

1/2 the year  
methodology

Teacher:

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### BOX 3.3: ELICITATION TECHNIQUES

1. **Questions and answers.** Simple questions, very often following reading, or as part of an interview; may require short or long answers:

What is the (family) relationship between David Copperfield and Mr Murdstone?

2. **True/false.** A statement is given which is to be marked true or false. This may also be given as a question, in which case the answer is yes or no.

Addis Ababa is the capital of Egypt.  
Is Addis Ababa the capital of Egypt?

3. **Multiple-choice.** The question consists of a stem and a number of options (usually four), from which the testee has to select the right one.

A person who writes books is called  
a) a booker. b) an editor. c) an author. d) a publisher.

4. **Gap-filling and completion.** The testee has to complete a sentence by filling a gap or adding something. A gap may or may not be signalled by a blank or dash; the word to be inserted may or may not be given or hinted at.

They (go) to Australia in 1930.

Or

They \_\_\_\_\_ to Australia in 1930. (go)

Or

A \_\_\_\_\_ is someone who writes books.

Or

I've seen that film. (never)

5. **Matching.** The testee is faced with two groups of words, phrases or sentences; each item in the first group has to be linked to a different item in the second.

large	small
unhappy	many
a lot	big
little	sad

6. **Dictation.** The tester dictates a passage or set of words; the testee writes them down.

7. **Cloze.** Words are omitted from a passage at regular intervals (for example, every seventh word). Usually the first two or three lines are given with no gaps.

The family are all fine, though Leo had a bad bout of flu last week. He spent most of it lying on the sofa watching \_\_\_\_\_ when he wasn't sleeping!

His exams \_\_\_\_\_ in two weeks, so he is \_\_\_\_\_ about missing school, but has managed to \_\_\_\_\_ quite a lot in spite \_\_\_\_\_ feeling ill!

8. **Transformation.** A sentence is given; the testee has to change it according to some given instruction.

Put into the past tense:  
I go to school by bus.

9. **Rewriting.** A sentence is given; the testee rewrites it, incorporating a given change of expression, but preserving the basic meaning.

He came to the meeting in spite of his illness.  
Although ....

10. **Translation.** The testee is asked to translate expressions, sentences or entire passages to or from the target language.

11. **Essay.** The testee is given a topic, such as 'Childhood memories', and asked to write an essay of a specific length.

12. **Monologue.** The testee is given a topic or question and asked to speak about it for a minute or two.

### BOX 3.4: GUIDELINES FOR TEST PREPARATION

**Validity.** Check that your items really do test what they are meant to!

**Clarity.** Make sure the instructions for each item are clear. They should usually include a sample item and solution.

**'Do-ability'.** The test should be quite do-able: not too difficult, with no trick questions. Ask a colleague to read through it and answer the questions before finalizing.

**Marking.** Decide exactly how you will assess each section of the test, and how much weighting (percentage of the total grade) you will give it. Make the marking system as simple as you can, and inform the testees what it is: write in the number of points allotted after the instructions for each question.

**Interest.** Try to go for interesting content and tasks, in order to make the test more motivating for the learners.

**Heterogeneity.** The test should be such that lower-level students can feel that they are able to do a substantial part of the test, while the higher-level ones have a chance to show what they know. So include both easy and difficult items, and make one or more of the difficult ones optional. (See Module 21: *Large heterogeneous classes* for more discussion of materials for heterogeneous classes.)

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### Questions for the 4th year methodology examination

1. Curriculum and syllabus. Define the terms and identify their roles. Different types of syllabuses - explain the basic differences.
2. The National Core Curriculum, the Frame Curriculum of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, local curricula, and the year syllabus - function of the different curricula; relationship of the different curricula.
3. Reasons for testing. Evaluation criteria for testing. Function of the different types of tests.
4. Reasons for testing. Types of tests. Elicitation techniques - comment on their applicability.
5. Theoretical concepts of testing: reliability and validity.
6. Steps of designing a test. Steps of test administration. Washback.
7. The new school-leaving exam: its levels, main parts, elicitation techniques, evaluation.