



COMMUNICATION
Reading
SCQF Level 3
10 Hour Unit (F3GN 09)

CORE SKILLS UNIT

ASSESSMENT SUPPORT PACK

Part 1: Information for tutors

What is involved?

This Unit is one of a group of four:

- ◆ Listening
- ◆ Speaking
- ◆ Reading
- ◆ Writing

Together these deliver the complete Communication Core Skill at SCQF level 3. This Unit is about using reading skills in everyday personal, workplace, social, and educational situations. The focus of the Unit is on transferable communication skills. It is designed for delivery in schools, colleges, workplaces, community, and other learning environments.

The learner will be expected to work only with simple written information. The work will be simple and routine, using everyday language familiar to the learner. Learner motivation can be maximised by making the reading activities as relevant as possible to the learner. The activities should consist of an appropriate mix from personal, workplace, social, and educational examples. Also, integration of the communication activities with those of other SQA Units being undertaken should be explored. For example, when a learner is undertaking vocational or subject-specific Units, motivation for Communication can be increased if the learner can see the direct relevance of the task.

Assessment and evidence

Learners at SCQF level 3 are required to deal only with simple language in routine situations. They may need some support to carry out the activities.

For this reading Unit the learner should read and understand simple text. The topic should be one that is familiar to the learner, using everyday language.

You should try to identify naturally occurring opportunities for assessment where possible. For learners who are also working towards vocational or subject-specific Units, opportunities for assessment of Communication skills could arise while completing vocational or subject-specific tasks that provide evidence for both Units. The exemplar in this pack could be used or contextualised for this purpose.

The assessment process is likely to involve one or more of the following:

- ◆ oral questioning
- ◆ written/oral responses to written questions
- ◆ a short report

If you use oral questioning, you must keep a record of both the questions and learner responses. All evidence must be retained, signed, and dated by you.

Planning

You should work out where opportunities for meeting the standards are likely to arise. You should discuss the assessment process with learners so that they clearly understand what is expected of them.

Guidance on the Unit

What learners need to know or be able to do

The Unit states that the learner will:

- ◆ work out what a piece of writing is for (eg to give instructions, offer advice, or persuade the reader of a certain point of view)
- ◆ pick out the important ideas and key points in a non-fiction text
- ◆ decide whether a piece of writing works (eg how useful is it to its readers, does it give both sides of an argument, is it easy to read, and is all the information complete?)

Reading skills can be developed and assessed in a number of ways that can be adapted to the personal situation of the learner, eg whether they are attending school or college, in paid or voluntary work, or engaged in community or social activities. The sample text contained in Part 2 gives a guide to the level of reading ability required.

The purpose of the document

The purpose of the written communication should be clear. Learners need to decide for whom the document has been written, and why, eg to instruct, inform, advise, or persuade. The document should be a piece of simple reading material of around 200 words on a non-fiction topic that conveys several pieces of information. The topic should be simple and familiar to the learner. Texts with a practical purpose are suitable. The selected documents may include other supportive material as well as words, eg pictures, diagrams, and sketches.

Understanding

The key points should be explicit, and the content should be direct and uncomplicated. Learners should be able to pick out the main ideas behind the text and the important points that contribute to understanding. Vocabulary should be familiar to the learners.

Did the document achieve its purpose?

It is important that learners make a basic evaluation of the document. Was information or advice conveyed effectively? Was it useful for the intended reader? Evaluation should be supported by at least one piece of evidence.

Gathering evidence

It may be appropriate for you to gather written evidence produced by the learner in the form of a brief report. However, written evidence is not essential for this Unit and it is inappropriate if it disadvantages the learner.

You may wish to use oral assessment instead. This requires you to create and complete record sheets comprising a checklist and prompts for an oral report. Learner comments need to be noted by you, or you may record the session as evidence, including supplementary questions and responses if applicable. Alternatively you can use, or adapt, the planning sheets and assessment checklist supplied in Part 3.

From the learner's point of view, it is useful to have the means of keeping all the work of this Unit together. You can help by creating and providing a workbook that includes all the evidence-gathering items. An alternative would be to provide worksheets that can be made into a portfolio or e-portfolio.

If you have chosen to integrate the Communication work with that of other Units being undertaken by the learner, it may be possible to assess this work as part of a larger single activity. In this case, you must keep separate records of assessment decisions for this Unit.

Evidence may be gathered in a variety of ways. Some typical activities might be:

- ◆ picking out the main points from a health information leaflet and commenting on how useful the leaflet would be to people with these health problems
- ◆ reading a letter on how to enrol as a college student, identifying the main information in it, and deciding whether the letter outlines the procedures clearly
- ◆ stating the aim of a short web article about wind farms, summarising the main points made in favour of (or against) this form of energy, and indicating whether the writer has made convincing arguments
- ◆ reading a newspaper job advertisement, establishing the main features of the job and the skills required, and deciding whether the advertisement is likely to attract suitable applicants
- ◆ looking at a health and safety poster in the workplace, listing the actions that it recommends employees take to avoid hazards, and saying whether these are adequately explained.

Note: Learners must prove that they can do the whole of the task at one time. They should not gather evidence from different situations for different parts of the task.

Evidence for reading assessment may be presented in the form of a written or oral report, supplemented by responses to questions if necessary.

Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Part 2: Assessment guidance

For this Unit you should choose a piece of simple reading material of around 200 words on a non-fiction topic that conveys several pieces of information.

