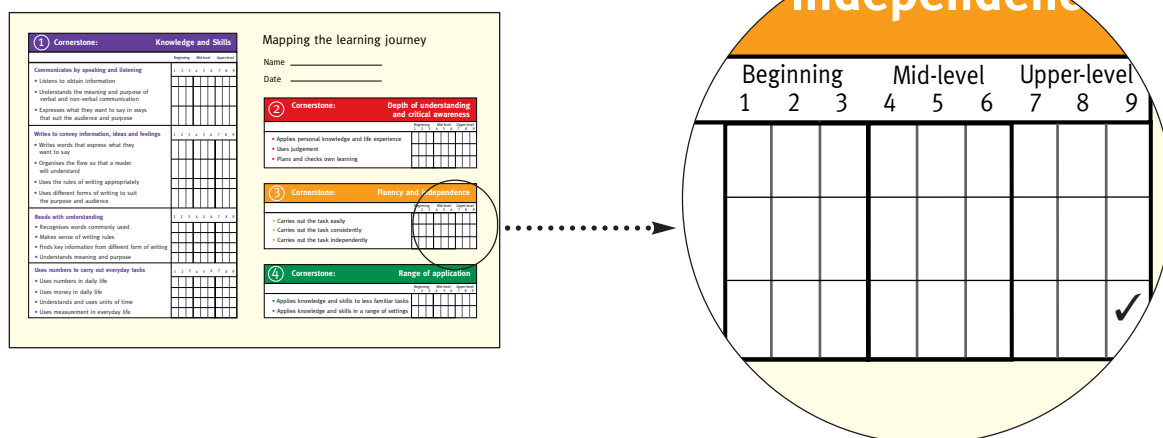
Peter carried out this task very independently so he and Frank placed his progress at the very top of the scale for this element (9 on the mapping form).

Process cornerstone 4
Range of Application

The learning environment was very safe and familiar to Peter and although he carried out the task with great competence, we do not yet have any evidence of how well he might cope with a similar task in a more public and stressful situation.

Map 5.42 Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings
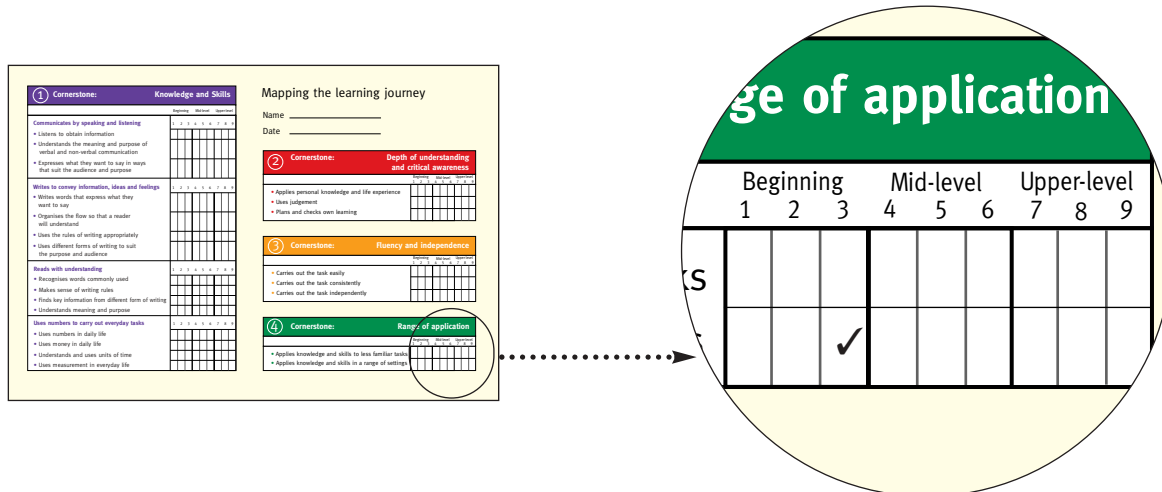
So Peter and Frank placed his progress at the top end of beginning for this element or 3 on the mapping form.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

The most obvious feature of this task is the format: newspaper articles have a special lay-out which means that although Peter had been used to reading from left to right in most of the texts he had worked with before, he now has to factor in reading in columns from top to bottom as well.

It is true that this format is very familiar to people who are used to handling or even just seeing newspapers being read by other people. However, reading in columns usually involves coping with small, closely spaced print and sometimes words that are hyphenated at the end of lines.

These conventions are all more advanced than those typical of beginning and mid-level reading tasks. As well as this, the sentences in this article are relatively long and are certainly more complex in structure than the bullet points or simple phrases met at the more beginning levels. Peter's tutor Frank tells us that he was able to make sense of these conventions when he read this article aloud and stumbled only twice when he met the words hyphenated at the line endings.

Map 5.43 Makes sense of writing rules
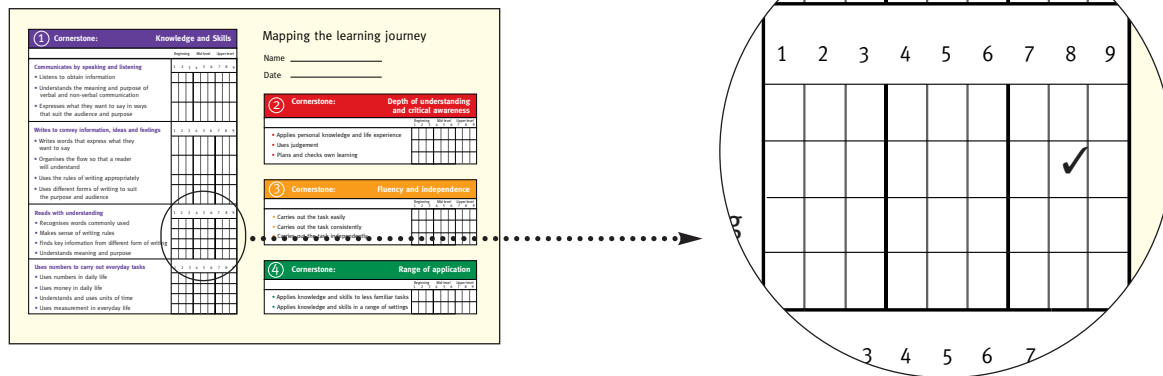
As a result Peter and Frank decided to place Peter's progress at the middle of upper level or 8 on the mapping form.

Frank was also interested to know how much of the content Peter was actually able to understand. As we know, the fact that a learner can read a text out loud does not necessarily indicate that s/he has grasped its meaning. To explore this question, Frank discussed the article with Peter and after some oral questions and answers he gave a written response to four questions.

All of this showed Frank that Peter was able to read the rather unusual vocabulary contained in the text: 'capsized', 'dramatic' and 'inflatable' are not really everyday words for a city-dweller. He also managed to give correct factual answers to specific questions such as 'how long were they in the water?'

Map 5.44 Recognises words commonly used
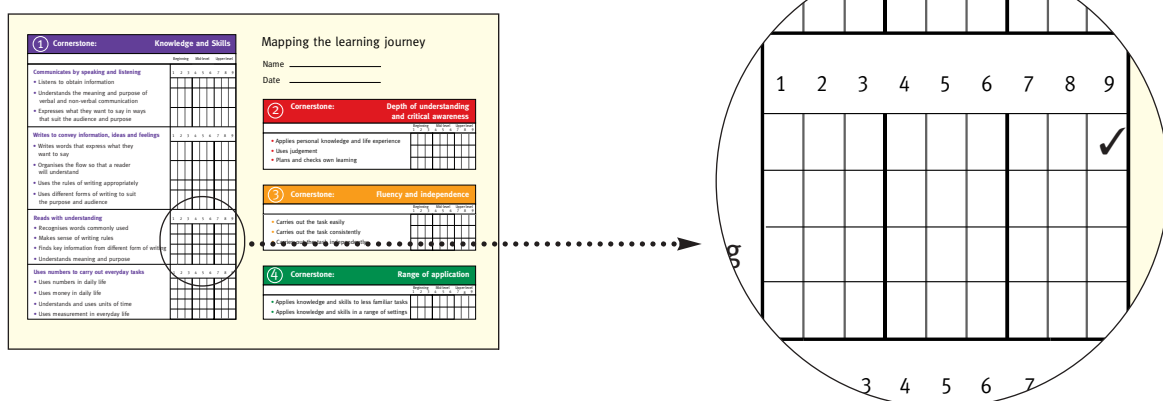
Peter showed great proficiency in recognising common words so he agreed with Frank that his progress on this element was at the top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Map 5.45 Finds key information from different forms of writing
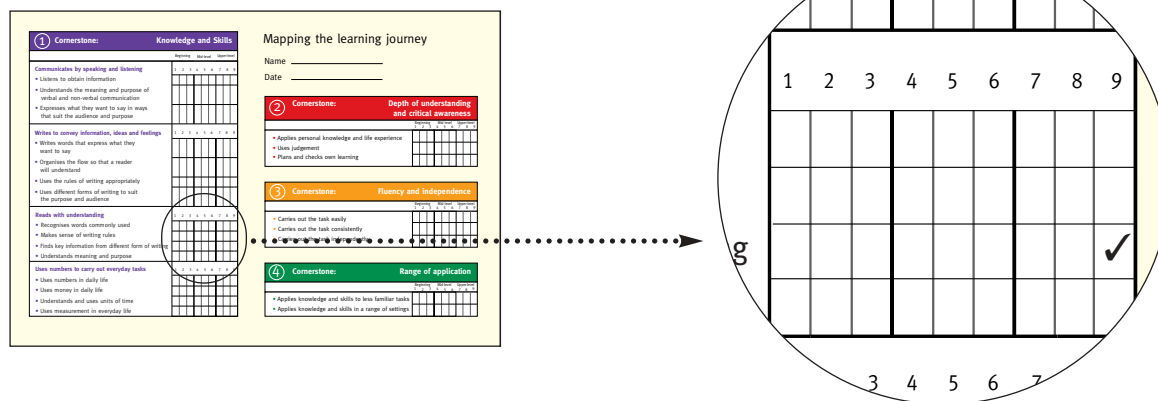
Again Peter showed great proficiency at a high level here so he and Frank mapped his progress at 9 on the mapping form. Finally, Frank asked him to retell the event in his own words, which he did, thus showing that he could integrate all of these elements to get the overall meaning.

Map 5.46 Understands meaning and purpose
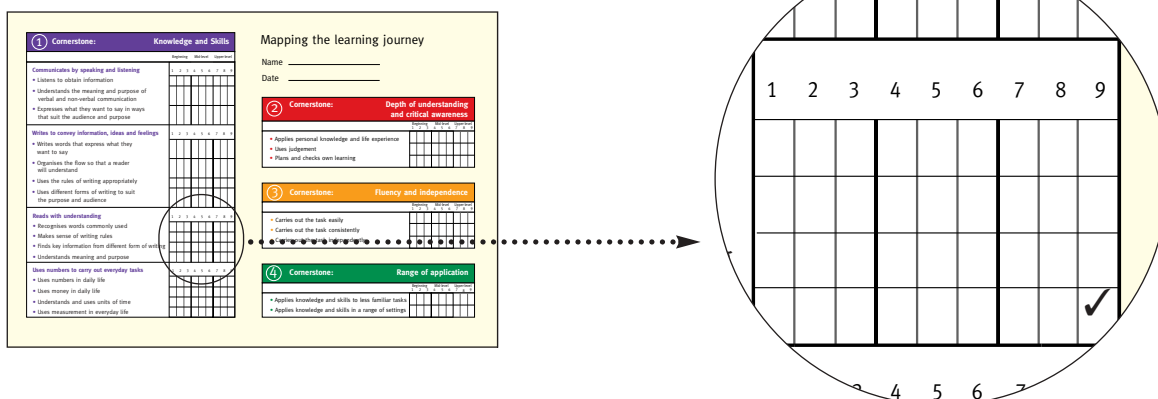
Peter had no difficulty retelling the event showing that he fully understood the meaning and purpose of the article. As a result he and Frank agreed that his progress on this element was at the top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Uses numbers to carry out everyday tasks

Sample 1 – Beginning level: checking a till receipt

The task described

The activity that produced this sample of work was designed to show that the learner, Maire, was able to check the accuracy of a supermarket till receipt. There were two parts to this task.

