

ASER assessment tasks

The testing process addresses ASER's central question – are children acquiring foundational skills? The process is designed to record the highest level that each child can comfortably achieve. That is, rather than testing grade level competencies, ASER is a 'floor test' focusing on basic learning.

Testing is conducted at home, rather than in schools, so as to include out of school children and children attending different types of schools. All children in the 5-16 age group in a sampled household are tested using the same tools, irrespective of age/grade or schooling status. Children are assessed on basic reading and simple arithmetic. In 2016, tests of basic English reading and comprehension were also conducted.

ASER's testing process incorporates various measures to ensure that it captures the best that each child can do. Surveyors are trained to build rapport with children to create a relaxed and encouraging environment. Testing is conducted in the local language of the child. Children are given the time they need to do each task on the assessment. The testing process is adaptive to the child's ability so that she does not have to attempt all levels. Thus, placed at the core of this test design is the child's comfort and a commitment to accurately record the highest level the child can perform at.

The following pages outline information about ASER testing and the process followed to assess each child on reading, arithmetic and English.

READING TASKS:

All children are assessed using a simple reading tool. The reading test has 4 tasks:

- **Letters:** Set of commonly used letters.
- **Words:** Common, familiar words with 2 letters and 1 or 2 *matras*.
- **Std I level text:** Set of 4 simple linked sentences, each having no more than 6 words. These words (or their equivalent) are in the Std I textbooks of the states.
- **Std II level text:** Short story with 7-10 sentences. Sentence construction is straightforward, words are common and the context is familiar to children. These words (or their equivalent) are in the Std II textbooks of the states.

While developing reading tool in each regional language, care is taken to ensure:

- Comparability with previous years' tools with respect to word count, sentence count, type of words and conjoint letters in words.
- Compatibility with the vocabulary and sentence construction used in Std I and Std II language textbooks of the states.
- Familiarity of words and context, established through extensive field piloting.

Sample: Hindi reading test*

पढ़ने की जाँच SAMPLE

कहानी	अनुक्रम
सावन का महीना था। आसमान में बहुत काले-काले बादल छाए थे। ठंडी-ठंडी हवा चल रही थी। मुझे झूला झूलने का मन किया। बड़े भैया एक मोटी सी रस्सी लेकर बाहर आए। भैया ने रस्सी को पेड़ से लटकाकर झूला बनाया। सब ने मिलकर खूब झूला झूला। बाकी बच्चे भी आकर मजे से झूलने लगे। झूलते-झूलते रात हो गई।	बगीचे में एक पेड़ है। पेड़ पर एक तोता रहता है। तोते का रंग हरा है। वह लाल टमाटर खाता है।
ल प स क ग ड ब म ट झ	लाल दूध पैर तेल किला मोर जूला कुल पानी मौका

Similar tests are developed in 19 regional languages

* Shortened to a more concise layout for purposes of this report. However, the four components or 'levels' of the tool remain the same in the full version.

How to test reading?

PARAGRAPH

START
HERE



Ask the child to read either of the 2 paragraphs.
Let the child choose the paragraph herself. If the child does not choose give her any one paragraph to read.
Ask her to read it. Listen carefully to how she reads.



The child is not at **'Paragraph Level'** if the child:

- Reads the paragraph like a string of words, rather than sentences.
- Reads the paragraph haltingly and stops very often.
- Reads the paragraph fluently but with **more than 3 mistakes**.



The child is at **'Paragraph level'** if the child:

- Reads the paragraph like she is reading sentences, rather than a string of words.
- Reads the paragraph fluently and with ease, even if she is reading slowly.
- Reads the full paragraph with **3 or less than 3 mistakes**.

If the child is not at **'Paragraph Level'** then ask the child to read words.



WORDS

Ask the child to read any 5 words from the word list.

Let the child choose the words herself. If the child does not choose, then point out any 5 words to her.

The child is at **'Word Level'** if the child reads at least **4 out of the 5 words** correctly.