The topic should be one that is simple and familiar to learners from their personal, workplace, social, or educational experiences. Texts with a practical purpose are most suitable and could include health and safety notices, job advertisements, or articles on current issues. These may include images as well as words.

Vocabulary should be familiar to the learners.

Assessors should ensure that reading texts are appropriate for this level. A brief marking guideline should be drawn up to ensure consistency of reading assessment.

One exemplar text is provided in this section, as a guide to the length and complexity of a suitable written piece. This particular piece could be supplemented by pictures, lists of the main vegetable groups or recipes.

Exemplar assessment

Task: Use reading skills in personal, workplace, social, or educational situations in order to read simple written documents.

Example

Read the document below. Pick out the main points and comment on how useful it would be to people who might read it in a supermarket magazine.

Five a day: Vegetables are good for us!

Why eat vegetables?

Vegetables are widely recognised for their benefits to health. Many people now believe they help to prevent heart disease and some cancers. Apart from the health benefits, vegetables are tasty and nutritious. And if you are on a tight budget, vegetable dishes are usually cheaper than meat ones.

What do vegetables contain?

Vegetables are low in calories and high in fibre, and contain vitamins and minerals that are essential to a balanced diet. They are good providers of vitamin C and folic acid.

How to store?

It is important not to lose goodness by poor storage methods. Green leafy vegetables, like cabbage and watercress, should be kept cool, in a refrigerator if possible. Vegetables that are fast-frozen soon after being harvested keep their vitamin levels very well, providing they are stored and cooked according to the instructions on the pack.

To cook or not to cook?

Many vegetables can be eaten raw, not just lettuce and tomatoes. Carrots, cauliflower, and mushrooms all make tasty additions to salad dishes. If vegetables are to be cooked, it is best to use only a little water, eg steaming, microwaving, and pressure cooking. Stir frying keeps the food nice and crisp, but may add calories through the fat or oil used for the cooking. Many people use a non-stick wok for stir fries, with only a trace of oil.

Notes for assessment

The learner must succeed in all skills in any one task to achieve this Unit.

Part 3: Exemplar recording documentation

This section provides forms that can be used for planning and recording learners' results.

Planning sheets

You can use these to help learners plan and/or provide supplementary evidence.

Assessment checklist

You can use this to record achievement for the task. The checklist identifies the skills that learners must demonstrate.

Planning sheet A: Reading assessment

Task: Use reading skills in personal, workplace, social, or educational situations in order to read simple written documents.

Use this sheet to help you prepare for assessment.

Learner:	
What did you read?	
<p>What was the purpose of the piece of writing? For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ to give instructions ◆ to offer advice ◆ to persuade you to do something ◆ to give information ◆ to entertain 	
<p>What were the most important points in the piece of writing? Try to list them in your own words.</p>	
<p>Did the document succeed in what it set out to do? Give it your rating by thinking about such questions as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Did it include useful information or advice? ◆ Was it easy to read? ◆ Was it well-written? ◆ Did it highlight the important points clearly? ◆ Was it useful to you? <p>Back up your comments with evidence.</p>	

Tutor signature..... Date.....

Planning sheet B: Reading assessment

There are different ways of assessing reading. Your tutor may ask you questions about what you have read and record your answers (Planning Sheet A will help you prepare for this).

Or you may be asked to write a short report on what you have read. The following format may help you.

Report on.....

{Insert the title of the document that you read.}

1. Introduction

{Briefly explain the purpose of the document.}

2. Main points

{Here summarise what the document was about, picking out the main points. You can use a bulleted list if you want to.}

3. Evaluation

{Rate the piece of writing. Decide whether it succeeded in what it was trying to do. Back up your evaluation with evidence.

This section of your report is likely to be at least 30 words long.}

Signature:

Date:

{Don't forget to sign and date your report.}

Exemplar reading report

Report on 'Five a day: Vegetables are good for us!'

1. Introduction

The article was about vegetables. The purpose was to persuade you to eat more of them.

2. Main points

The writer tells you:

- ◆ why you should eat vegetables (healthy, tasty, and cheap)
- ◆ what vegetables contain (fibre, vitamins, and minerals)
- ◆ how to store them
- ◆ ways to serve them (raw or cooked)

3. Evaluation

It was easy to understand, with headings to let you see the main points.

It was good to say vegetable dishes 'are usually cheaper' because people are short of money these days.

The article would look better with some pictures of vegetables and maybe a recipe to give you ideas.

Signature: *Frank Coble*

Date: *3 March 2009*

Assessment checklist: Reading

Task: Use reading skills in personal, workplace, social, or educational situations in order to read simple written documents.

Learner:		
Description of reading task:		
Skills	Tutor feedback	Achieved (Yes/No)
Identifies the most important ideas or main points in the written communication.		
Evaluates success of communication in terms of its purpose.		
Supports basic evaluation with at least one piece of evidence/reasoning.		
Tutor signature:	Date:	
Context: Reading materials should be familiar to the candidate and routine to their situation. Texts with a practical purpose are most suitable. The communication will be brief, the key points should be explicit, and the content should be direct and uncomplicated. The purpose of the communication should be clear and clearly embodied in conventions typical of this particular form.		



ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Core Skills

This Unit is part of a suite of four Units that when completed give automatic certification of the Core Skill of Communication at SCQF level 3. The other Units in this suite are:

Communication: Writing at level 3

Communication: Listening at level 3

Communication: Speaking at level 3

Credit value

1.5 SCQF credit points (0.25 SQA credits) at SCQF level 3

Unit code:	F3GN 09
Superclass:	KB
Publication date:	August 2009
Source:	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Version:	02

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