First, Maire practised with the receipt shown here during her session with her tutor, Sally. Then she examined the receipt in her local supermarket the next time she went shopping and reported back to Sally on her experience.

Like many real-life numeracy tasks, this one involves quite a lot of reading: for example, the name of the shop and its location that are given at the top and the groceries that are listed down the left-hand side. Maire has to read across and check that the prices shown are correct. For this she has to be able to understand the format of the receipt. She also needs to relate the concept of the value of the numbers to a practical application, in this case, money - the specific prices given.

<table>
<tr><td>**Level of difficulty**</td></tr>
</table>

This is a beginning-level numeracy task because it involves:

❚ matching numbers with concept of their value;

❚ counting items up to 8;

❚ recognising the format and notation for writing money in figures; and

❚ checking and estimating the realistic costs of single items.

VAT NO IE9513674T

EUR

Carrier Bag	0.04 C
Plastic bag levy	0.15 A
Lambrusco Bianco	2.49 C
Mint Sandwich	1.25 C
Orange Jaffa Cakes	1.39 B
Lambrusco Bianco	2.49 C
Cherry Bakewells	1.25 B
NON-FOOD	2.49 J

TOTAL	8 LINES	11.55

CASH GIVEN   EUR   15.00
CHANGE   EUR   3.45
VAT B 13.5% = 0.31
VAT C 21%   = 1.08
RECEIPT: 001/1975 ST.0904
TILL: 04   DATE: 24/05/03   TIME: 10:51

Questions :-

① How many items were bought?
   eight

② Which till did the Customer go through?
   FOUR

③ At what time did the Customer go through the till?
   10.51

④ How much did the plastic bag cost?
   ~~4c~~ 15c

⑤ How much did the mind sandwich biscuts cost?
   1.25

⑥ How many bottles of wine were bought?
   Two

⑦ How much did the Bakewells cost?
   1.25

⑧ How much did the orange biscuts cost?
   1.39

⑨ How much did the shopping come to?
   11.55

⑩ What cash was given to the cashier?
   15.00

⑪ What change was given to the customer?
   3.45

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Mapping the cornerstones

Maire and Sally began by mapping the process cornerstones – fluency and independence and range of application. They left depth of understanding and critical awareness blank as it was not relevant to Maire's learning plan. Then they moved on to mapping Maire's progress in numeracy under knowledge and skills. Again, they only looked at those elements of numeracy and reading that were relevant to Maire's learning plan.

Process Cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

As well as discovering what Maire can do, it is also important for us to know the circumstances under which she actually carried out the task. Sally said: "The only instructions Maire was given was not to start the questions immediately – but to take her time and study the receipt carefully first."

The detailed questions in the quiz provide a good guide to getting a lot of information out of this small document and so this is a very structured, beginning level, task. Even so, it is worth noting that, Maire needed very little help with just some aspects of the task, for example when the format of the receipt which was pointed out to her.

Map 5.47 Independence in carrying out the task
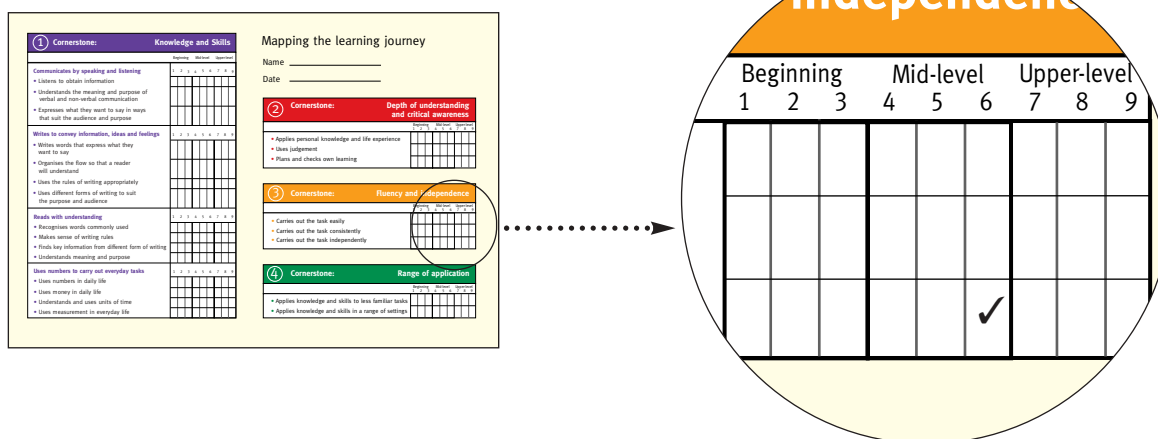
Maire and Sally agreed that Maire's proficiency in carrying out the task independently was at the top end of mid-level (6 on the mapping form).

Process Cornerstone 4
Range of application

The second part of this activity gave Maire scope to show more about her ability to carry out a task with no structure and no help at all – without the written questions to guide her in checking the receipt and without her tutor to encourage her.

Sally suggested that the next time Maire went shopping, she could check her receipt in the way she had done in their session, but this time in the supermarket itself. This meant that the setting was less familiar, fairly public and not nearly as safe as the one-to-one session with her tutor. Clearly, this was a much bigger challenge for Maire, even if the actual task – checking a receipt – was identical to what she had already done in the session.

A few days later she rang Sally and told her that she had done this. She found no mistakes in the receipt so she did not have the extra task of asking the cashier to look at it – but even so, she was delighted to know that the prices charged were accurate and that she had been able to check them in the real-life, public and therefore quite high-risk setting.

Map 5.48 Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings
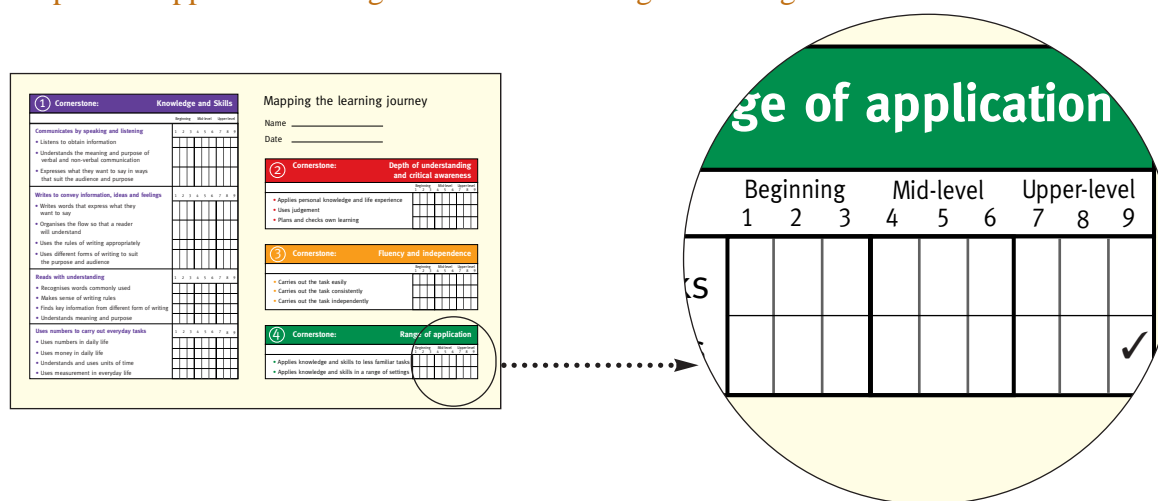
This meant that Maire had reached the top end of proficiency and could map her progress for this element at 9 on the mapping form.

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

On the short quiz that Sally prepared for Maire, her answers to questions 4, 5, 7 and 8 show that she was indeed able to make this connection between the symbols (numbers) and the concept which they signify (money, price). There is no calculation involved here – she is not asked to add the cost of the items herself, but only has to read them from the total given (question 9). However, whenever we check prices against items purchased, basic estimation skills come into play. Does €1.39 sound about right for a packet of Jaffa cakes? Yes. If the price given had said €13.90 we would immediately know that something was wrong, firstly because we would not get the amount of change we'd expected and then, on checking the receipt, we'd see that in this case the cashier probably hit the wrong key.

In relation to knowledge and skill, therefore, Maire has shown that she can handle a basic numeracy task well.

Map 5.49 Uses money in daily life
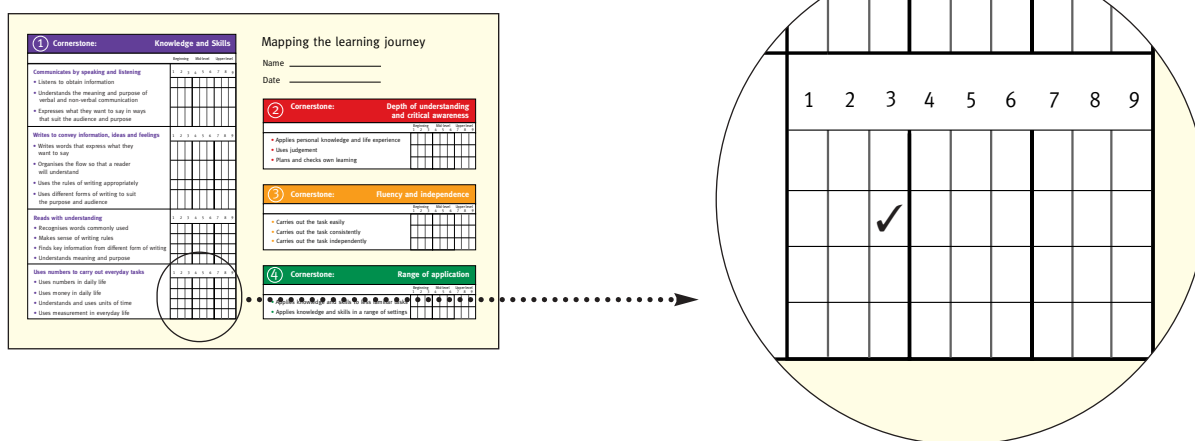
So she and Sally agreed that her proficiency was at the top end of beginning, which relates to 3 on the mapping form.

Most of the other questions - 2, 3, 9, 10, 11- provide evidence of Maire's ability to locate specific information in a familiar document. Strictly speaking this is a basic reading, rather than a numeracy task. In real life, of course, these categories overlap and we often find numeracy tasks at different levels, which also make demands on people's reading skills, especially their ability to find their way around the formats of different documents. The purpose of analysing activities in this way is to identify people's strengths and to pinpoint areas of weakness that can then be addressed.

Map 5.50 Finds key information from different forms of writing

In this case Maire's proficiency in finding key information in the receipt was very good so she mapped her progress at 3 on the mapping form.