STORY

Ask the child to read the story.

The child is at **'Story Level'** if the child:

- Reads the story like she is reading sentences, rather than a string of words.
- Reads the story fluently and with ease, even if she is reading slowly.
- Reads the full story with **3 or less than 3 mistakes**.

If the child is at **'Word Level'**, then ask her to try to read the same paragraph again and then follow the instructions for paragraph level testing.

If she can correctly and comfortably read at least 4 out of 5 words but is still struggling with the paragraph, then mark the child at **'Word Level'**.

If the child is not at **'Word Level'** (cannot correctly read at least 4 out of the 5 words chosen), then show her the list of letters.



LETTERS

Ask the child to recognize any 5 letters from the letter list.

Let the child choose the letters herself. If the child does not choose, then point out any 5 letters to her.

The child is at **'Letter Level'** if the child correctly recognizes at least **4 out of 5** letters correctly.

If the child is at **'Letter Level'**, then ask her to try to read the same words again and then follow the instructions for word level testing.

If she can recognize at least 4 out of 5 letters but cannot read words, then mark the child at **'Letter Level'**.

If the child is not at **'Letter Level'** (cannot recognize at least 4 out of 5 letters chosen), then mark the child at **'Beginner Level'**.

ON THE HOUSEHOLD
SURVEY SHEET, MARK
THE CHILD AT THE
HIGHEST LEVEL SHE
CAN REACH.

ARITHMETIC TASKS:

All children are assessed using a simple arithmetic tool. The arithmetic test has 4 tasks:

- **Number recognition 1 to 9:** Randomly chosen numbers from 1 to 9.
- **Number recognition 10 to 99:** Randomly chosen numbers from 10 to 99.
- **Subtraction:** 2-digit numerical subtraction problems with borrowing.
- **Division:** 3-digit by 1-digit numerical division problems.



Sample: Arithmetic test

गणित की जाँच SAMPLE				
अंक पहचान 1-9	संख्या पहचान 10-99	घटाव	भाग	
1 4	51 83	$\begin{array}{r} 46 \\ - 29 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 63 \\ - 39 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$7 \overline{)879}$
7 3	37 65	$\begin{array}{r} 47 \\ - 28 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 45 \\ - 17 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$6 \overline{)824}$
6 9	55 26	$\begin{array}{r} 92 \\ - 76 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 84 \\ - 57 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$8 \overline{)985}$
5 2	91 43	$\begin{array}{r} 52 \\ - 14 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{r} 66 \\ - 48 \\ \hline \end{array}$	$4 \overline{)517}$
बच्चे से कोई भी 5 अंक पहचानने को कहें। कम से कम 4 सही होने चाहिए।	बच्चे से कोई भी 5 संख्या पहचानने को कहें। कम से कम 4 सही होनी चाहिए।	बच्चे से कोई भी 2 घटाव के सवाल करने को कहें। दोनों ही सही होने चाहिए।	बच्चे से कोई भी 1 भाग का सवाल करने को कहें। वह सही होना चाहिए।	

How to test arithmetic?

SUBTRACTION 2-digit with borrowing

**START
HERE** →

The child is required to solve 2 subtraction problems. Show the child the subtraction problems. First ask the child to choose a problem. If the child does not choose, pick a problem.

Ask the child what the numbers are, then ask the child to identify the subtraction sign.

If the child is able to identify the numbers and the sign, ask her to write and solve the problem at the back of the Household Survey sheet. Observe if the answer is correct.

Even if the first subtraction problem is answered incorrectly, ask the child to solve the second question following the process explained above. If the second problem is correct, ask the child to try and do the first problem again.

If the child makes a careless mistake, then give the child another chance with the same question.

If the child **cannot do both** subtraction problems correctly, then ask the child to recognize numbers from 10-99. Even if the child does just one subtraction problem wrong, give her the number recognition (10-99) task.

If the child **does both** the subtraction problems correctly, ask her to do a division problem.