Sometimes it is not entirely clear exactly what abilities a learner has demonstrated. In her quiz answers, for example, Maire correctly says that eight items were bought on this shopping trip (question 1). If she reached this answer by counting down the list, this would show a grasp of natural numbers and a basic counting strategy. However, in this case, the answer is printed alongside the total price: "8 lines". If Maire knew that a "line" indicates an item purchased, then her correct response here could be evidence of reading ability, rather than of counting skill. To find out which, we would have to watch her at the task or ask her how she got the answer. As she got it right, in real life it probably does not matter how she arrived at it. However, if her answer had been wrong, it would be very important for Sally to know whether this was a gap in Maire's reading or in her grasp of numbers.

Sample 2 – Mid-level: reading the time

The task described

This next task is a practise activity which the same tutor, Sally, designed to allow Maire to show the progress she had made in telling the time and interwoven with this, in using different counting strategies to do this.

Level of difficulty

This is a mid-level numeracy task because it involves:

▌ telling the time to the nearest quarter hour;

▌ handling more complex equivalencies of time; and

▌ using counting strategies.

Terms to know: "Past", "To".

1. What is the time on these clock faces?
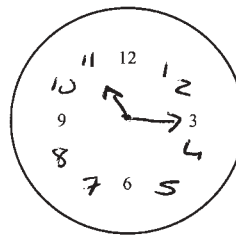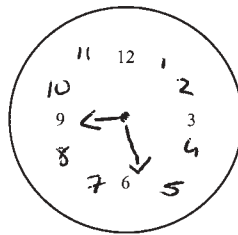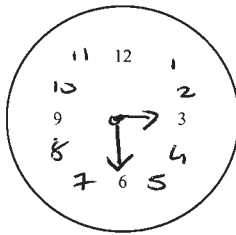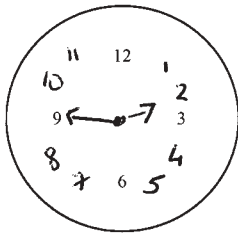
2. How many minutes:
   in an hour? 60
   in a half hour? 30
   in a quarter hour? 15
   in three-quarters of an hour? 45

3. Count in fives quickly up to and down from 60.
   Fill in the blanks:

   - 5   10   15 | 20 | | 25 | 30

   35 | 40 | 45   50 | 55 | | 60 |

   - 15   20 | 25 | 30 | 55 | | 60 |

   45 | 50 |

   - 25   20 | 15 | 10 | 5 |

   - 35   30 | 25 | | 20 | 15 | 10 | 5

4. What is the time on these clock faces?
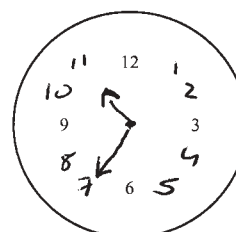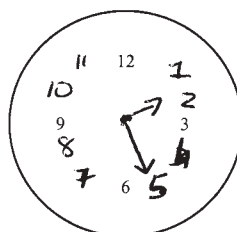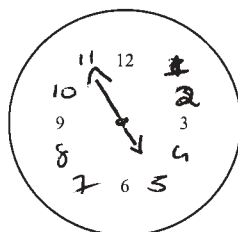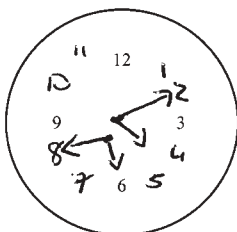
Skills you need.
Writing time in words and numbers (am & pm)

Write these times in numbers:

half past two   `2 . 30`   five to five   `4 . 55`

a quarter to three   `2 . 45`   ten past eight   `8 . 10`

twenty to six   `5 . 40`

Mapping the cornerstones

Only one process cornerstone was relevant to Maire's learning plan for this task and that was depth of understanding and critical awareness. Maire and Sally also mapped this task for relevant elements of numeracy under knowledge and skills.

Process cornerstone 2
Depth of understanding and critical awareness

Maire was able to bring some prior knowledge to this task, the basic understanding of how a clock face works and what it is for, which she was able to do with very little prompting.

Map 5.51 Applies personal knowledge and life experience
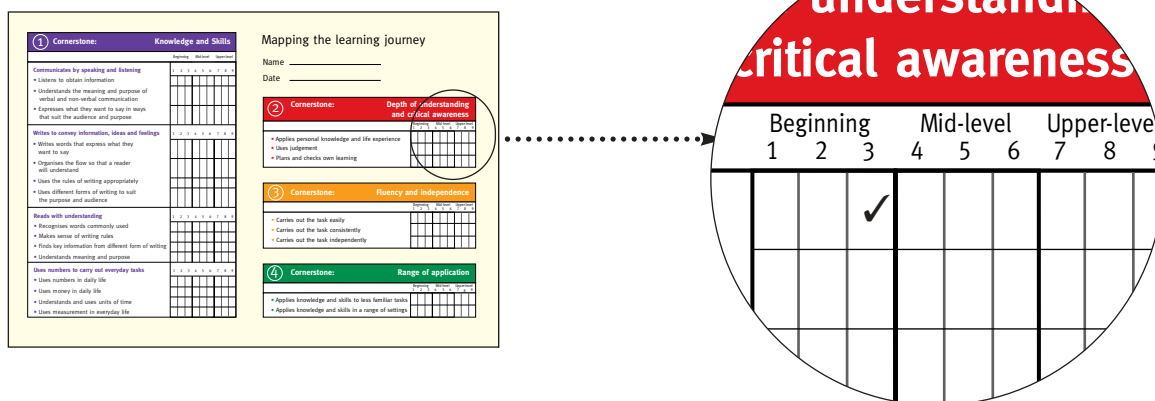
So she and Sally agreed that her proficiency was at the top end of beginning for how well she applied her personal knowledge and life experience (3 on the mapping form).

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

This appears to be a very simple exercise, but it is more complicated than it first looks. As well as recognising the quarter hours on a clock face – and thereby showing an understanding of the most common fractions, at least in a real-life situation – Maire was able to tell the time verbally, to the nearest quarter hour, when Sally asked her. This meant that she had to use the correct terminology as well.

In addition, Maire was able to give correct answers to the questions about equivalencies for which she had to know not only the number of minutes in an hour, but also the half, quarter and three quarter hours.

All of this indicates that Maire is able to handle activities involving the time and numbers skills needed for that – such as the most commonly-used fractions – at a middling level of difficulty. She did not need to make calculations, which would have made it an upper level task.

Map 5.52 Understands and uses units of time.
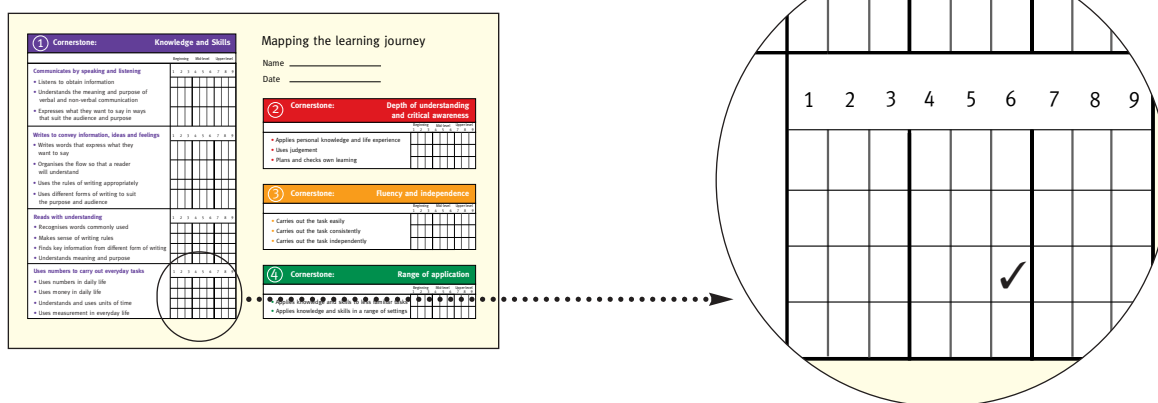
This meant that Maire was at the top end of mid-level in her proficiency in understanding and using units of time (6 on the mapping form). Another mid-level number task that Maire carries out is the strategy of counting in fives and counting on from different starting points. This will allow her to work out times to the nearest five minutes, which is the next logical step in her work in telling the time.

Map 5.53 Uses numbers in daily life
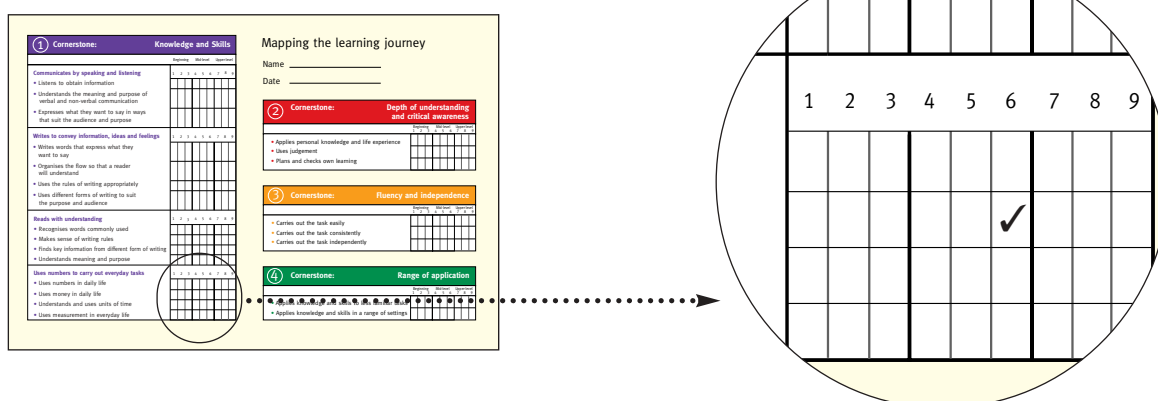
Maire did this with great proficiency so she and Sally placed her progress at the top end of mid-level, which is 6 on the mapping form. We will now move on to look at how an upper-level numeracy task was mapped.

Sample 3 – Upper level: using the TV guide

The task described

The source for this activity is a page of TV listings for one evening's viewing on four channels, taken from a TV guide. This is accompanied by a set of eight written questions that allow the learner, Paul, to demonstrate skills in numeracy, in relation to time and also in reading.

The most obvious feature of this piece is the level of reading involved. It is very high. The format is in columns, the print is small, there is a lot of it and much of the vocabulary is unusual. (On BBC 2 at 9.50 "Quentin Wilson wreaks havoc…")

That said, Paul does not have to read the whole piece to answer the questions supplied by his tutor Alan. This makes sense because most of us would not usually read all of the detail about all the TV programmes listed for an evening.

We would be more likely to focus on the programme titles – and these are given in bold, which makes them easier to read – and perhaps look at the small print if one programme catches our eye.

In fact, for the questions given here, Peter does not have to read any of the small print at all. So, this is a less extensive reading task than it first appears. Of course, a different set of questions could have made more demands on Peter's actual reading of this piece. This shows how the same material used in a different way can stimulate different activity at different levels, and thus allow the learner to show different abilities.

In fact, the reading that Peter has to do here involves simple location of facts in a text: what time certain programmes begin and end (questions 2, 3, 5).

The maths part of the activity is at different levels: some questions are at beginning level because they require only recognition of numbers, others are at mid-level and others at upper level. The overall difficulty of the task is determined by the most difficult parts.

Level of difficulty

This is an upper-level numeracy task because it involves:

▌ doing a target numeracy task within a complex reading task;

▌ working out units of time;

▌ using the 24 hour clock;

▌ doing several steps in the correct sequence; and

▌ judging what calculations to carry out.

BBC 1	BBC 2	UTV	Channel 4
5.00 **SMart** The programme that turns everyday objects into exciting and easy-to-make pictures. *72398675*	**5.15** **Weakest Link USA** Anne Robinson tries her hand at intimidating teenage schoolchildren. *3247307*	**5.00** **Crossroads** Tracey tries to make the pub feel like home. Helen puts Ryan straight about his bad attitude towards women. *4870*	**5.00** **Richard and Judy** With Judy Finnigan and Richard Madeley. *8758*
5.25 **Newsround** News magazine for children. *98765432*	**6.00** **The Simpsons** Homer becomes a professional boxer *565859*	**5.30** **UTV Live and Weather.** *268*	**6.00** **The Salon** 713
5.35 **Neighbours** *8765431*	**6.20** **TOTP 2** Fast-moving music show *918336*	**6.00** **UTV Live at Six.** *955*	**6.30** **Hollyoaks** Can Nick come out of the closet to his parents with a little help from Nathan? *177*
6.00 **BBC News** 768	**6.45** **Star Trek: The Next Generation** Sci-fi drama series. *171151*	**6.30** **ITV Evening News: Weather.** *751*	**7.00** **Channel 4 News** *357935*
6.30 **BBC Newsline; Weather** 899	**7.30** **David Hammond's Ireland** "The Banks of the Roses" *520*	**7.00** **Emmerdale** (As TV3). *2142*	**7.55** **Outsider Music: BJ Snowden** A former music teacher who performs lo-fi creations on her Casio keyboard. *369731*
7.00 **Watchdog** The car credit company charging €100 for a test drive. *2345*	**8.00** **Get a New Life** (New Series) Series offering advice on how to set up a new life abroad *5848*	**7.30** **Champions League Live** "Real Madrid v Manchester United" Desmond Lynam introduces live coverage from Spain as Real Madrid host Manchester United in the first leg of the UEFA Champions League quarter final. *65695205*	**8.00** **Selling Houses** Property expert Andrew Winter looks at a modern two-bedroom Georgian flat near Bristol *3494*
7.30 **Eastenders** Pat has to admit she's not the woman she once was. Alfie unwittingly touches a nerve. Janine's attempt to worm her way back into Ricky's affections backfires badly. *544*	**9.00** **Monsters We Met** (New Series) Natural history programme. America was once home to formidable super-predators like the giant short-faced bear and the sabertooth cat. *354611*		**8.30** **The City Gardener** Matt James advises on how to improve city gardens. *36523*
8.00 **Holby City** Lisa spends the day in court as Kath's trial begins. Tom explains the basis of his alcoholism to his psychiatrist (Followed by BBC Newsline update) *3462*	**9.50** **E-Mails You Wish You Hadn't Sent** Quentin Wilson looks at the havoc wreaked on the internet when chain e-mails spiral out of control. *131981*	**9.50** **ITV News.** *180636*	**9.00** **Bald** A look at the different approaches used by men who, despite only being in their twenties, are already suffering from hair loss. *17971*
9.00 **A Life of Grime** Documentary series. Dr. Yunes Teinaz confiscates some live snails from a grocer *789651*	**10.00** **Manchild** Comedy drama series. With Nigel Havers, Anthony Head *97878*	**10.20** **First Wives** A look at the heartache and emotional turmoil women go through when their husbands leave them for a younger woman, and how these same women go about turning their lives around. *539303*	**10.00** **40** Proactive three-part drama focusing on seven former schoolfriends whose lives are undergoing seismic change as they hit the landmark age of 40. With Nimmy March and Eddie Izzard. *9640616*
9.30 **Traffic Cops** Bikers flood into South Yorkshire in the summer months, but there are many accidents. *25176*	**10.30** **Newsnight** With Jeremy Paxman *903949*	**11.20** **The Club** Celebrity bar managers Dean Gaffney, Sam Fox and Richard Blackwood pick one of their team to face the sack – and then tell them why their face doesn't fit. *630686*	**11.05** **The Sopranos** Ralph buys a horse, and Tony discovers that he has a knac for horse-racing strategy. *9021003*
10.00 **BBC News** *908818*	**11.20** **BBC Four on Two: The Autism Puzzle** The mysterious mental disorder is examined *248427*	**12.05** **Champions League** Gabby Logan presents extended highlights from tonight's games as Manchester United face Real Madrid, and Ajax host AC Milan. *5927627*	**12.15** **NYPD Blue** Fancy moves to his new role as Captain leaving the detectives with his icy, female replacement. *8250258*
10.25 **Regional News and Weather** *396612*	**12.20** **The Witness** A man describes his childhhod experiences as a member of the Hitler Youth. *6067847*	**1.05** **Nash Bridges** Drama series about a San Francisco police inspector. Nash discovers his life savings are gone after his accountant	**1.10** **Eurotrash** With Antoine de Caunes. *13459169*
10.35 **Families** Series following nine families for a year. *713877*	**12.30** **BBC Learning Zone: Open**		
11.05 **Hollywood Greats** Jonathan Ross profiles American icon Jimmy Stewart. *78676*			
11.45 **FILM: The Shootist** (1976 Western) Starring John Wayne, Lauren			

Becall and Ron Howard (See Film of The Day) *894972*	**University: The Train to Cluj-Napoca** A train journey through Hungary and Romania. *457684*	invests in a crooked deal (Followed by ITV News Headlines) *6892826*	1.45 **KOTV** Top international boxing action. *9634726*
1.20 **Join BBC News 24** *7549373*	1.00 **Bajourou – Music of Mali** A group of Mali's most famous musicians. 32867	1.55 **Champions League** "Read Madrid v Manchester United" Full coverage of the first leg of the UEFA Champions League quarter final. *516173*	2.10 **Magic Mountain** Series following Chris Bonington and his expedition as they attempt to scale Sepu Kangri in Tibet. *5242828*
1.40 **Sign Zone: Secrets of Leadership** "Martin Luther King" *9695097*	1.30 **The Art of the Restorer.** *67429*	3.30 **World Sport** News from around the world. *98786060*	3.05 **Encounters** Documentary series. *6827428*
2.30 **Sign Zone: Horizon** *5946530*	2.00 **National Test Revision: Keystage 3 Bitesize Revision – English 2** *81911*	3.55 **Get Stuffed** Cooking on a budget (Followed by ITV News Headlines). *47185293*	4.00 **Monster Files: The Beast of the Amazon** Documentary. *675349*
3.20 **Sign Zone: Natalie Cassidy Goes Wild in Australia** *4643242*	4.00 **Languages: Work Talk: Germany.** *24842*	4.05 **ITV Nightscreen** *0643676*	4.55 **Pyromania: Everybody Loves Fireworks.** *345562*
4.20 **Sign Zone: How to be a Gardener** *47426181*	5.00 **Working in the Community** Involving and inspiring volunteers. *60806*	5.30 **ITV Early Morning News.** *75351*	5.50 **Bagpuss.** *7329571*
4.25 **Joins BBC News 24** *7872639*			

Mapping the cornerstones

Two process cornerstones were relevant to Paul's learning plan – depth of understanding and critical awareness and fluency and independence. Range of application was not relevant so they left it blank. Following this Paul and his tutor Alan mapped Paul's progress on relevant elements of numeracy under knowledge and skills.

Process cornerstone 2
Depth of understanding and critical awareness

It is possible to comment on the depth of understanding Paul brings to the task. Clearly, he is using his prior knowledge and experience of how newspaper listings work and also, specific counting strategies, and all of this in a situation that is probably similar to others he has met – TV listings with different programmes and durations – but which need to be adapted somewhat to this new task.

Map 5.54 Applies personal knowledge and life experience
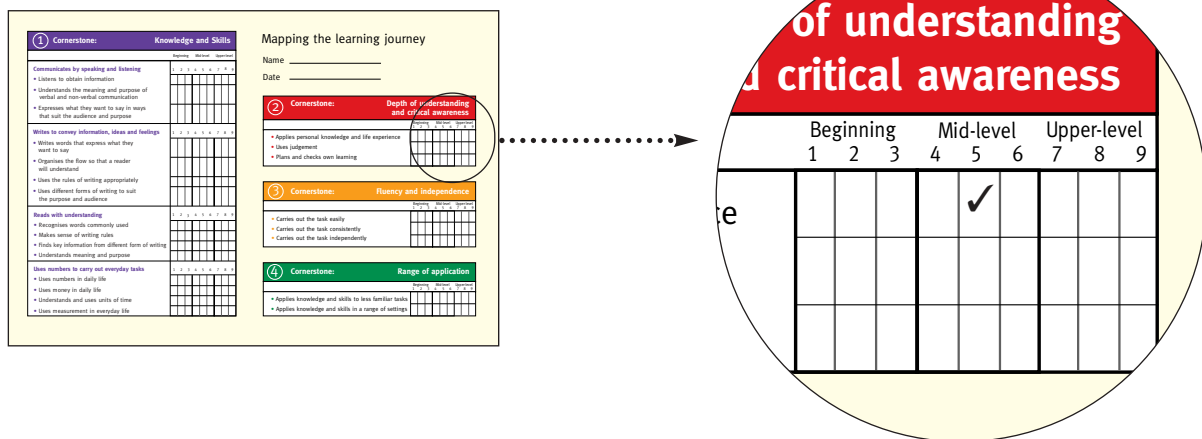
Paul showed some but not great proficiency in applying his personal knowledge and life experience to the task. So he and Alan agreed that his progress on this element was at 5 on the mapping form.

Process cornerstone 3
Fluency and independence

The fact that Paul also has to use his own judgement to decide what calculations to carry out to get the right answer is very significant. One of the difficulties that learners sometimes report is that they can 'do the sums' but their problem when they have a real-life activity to carry out, such as buying a carpet or working out how long a journey lasts, is knowing which sum to do.

According to the background information supplied by Alan, Paul carried out this task independently, which is important partly because he was able to do the calculations without help and partly because he was able to choose the correct calculations for this situation. This alone makes it an upper level task.

Map 5.55 Independence in carrying out the task
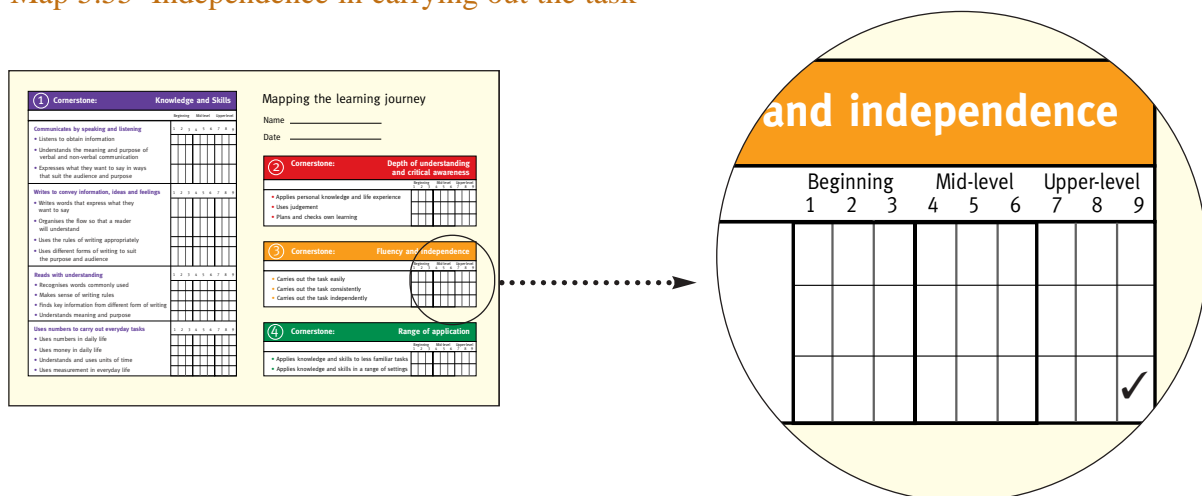
Because Paul did very well in carrying out this upper level task he and Alan placed his progress at the top of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Cornerstone 1
Knowledge and skills

The first calculation is in question 4, which asks how long a particular programme lasts. If we look at the listings we see that Nash Bridges starts at 1.05 and finishes at 1.55 so Paul has to subtract .05 from .55 to get the answer. Similarly, the calculations needed to answer question 7 are not very advanced. Paul is asked to give the finishing times of three programmes if these were extended by ten minutes each. As the original times are 10.20, 11.20 and 12.05 the addition of ten minutes makes no impact on the hour given. Much greater demands are made in question 6. Partly this is because there are several different steps involved in finding out how much of a TV programme Paul would miss if he had to leave the house before it finished. In this case, the situation is further complicated because the question refers both to the 12 and the 24 hour clock – the programme starts "at 7.30 and you must go out at 20.45"; and in the listings, the time is given in the 12 hour clock.

To handle this question, Paul needs to be able to switch between the 12 and the 24 hour clock. He is asked to work out the time between his leaving the house – 20.45 – and the end of the programme – 21.50 (or 9.50, as it is shown). The easiest way to do this is to count on from 20.45, to 21.45 and add 5 minutes, to end up with the answer: 1 hour and 5 minutes. Counting on is a mid-level numeracy strategy but the complicated context here, in particular the inclusion – and confusion – of the 12 and 24 hour clocks push the knowledge and skills needed for this task into the upper level of difficulty.

Map 5.56 Understands and uses units of time
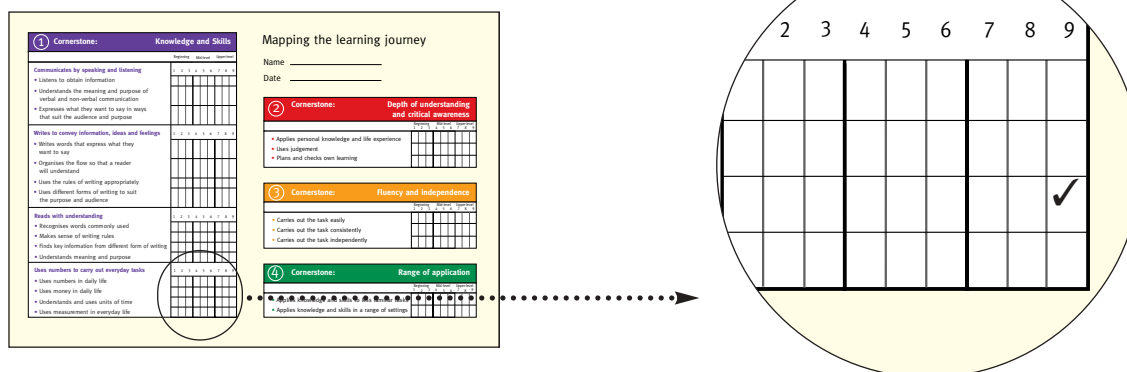
Because of this Paul and Alan agreed that Paul's progress was at the top end of the scale (9 on the mapping form).

Conclusion

This section presented samples of learners work drawn from the research to develop Mapping the Learning Journey. These samples show how tutors and learners mapped different pieces of work relating to each of the four cornerstones and areas of learning. They include work at different levels of task complexity and show different levels of progress across the learners. This ties together the information provided in previous sections of this user guide. Together, these sections provide tutors and learners with support to use the mapping form available in Section 6. However, a full understanding of how to implement the guidelines provided in this user guide in practise can only be achieved by attending the Mapping the Learning Journey tutor training.

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Part of the Evolving Quality Framework

Mapping the Learning Journey

Section 6

Tools for recording progress

Range of application

and Independence

Knowledge and Skills

of erstanding and critical awareness

NALA
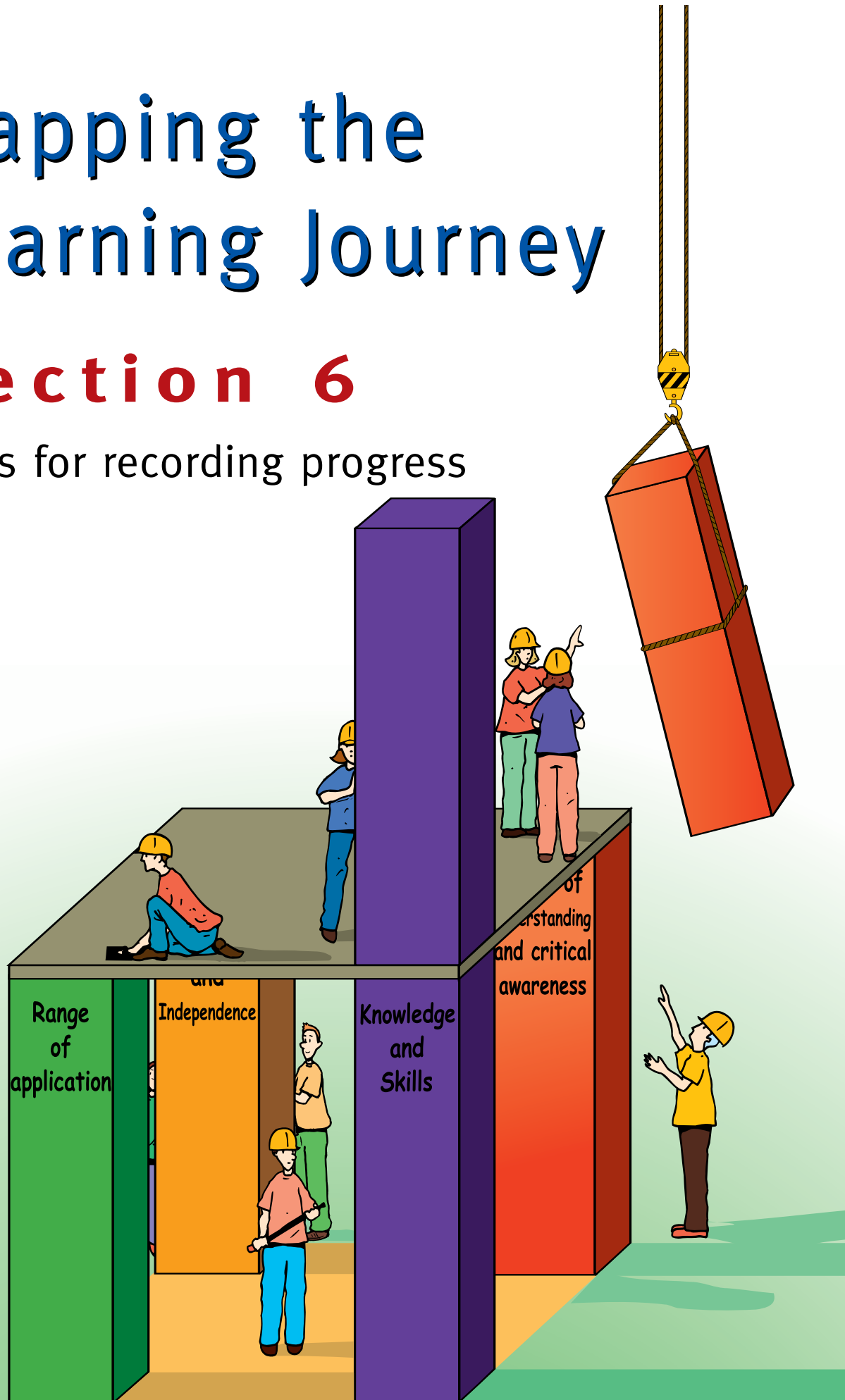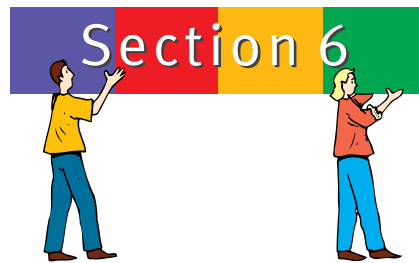
Introduction

This section of the framework reminds you of the stages in the teaching and learning journey that were outlined at the beginning of Section 3. The mapping form is also included as part of this section. This form has two purposes:

Purpose 1: The form is black and white and can be photocopied and used to map and record progress. It is available on durable strong paper. We have included a full colour A3 and a black and white A4 form. We used the A3 version during the pilot but some tutors preferred the A4 version.

Purpose 2: The full colour A3 version that can be used as a poster on the wall so that tutors and learners can become familiar and comfortable with what this new tool looks like.

Stages in the teaching and learning journey

1. The learner agrees an individual learning programme with their tutor over a period of time.

2. The learner decides what activities they want to work on with their tutor over a period of time.

3. The tutor develops the activities identified and agrees methodologies including assessment with the learner (MLJ provides supports when developing activities, see Section 4).

4. Over time the learner and tutor develop an understanding of what the learner already knows and can do. This is often discussed together, informally. Notes or learning journals are maintained so the tutor and learner can reflect on the learning journey at appropriate intervals.

5. About 3 times a year **MLJ** is used to summarise and record learners progress.

- Firstly, tutors and learners look at the activity or task that have been completed. They determine how complex or difficult this task was. You will remember from Section 1 that there are three levels of task difficulty: beginning; middle; and upper. Upper level MLJ tasks are very close in complexity to FETAC Foundation Level tasks. Section 2 contains a number of laminated sheets that give examples of tasks developed and used by learners and tutors during the testing of MLJ. These can help you to decide what level of complexity your task is at.

- Secondly, tutors and learners must identify the outcomes of evidence of progress the completed task is showing and relate them to the framework. Which cornerstones does it show evidence of progress in? For instance do the activities apply to all three process cornerstones? Which areas of learning were learners working on? It is unlikely that learners will have been focusing on every element of the area of learning they have been working on. Nor will it always be relevant to focus on every element of the process cornerstones. Again there are supports built into the framework to help tutors and learners to make this decision. Also the training that tutors will receive will be invaluable to the mapping process.

- Tutors and learners look at the MLJ mapping form together. They have already decided the level of task difficulty and elements of the various cornerstones that are relevant to the evidence of progress shown in the completed task. Tutors and learners discuss together how proficiently the learner has completed the task. Over time these mapped exercises can build up to show learners very clearly how they have been progressing and what areas they may wish to focus on.

Conclusion

The mapping forms are enclosed as part of this section. The mapping form has been designed specifically so it can be photocopied as needed. If, over time, your original mapping forms become worn and do not photocopy to a satisfactory quality, NALA will send you a replacement copy, free of charge. Contact details for your local NALA Regional Development Worker are

Cork: Margaret Murray

Phone: (021) 431 7011

e-mail: mmurray@nala.ie

Mullingar: Peter Kiernan

Phone: (044) 403 74

e-mail: pkiernan@nala.ie

Write to: NALA
                76 Lower Gardiner Street
                Dublin 1

Phone: (01) 8554332

e-mail: literacy@nala.ie

or check out our website: www.nala.ie

We would like to remind you that training is essential to equip tutors with the skills and supports needed to use these forms appropriately and consistently with learners. With the appropriate training and supports, tutors and learners will be able to use these forms to map learners' progress. It is important to remember that the MLJ framework is not a curriculum so tutors and learners can use these forms flexibly to reflect only those parts of the framework that relate to the tasks the learner has completed. With practice and support tutors and learners will become very familiar with the particular sections of the framework that are most helpful during the various stages of the teaching and learning process. We welcome any thoughts or comments you may have as you begin to use the framework. These will help us to develop the framework over time to ensure the best quality service and supports to learners.

Notes

Notes

Appendix 1   Explanation of terms
The new language of Mapping the Learning Journey

Mapping	A process of reviewing tasks completed by a learner for signs of progress; making a note of that progress.
Learning Journey	The process involved when a person begins working towards their goals with their tutor.
Adult basic education (ABE) services	The range of services providing learning opportunities for adults with literacy needs; the main provider is the VEC Adult Literacy Service, other VEC programmes (for example, disability training centres) followed by FÁS, Teagasc, workplaces and community education.
Evolving Quality Framework	A plan used by a centre to guide and improve the quality of service in ABE by: • seeing how good a service they are giving; • finding out what is already working well, • identifying what needs to be improved and making changes; and • checking that changes made have improved quality.
Curriculum	A learning plan that includes the content of the learning and teaching programme, the learning goals or objectives and the methods and materials that will be used; in adult basic education, it is based on the learners' needs, interests and goals and is negotiated between learner and tutor.
Tasks	Pieces of work and activities carried out by learners to achieve their learning goals.
Rich activities	Activities that allow for progress to be shown across a number of cornerstones and not just knowledge and skills.
Validate	The action taken by tutors and learners to say that they would be happy to recommend it to tutors and learners, once it was tested and changed according to their feedback.
Flexible and adaptable	The ability of the framework to be used by learners and tutors working on tasks below FETAC Foundation Level in a range of settings, with different goals and working on different cornerstones, areas of learning and elements at different stages of progress.

Teaching methods	Different ways that tutors and learners around the country use to work towards achieving learning goals.
Assessment techniques	Ways of checking progress; Mapping the Learning Journey allows for different techniques and provides a national framework for tutors and learners to summarise and record the signs of progress.
Progress	Level of success in reaching learning goals.
Intuitive processes	Gut feelings and the relationship between learner and tutor that guide how the teaching and learning journey is managed and discussed between tutors and learners.
Consultation	Finding out peoples' opinions and drawing on their knowledge and experience.
Performance	Applying learning in practice; carrying out a task.
Learning goals	What the learner wants to achieve over a certain length of time; inform the tasks and activities that tutors and learners carry out.
Guiding principles	The values and beliefs that guide NALA and ABE providers, tutors and learners as they use Mapping the Learning Journey.
Learner-centred	Putting the learner's needs and interests at the centre of the teaching and learning process.
Informal	A friendly relaxed situation between tutors and learners that allows them to discuss learners' progress.
Constructive	Useful; MLJ has been developed to provide information about a learner's progress so that learners and tutors can use this information to help learners reach their goals.
Holistic	The 'big picture' view of literacy and numeracy learning, recognising that it takes place in the context of a person's overall development and individual life circumstances, and in specific social and cultural contexts.

Mapping framework	A structured way for learners and tutors to track and record learners' progress over time.

Dimensions of learning	Aspects of learning, divided in MLJ into the four cornerstones:
	• knowledge and skills (made up of the four areas of learning); and
	• three process cornerstones:
	    - depth of understanding and critical awareness;
	    - fluency and independence; and
	    - range of application.

Cornerstones that	Key blocks; like cornerstones in a building, they provide an outline of amount and type of learning is taking place.
Process cornerstones their	Cornerstones that describe how well learners can use their knowledge and skills to meet the demands of daily lives.
Knowledge and skills cornerstone	Cornerstone to describe what a learner achieves in relation to four areas of learning.
Areas of learning	Parts of the knowledge and skills cornerstone: • Communicates by speaking and listening; • Writes to convey information, ideas and feelings; • Reads with understanding; and • Uses numbers to carry out everyday activities.
Depth of understanding and critical awareness	Process cornerstone to describe how well learners can take what they have learned and apply their knowledge, judgement and insight to the work in hand.
Fluency and independence	Process cornerstone to indicate the amount of help a learner needs to carry out real-life literacy and numeracy tasks and how consistent they are when they handle these.
Range of application	Process cornerstone to describe how far the learner can apply what they have learned in one setting (for instance, in the room with their tutor) to other settings (for instance, different places and situations in their daily lives).

Elements	Individual learning points that make up each of the process cornerstones and each area of learning within the knowledge and skills cornerstone.
Continuum of progress	A scale that measures learners' progress by referring to the difficulty of an activity and the learner's ability to carry out that activity; together these provide a picture from beginning level to being ready to work on more difficult tasks equivalent to FETAC Foundation level.
Mapping tasks	Specific tasks that tutors and learners choose to review and reflect on to help identify progress, and to record this progress on the MLJ framework.
Rich tasks	Tasks that allow learners to show progress across a number of cornerstones.
Range of the framework	The nine-point scale that measures the stage in the learners' progress (stage of proficiency) based on the level of difficulty of the task and how well the learner completed the task in terms of each cornerstone.
Task level	The difficulty of a task, whether a very beginning task or one closer to FETAC Foundation Level.
Stage of proficiency	How well a learner has completed a task relative to how difficult the task was.
Process of assessment	Plan for learning, analysing strengths and difficulties and reviewing progress.
Mapping the Learning Journey (MLJ)	A process of ongoing reviewing of learners' progress towards their goals.
Mapping form	Individual form for recording learners' progress for each area of learning across the three process cornerstones.

Part of the Evolving Quality Framework

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Writes to convey information, ideas and feelings

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Writes words that express what they want to say		
Writes the most familiar words in own life	Writes words needed for simple everyday tasks	Chooses appropriate words for the task in hand including descriptive, formal and informal
Organises the flow so that a reader will understand		
Writes letters or words or phrases in order in a list or a simple sentence	Writes a few simple sentences in sequence so that they convey information to a reader	Writes so that main points flow smoothly to convey ideas and information
Uses the rules of writing appropriately		
Uses alphabet, upper and lower case, short lists, phrases and single sentences in present tense Checks individual words and revises spelling if needed	Writes sentences using capitals and full stops Spells familiar words correctly Writes several sentences in appropriate sequence Reads back over sentences or responses to a form and improve capitalisation, spelling and sentence structure if needed	Writes a short narrative passage paying attention to sentence structure, punctuation and spelling Uses usual formats for letters, lists, forms and charts Reviews a longer narrative or application form and revises sequence, grammar, punctuation and spelling if needed
Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience		
Uses application forms where layout is simple and basic personal details are required Writes notes or letters where content is basic or supplied Writes instructions where content is concrete and simple Writes stories rooted in own experience (language experience)	Uses application forms that involve more reading and that ask for more information than basic personal details Writes notes or letters where content is generated by learner and involves some sequencing Writes instructions involving several steps Writes stories based on own experience; also accounts of things that happened, such as in journal entries	Uses application forms that involve considerable reading or that include open questions requiring more detailed input from the writer Writes longer notes or letters involving some narrative such as, formal letters Writes more complex instructions involving different formats Writes stories with description, atmosphere, flow

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Writes to convey information, ideas and feelings

Beginning level	Examples
Writes words that express what they want to say	Writes own and friends' names and addresses Writes shopping list with common brand names Writes addresses containing familiar place names
Organises the flow so that a reader will understand	Writes short diary entry of arrangements made – single words, phrases or simple sentence Writes 'to-do' list Writes single simple sentence or captions to match a picture Writes short telephone message (x late, arrives at 5 pm)
Uses the rules of writing appropriately	Lists children's names alphabetically Completes stem sentences with subject, verb and object Corrects spelling in a note left for a friend
Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience	Form – fills in name and address on raffle ticket Note or letter – signs name on a greeting card Instructions – leaves note explaining how to organise a meal (find x in fridge, boil potatoes, put y in oven, mark 5) Stories – 'why I joined the learning group' (language experience)

Mid-level	Examples
Writes words that express what they want to say	Writes birthday or Christmas cards with greetings Writes notes as reminders or to pass on a short message
Organises the flow so that a reader will understand	Writes directions for visitor on how to get to a nearby place Writes a postcard with short greetings to a friend Writes out a cheque Writes a message giving detailed arrangements for meeting friends, using a few connected sentences
Uses the rules of writing appropriately	Spells familiar words accurately and checks spelling of less familiar words in form or note Checks that instructions are in correct order and that capitals and full stops make the sequence clear Arranges out-of-sequence sentences in correct order Corrects note to friend checking spelling, capitals, matching forms of nouns and verbs, and sentence structure
Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience	Form – fills in name and address on club card form Note or letter – writes a short greeting on a postcard Instructions – leaves note explaining how to set a digital alarm clock Stories – writes journal entry about an event or visit of interest

Upper-level	Examples
Writes words that express what they want to say	Chooses suitable words for a letter to a teacher Chooses suitable words for a job application letter or form
Organises the flow so that a reader will understand	Describes a recent event and what happened Sets out the main points for a letter of complaint, deciding how to make points in paragraphs Makes longer, more detailed and reflective journal entry
Uses the rules of writing appropriately	Checks job application letter for spelling, abbreviations and correct format Checks open letter applying for a job for correct sentence structure, sequencing punctuation and paragraphs Writes out recipe in usual recipe format and uses appropriate abbreviations Revises letter to make sure the reader will understand
Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience	Form – fills in simple job application form Note or letter – writes long letter to a friend; replies to job advert asking for application form Instructions – writes recipe for a friend who has never cooked the dish Stories – writes short story from own experience or imagination, write description or reviews of TV programmes or books

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Communicates by speaking and listening

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Listens to obtain information		
Finds out single items of factual information	Finds out more detailed items of factual information	Finds more complicated information that is less rooted in concrete, personal experience and where the range of sources is varied and less predictable
Listens for answers to concrete and direct questions	Selects relevant details from a range of less predictable options	
Identifies helpful and unhelpful listening behaviours	Practises helpful listening behaviours	Receives and acts appropriately on feedback and adjusts listening behaviour to help other people to clarify what they mean
Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication		
Follows simple directions and instructions	Follows three- or four-step instructions and directions	Follows complicated instructions that involve many steps
Gets the gist of dialogues and conversations with small groups of familiar people	Gets the gist of conversations with groups of less familiar people	Follows large group discussions and discussions in the mass media
Recognises different styles of communication as being suitable for different situations and the meaning of non-verbal cues	Recognises the impact of different non-verbal signals in different situations	Recognises the power dynamics in different types of interaction
Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose		
Answers direct questions that draw on personal experience and observation	Gives more elaborate answers to questions, including explanation and description	Explains complex arrangements and instructions in unpredictable situations
Gives simple instructions and directions in structured situations	Gives three- or four-step instructions and directions in less predictable situations	Takes part in discussions in a large group, giving opinions and ideas at some length, sometimes taking the initiative
Gives opinions with support and prompting	Expresses ideas and opinions with some back-up	Gives constructive feedback
Uses suitable non-verbal cues	Uses different communication styles appropriate to different situations	Negotiates to meet practical needs

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Communicates by speaking and listening

Beginning level	Examples
Listens to obtain information	• Gets the time from the speaking clock • Learns the state of the traffic from AA Roadwatch on the radio • Takes a simple telephone message • Identifies answers to 'who, what, where, when' questions from familiar sources
Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication	• Follows instructions on how to use a simple hand tool or how to get to a nearby shop • Asks questions to ensure that they understand instructions correctly • Gets the gist of arrangements to meet for a social event • Recognises a friend's reaction from facial expression, gesture and posture • Notes differences in speech and gesture when talking to a friend and talking to a boss
Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose	• Gives instructions on how to use a hand tool, ATM or how to get to a nearby shop • Answers simple questions about directions, or make arrangements to meet friends • Leaves a short message on straightforward answer machine • Makes a call to the dentist to arrange an appointment

Mid-level	Examples
Listens to obtain information	• Gets train arrival and departure times and ticket prices from speaking clock • Identifies a range of hotels for weekend breaks from Bord Fáilte, by phone or in person • Asks questions to check dates and prices
Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication	• Follows instructions to top up mobile phone credit or to get to somewhere distant • Gets the gist of conversations with a small group of unfamiliar people • Gets the gist of information and ideas from radio news • Identifies appropriate and inappropriate non-verbal behaviour for a job interview
Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose	• Gives instructions on how to get to a location some distance away • Asks for a job application form • Discusses options for B&B and make a booking • Gives opinion of TV programme or film and reasons • Leaves message on an answer machine that provides several options for response

Upper-level	Examples
Listens to obtain information	• Finds out detailed arrangements for a weekend break • Gets information about new tax bands or allowances as explained on TV current affairs programme • Helps another person to clarify what they mean in conversation
Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication	• Follows complicated directions to an unfamiliar place • Follows the discussion in a TV documentary or a large group • Recognises the type of interaction typical of negotiating in practical situations
Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose	• Explains detailed arrangements for a weekend break • Gives opinions at a job interview (or role-play) to explain why they are good for the job • Gives and takes constructive feedback on performance in a role-play • Negotiates the price of getting a household repair done

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Reads with understanding

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Recognises words commonly used		
Recognises very basic social and sight words and more difficult words that are familiar from own experience	Recognises more difficult words that are in their personal vocabulary plus some descriptive words Recognises common abbreviations and contractions	Recognises many words commonly used at work and in community including some official language; also recognises less common words, as well as informal and colloquial language Recognises most abbreviations needed for daily life
Makes sense of writing rules		
Responds to the basic tools including the alphabet, matching letters and sounds, text conventions (left to right, front or back) Makes sense of very simple sentences using familiar words	Understands more conventions including simple punctuation for sentences and questions, upper and lower case, matching singulars and plurals and gender; also recognises syllables and word-building strategies Follows short narratives containing a few straightforward sentences	Makes sense of longer narratives with several sentences, some complex sentences and paragraphs Makes sense of more complex stories, poems and articles
Finds key information from different forms of writing		
Uses pictures and graphic clues to find information	Uses known words and graphic clues to find information and meaning Makes sense of common formats like recipes, menus, forms, bills	Uses whatever words are recognised, any clues from headings and any pictures to predict what a piece of writing is about Makes sense of more complex forms and tables
Understands meaning and purpose		
Understands the purpose of familiar documents even if they cannot read the words Understands the meaning of very simple, single sentences	Locates factual information (who, what, where, when) in simple texts Discusses meaning and purpose of a short narrative consisting of a few straightforward sentences	Works out meaning when this is not immediately obvious Shows understanding of longer, more complex pieces through questioning and gives reactions and opinions to a piece of writing

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Reads with understanding

Beginning level	Examples
Recognises words commonly used	• Recognises own name, children's names • Recognises own street and town • Recognises tea packet, milk carton • Recognises 'stop' and 'exit' and other social sight words
Makes sense of writing rules	• Arranges words or items in alphabetical order • Fits letters in words to match sound, in worksheet or scrabble counters • Follows sentences left to right, books front to back and lists top to bottom
Finds key information from different forms of writing	• Finds 'Exit' from word or picture • Locates bus stop • Uses brand names and logos to identify well-known products • Reads supermarket brochure special offer explained in bullet points • Finds out shop opening and closing times from notice on door
Understands meaning and purpose	• Recognises an ESB bill even if they cannot read the words • Knows what a phone book is for • Understands the purpose of advertisements • Reads cost of joining video club explained in one short sentence • Reads own language experience stories

Mid-level	Examples
Recognises words commonly used	• Indentifies a shopping list with items regularly bought • Recognises familiar ingredients in a recipe • Reads list for music or computer or sporting equipment (personal interest) • Reads abbreviated days of week on calendar or diary • Recognises contractions such as – Don't walk on the grass
Makes sense of writing rules	• Looks up own name and familiar names in the phone book • Reads a new word by breaking it into syllables • Reads aloud one or two sentences from a notice about a film, using full stops and sentences to guide pauses
Finds key information from different forms of writing	• Matches road signs with their meanings • Identifies ingredients in a simple recipe • Reads from simple forms, calendars, bills and timetables • Identifies food and prices in simple recipes and menus • Identifies time and date of dentist's appointment from card or letter • Gets specific details from short narratives and simple poems
Understands meaning and purpose	• Locates the billing period and amount due from an ESB bill • Gets the gist of a written note or telephone message • Identifes and discuss the purpose of a piece of writing

Upper-level	Examples
Recognises words commonly used	• Reads safety manual at work • Follows the terms on voter's registration form • Recognises informal or colloquial words in popular stories and poems • Reads detailed amounts for cooking or measuring shown as abbreviations
Makes sense of writing rules	• Reads a short newspaper article aloud, guided by punctuation and similar supports • Looks up the Golden Pages for a nearby crash repair service • Uses the index or table of contents to find information on topic of personal interest • Makes sense of a local newspaper article on a known topic
Finds key information from different forms of writing	• Uses photos, captions, headlines and known words to identify what a newspaper article is about • Guesses the meaning of an unknown word from the context • Uses a timetable to find the best bus times for a particular journey • Follows a more complex form and understands the information required
Understands meaning and purpose	• Gives opinions about characters in a story • Reviews and discusses their reaction to a piece of text • Demonstrates understanding through question and answer

Cornerstone 1: Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Uses numbers to carry out everyday tasks

| Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Uses numbers in daily life		
Recognises and uses the most common numbers in real-life situations and the relevant language and symbols Adds a small number of items where the format is supplied and 'no carry over is needed Understands and applies the concept of half and quarter in real-life situations Makes rough estimates involving familiar routines	Uses a range of counting strategies to make everyday calculations Adds and subtracts numbers in practical situations, showing an understanding of place value Understands and applies the concept of multiplication and division in simple real-life situations Makes estimates involving less familiar but manageable routines Uses a calculator to check answers	Decides which calculations they need to work out real-life number questions expressed in words Uses multiplication and division to get answers needed for practical tasks Gets answers to real-life questions that require two or more different types of calculations Uses percentages and fractions to make practical calculations and understand their equivalencies
Uses money in daily life		
Recognises euro coins and notes, their names, abbreviations and symbols, and how they relate to each other Selects correct coins and notes to pay for familiar items Adds money to the nearest euro Estimates money needed for familiar items and services	Writes the words and numbers used in daily activities Uses different counting strategies to add and subtract money to the nearest cent Estimates total costs of a small number of items and compare costs of similar items Works out a simple budget using pencil and paper or a calculator	Decides which calculations they need to work out real-life money questions and use these to get answers Works out commonly used percentages and fractions like VAT, service charges and sale discounts Compares value for money of different items Works out detailed budgets using pencil and paper or a calculator
Understands and uses units of time		
Identifies and understand the essential units of time — minutes, hours, days, weeks, months — and how they relate to each other Recognises different formats for showing time — clock face, digital clock — and dates — calendars Identifies important dates in own life Recognises half and quarter hours on a familiar timepiece	Recognises different formats for showing time in timetables and programmes Uses watches and calendars to tell time and date, and to work backwards and forwards Finds specific dates and times on calendars, and timetables using 12 hour clock Programmes simple timepieces (alarm) Tells the time to the nearest quarter hour on different timepieces	Uses different time pieces to tell time to nearest five minutes, including using the 24 hour clock Adds and subtracts time to estimate durations (of journeys or programmes, for example) Uses diaries and planners to organise and manage time commitments Programmes more complex timepieces (VCR)
Uses measurement in everyday life		
Identifies and understands concepts of length, height, weight, capacity and temperature Uses appropriate units for different kinds of measurement as well as non-standard ways of measuring Understands and applies concepts of half and quarter to real-life situations Identifies appropriate instruments to use for different kinds of measurement Locates measurements given on packets and labels Compares estimates of measurement — larger and smaller, heavier and lighter, hotter and colder	Uses and writes abbreviations for units of measurement Uses standard instruments to measure height, weight, capacity and temperature to nearest whole number Identifies and understands how different units of measurement equate with each other Distinguishes between larger and smaller fractions Estimates measures in familiar situations	Decides which measurement units and calculations they need to work out real-life questions Measures accurately using standard instruments, and uses these to calculate how much of something they need for a particular purpose Judges when estimates will suffice and when accuracy is required Understands how measures are shown in visual tools like maps and plans

Cornerstone 1:   Knowledge and skills
Area of learning: Uses numbers to carry out everyday tasks

Beginning level	Examples
Uses numbers in daily life	• Writes own date of birth • Counts number of people in a room • Adds cost of a short shopping list • Cuts a pizza in quarters • Estimates cost of sandwich and newspaper
Uses money in daily life	• Matches euro coins and notes with the correct words, abbreviations and symbols • Uses coins to work out that four 5c coins equals one 20c coin • Selects correct coins to pay bus fare • Guesses likely cost of two-monthly ESB bill
Understands and uses units of time	• Names the seasons and months • Sets own watch to correct time • Finds own birthday on a calendar • Uses a clock to work out that one hour and ten minutes equals 70 minutes
Uses measurement in daily life	• Gives own height and weight • Uses a measuring tape to get own height in centimetres • Identifies which unit of measurement is used to give the distance from Galway to Athlone • Suggests ways of measuring out ingredients without kitchen scales

Mid-level	Examples
Uses numbers in daily life	• Works out a simple daily budget of expenses • Changes a recipe by doubling or halving amounts for ingredients • Uses five times tables to quickly count out coins
Uses money in daily life	• Writes a cheque. • Adds up a bill in a café and works out change due • Compares cost of making a mobile phone call with cost of sending a text • Works out weekly household expenses
Understands and uses units of time	• Finds convenient departure time on a train timetable • Uses a calendar to count out number of days to the holidays • Works out total time for a journey in two or more stages • Sets a digital alarm clock
Uses measurement in daily life	• Notes down the correct size of a window to buy curtains • Takes a child's temperature • Weighs out 250 g of flour on a kitchen scales • Estimates how much water a jug holds

Upper-level	Examples
Uses numbers in daily life	• Decides how to work out the number of tiles needed for a splash-back • Works out the number of tiles needed for a splash-back • Works out the cost of a weekend away • Works out tax due at 20% or 40%
Uses money in daily life	• Checks VAT on ESB bill • Works out a restaurant tip of 15% • Works out cost of a sale item at 25% off • Estimates value for money of packet of soap powder at 1/3 free, against usual size and price
Understands and uses units of time	• Converts between 12 and 24 hour clock to read travel times • Works out journey time from arrival and departure on train timetable • Sets timing on central heating
Uses measurement in daily life	• Works out the amount of carpet needed for a room • Works out monthly budget showing incomings, outgoings and savings • Decides how many bottles of wine to buy for a party with 20 guests • Finds the distance between Galway and Athlone using a map

Process cornerstone 2: Depth of understanding and critical awareness
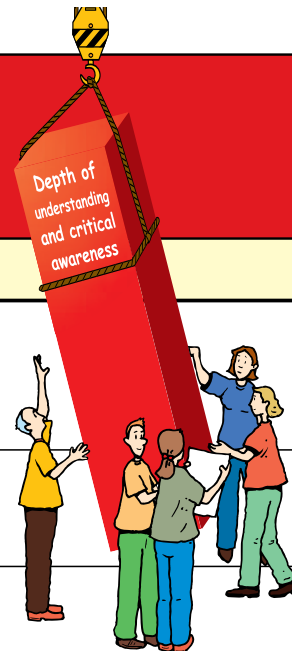
Beginning level	Examples
Applies personal knowledge and learning experience	• Tells story about something that happened to them • Fills in a form almost identical to one recently practised • Uses knowledge of ATMs to discuss the steps involved
Uses judgement	Gives own opinion of outcome of sporting controversy
Plans and checks own learning	In initial interview, sets broad learning goals

Mid-level	Examples
Applies personal knowledge and learning experience	• Uses prior experience of filling in a form to a new format that has a different appearance but some similar headings • Applies knowledge of items to understand a mail order catalogue
Uses judgement	Discusses why people may disagree about a sporting controversy and gives evidence to support their own opinion
Plans and checks own learning	Identifies a series of learning goals for next year and what they need to do to reach their goals.

Upper-level	Examples
Applies personal knowledge and learning experience	• Generates a personal budget using knowledge of own spending patterns. • Selects from a range of possible forms which one they should fill in for a particular situation
Uses judgement	Evaluates possible bias in newspaper coverage in sporting controversy and how this should affect their opinion.
Plans and checks own learning	Writes or speaks to reflect on learning progress over last year

Process cornerstone 2: Depth of understanding and critical awareness

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level

Applies personal knowledge and life experience

Recognises familiar items and situations and use these to complete familiar activities	Applies personal and local knowledge to new and unfamiliar tasks and activities	Analyses and reflects on knowledge and experience to guide actions
¥ Applies knowledge and experience directly ¥ May need prompting to apply own knowledge	¥ May need to modify knowledge to be useful. ¥ Requires some thought about how to apply knowledge.	¥ Extracts general rules and principles from own experience and applies them to other situations
1 = needs detailed prompting 2 = needs some prompting throughout 3 = needs only a little prompting	4 = prior knowledge is applied directly, needs no modification 5 = prior knowledge needs a little modification to be applied 6 = prior knowledge needs thought about how to apply	7 = applies prior knowledge when application is obvious 8 = applies prior knowledge when it is less clear how to do so 9 = extracts principles from previous situations and applies to new ones

Uses judgement

Expresses their own opinions and identifies personal priorities and values when asked or prompted	Identifies different points of view and reasons for making different choices	Evaluates information in terms of its source, possible bias and relevance and compares this with own experience and knowledge
1 = needs detailed prompting to give opinions 2 = needs some prompting 3 = needs only a little prompting	4 = identifies more than one different opinion 5 = identifies several possible points of view 6 = discusses why people hold different opinions	7 = identifies potential relevance of new information 8 = identifies potential bias in new information source 9 = compares new information with own knowledge, evaluates potential bias and draws conclusions

Plans and checks own learning

Identifies their own strengths, weaknesses, likes and dislikes, and set general goals	Sets realistic goals and learning plans	Monitors and evaluates progress and reflect on learning, adjusts learning plans and goals
1 = needs detailed prompting to identify strengths and interests 2 = needs some prompting to identify strengths & weaknesses and set goals 3 = needs only a little prompting to set goals	4 = sets specific goals but needs help in planning how to accomplish them 5 = needs little support in developing learning plan 6 = sets goals and plan for how to accomplish them with no support	7 = looks back on learning and identifies progress 8 = looks back on learning and identifies progress and difficulties 9 = adjusts learning plan to take account of progress and difficulties

Process cornerstone 3: Fluency and independence

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level

Ease in carrying out the task

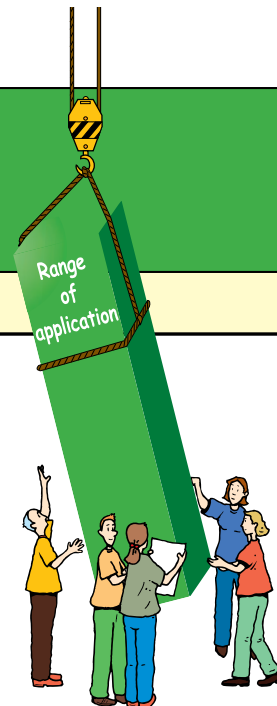| Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Some difficulty while working on the task: ¥ needs help getting started on the task; ¥ is hesitant and uncertain about how to continue; and ¥ takes a very long time to work through the task 1 = unable to start without help 2 = uncertain how to continue at every stage of task 3 = hesitation at every stage but continues with help	Some hesitation and completes task with some difficulty: ¥ has a few false starts but eventually gets started; ¥ is hesitant but recovers and continues working; and ¥ takes somewhat longer than the tutor would take. 4 = hesitant at first but can overcome it. 5 = often needs help but not always. 6 = gets stuck but recovers.	Carries out the task with ease and with no hesitation: ¥ works on the task with confidence; and ¥ completes task in much the same time as tutor would 7 = occasionally has difficulty with parts of task. 8 = seldom encounters difficulties. 9 = approaches task with confidence.

Consistency in carrying out the task

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Learner has used skill before, but has difficulty applying it again. ¥ rarely or sometimes applies same skills to an identical task 1 = has difficulty applying skills to identical task. 2 = occasionally can apply skills to identical task. 3 = sometimes can apply skills to identical task.	Once skill has been learned, usually can apply it again: ¥ to a similar task after a period of time, for example a week, a fortnight, or a month 4 = usually applies skills to an identical task 5 = sometimes applies skills to a similar task 6 = often applies skills to a similar task	Once skill has been learned, learner can apply it to new tasks again and again: ¥ has fully internalised the task and carries it out successfully after long periods without practise. 7 = usually applies skills and knowledge to new tasks 8 = almost always applies skills and knowledge to new tasks 9 = always uses skills and knowledge to carry out tasks

Independence in carrying out the task

| Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Needs help with most stages of the task: ¥ gets stuck unless there is frequent assistance; and ¥ constantly asks for help 1 = needs complete help with most parts of task 2 = needs a lot of help with most parts of the task 3 = needs some help with most parts	Needs some help with some parts of the task but can accomplish some parts alone 4 = needs some help with some parts of task 5 = needs some help with a few parts 6 = needs little help with a few parts of task	Needs little or no help in carrying out the task 7 = needs little help with a few parts of task 8 = needs minor help with only one part of task 9 = needs no help with any of task

Process cornerstone 4:   Range of application

Beginning level	Examples
Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks	• Uses knowledge of alphabetical order to correctly list given words, having recently completed a similar activity • Uses knowledge of time to work out how many minutes are in a specified time period, having recently completed a similar activity • Fills in name and address on a 'Clubcard' application form, having recently completed a video club form • Works out amount of payment due in canteen for snack, having recently bought similar items in a newsagent
Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings	Reads aloud with usual tutor

Mid-level	Examples
Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks	• Looks up item in an index, having recently practised looking up name in 'phone book (same knowledge and skill content but different format and context) • Uses train timetable to work out how long a train journey takes, having recently used bus timetable to time a bus journey (same knowledge and skill content, same context but different format). • Uses TV listings to work out the length of a TV programme (same knowledge and skill content but different format and context)
Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings	Reads a story to own child in a creche

Upper-level	Examples
Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks	• Uses knowledge of alphabetical order to locate information in an encyclopaedia of several volumes • Uses experience of the way most forms are structured to locate relevant items on a complicated form • Identifies and telephones local council or corporation office to ask about forms needed to apply for waiver of bin charges
Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings	Reads a notice or label for a stranger in a supermarket who has lost their glasses

Process cornerstone 4: Range of application

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level

Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks
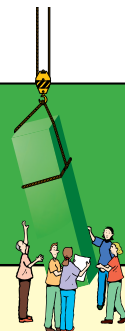
Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Applies skills and knowledge only to tasks that are almost identical to those recently practised in format, content or context.	Applies skills and knowledge to tasks that are similar in some ways and different in others, from those recently practised in terms of format, content or context	Applies skills and knowledge to unfamiliar tasks, by drawing on general rules, principles, experience and practice
1 = applies knowledge and skill only to identical tasks. 2 = applies knowledge and skill to a very similar but not identical task. 3 = applies knowledge an skill to different tasks with very similar format.	4 = applies knowledge and skill to tasks that are similar in some aspects but different in others. 5 = applies knowledge and skill to tasks that differ in format and content. 6 = is able to identify the familiar knowledge and skills needed for new tasks.	7 = recognises elements common to familiar and new task when connection is straightforward. 8 = recognises elements common to familiar and new tasks, even when connection is less straight forward. 9 = extracts the important elements of the task and identifies the general rules and principles needed to carry it out.

Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings

Beginning	Mid-level	Upper level
Mainly applies knowledge and skill in a comfortable and familiar setting	Applies knowledge and skill in settings that are not completely familiar or comfortable	Applies knowledge and skills in unfamiliar or public settings
1 = needs detailed prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting. 2 = needs some prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting. 3 = needs a little prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting.	4 = needs detailed prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting. 5 = needs some prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting. 6 = needs a little prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting.	7 = needs detailed prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting. 8 = needs some prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting. 9 = needs a little prompting to apply knowledge and skill in this setting.

Mapping the learning journey

Name _____

Date _____

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① Cornerstone: Knowledge and Skills

	Beginning	Mid-level	Upper-level
	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

Communicates by speaking and listening

- Listens to obtain information
- Understands the meaning and purpose of verbal and non-verbal communication
- Expresses what they want to say in ways that suit the audience and purpose

Writes to convey information, ideas and feelings

- Writes words that express what they want to say
- Organises the flow so that a reader will understand
- Uses the rules of writing appropriately
- Uses different forms of writing to suit the purpose and audience

Reads with understanding

- Recognises words commonly used
- Makes sense of writing rules
- Finds key information from different form of writing
- Understands meaning and purpose

Uses numbers to carry out everyday tasks

- Uses numbers in daily life
- Uses money in daily life
- Understands and uses units of time
- Uses measurement in everyday life

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② Cornerstone: Depth of understanding and critical awareness

	Beginning	Mid-level	Upper-level
	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

- Applies personal knowledge and life experience
- Uses judgement
- Plans and checks own learning

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③ Cornerstone: Fluency and independence

	Beginning	Mid-level	Upper-level
	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

- Carries out the task easily
- Carries out the task consistently
- Carries out the task independently

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④ Cornerstone: Range of application

	Beginning	Mid-level	Upper-level
	1 2 3	4 5 6	7 8 9

- Applies knowledge and skills to less familiar tasks
- Applies knowledge and skills in a range of settings