NUMBER RECOGNITION (10-99)

Ask the child to identify any 5 numbers from the list. Let the child choose the numbers herself. If the child does not choose, then point out any 5 numbers to her.

If she can correctly recognize at least **4 out of 5** numbers, then mark her at '**Number Recognition (10-99) Level**'.

DIVISION 3 DIGIT BY 1 DIGIT

The child is required to solve 1 division problem. Show the child the division problems. She can choose any one problem. If not, pick one for the child.

Ask her to write and solve the problem.

Observe what she does. If she is able to correctly solve the problem, then mark the child at '**Division Level**'.

Note: The quotient and the remainder both have to be correct.

If the child makes a careless mistake, then give the child another chance with the same question.

If the child is not at '**Number Recognition (10-99) Level**' (cannot correctly recognize at least 4 out of 5 numbers chosen), then ask her to recognize numbers from 1-9.

If the child is unable to solve a division problem correctly, mark the child at '**Subtraction Level**'.

NUMBER RECOGNITION (1-9)

Ask the child to identify any 5 numbers from the list. Let the child choose the numbers herself. If the child does not choose, then point out any 5 numbers to her.

If she can correctly recognize at least 4 out of 5 numbers, then mark her at '**Number Recognition (1-9) Level**'.

If the child is not at '**Number Recognition (1-9) Level**' (cannot recognize at least 4 out of 5 numbers chosen), then mark her at '**Beginner Level**'.

THE CHILD MUST SOLVE THE ARITHMETIC PROBLEMS AT THE BACK OF THE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY SHEET.

ON THE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY SHEET, MARK THE CHILD AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL SHE CAN REACH.

ENGLISH TASKS:

All children are assessed in English reading and comprehension using a simple tool. The test has 4 tasks:

- **Capital letters:** Set of commonly used capital letters.
- **Small letters:** Set of commonly used small letters.
- **Words:** Common, familiar 3 letter words. After reading, the child is asked for meaning of the words in her local language.
- **Simple sentences:** Set of 4 simple sentences, each having no more than 4-5 words. These words (or their equivalent) are in the introductory English textbooks of the states. After reading, the child is asked to say the meaning of the sentences in her local language.



Sample: English test

ENGLISH TEST SAMPLE	
<p>Give this test to ALL children. Record the highest reading level. Note the ability of the child to tell the meaning of words OR sentences depending on the child's highest reading level.</p>	
<p>Capital letter</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; letter-spacing: 1em;">A J Q</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; letter-spacing: 1em;">N E</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; letter-spacing: 1em;">Y R O</p> <p>Ask the child to recognize any 5 letters. At least 4 must be correct.</p>	<p>Small letter</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; letter-spacing: 1em;">h p x</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; letter-spacing: 1em;">u m</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; letter-spacing: 1em;">d g t</p> <p>Ask the child to recognize any 5 letters. At least 4 must be correct.</p>
<p>Word</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">cat red</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">sun</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">new fan</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em;">bus</p> <p>Ask the child to read any 5 words. At least 4 must be correct. If the highest level that the child has reached in reading English is the 'Word Level', then ask the child to say the meaning of <u>those words</u> she has read correctly. She can say the word meaning in the local language. The meaning of at least 4 words must be correct.</p>	<p>Sentence</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em;"><u>What is the time?</u></p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em;"><u>This is a large house.</u></p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em;"><u>I like to read.</u></p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em;"><u>She has many books.</u></p> <p>Ask the child to read all sentences. At least 2 must be correct. If the highest level that the child has reached in reading English is the 'Sentence Level', then ask the child to say the meaning of <u>those sentences</u> she has read correctly. She can say the meaning in the local language. The meaning of at least 2 sentences must be correct.</p>

How to test English?

There are 2 parts in the English tool: Reading and Meaning.

- First administer the reading section and mark the highest reading level of the child.

- Then administer the meaning section. **This is only for children who are marked at word or sentence level in the English reading section.**

PART 1: READING

CAPITAL LETTERS

**START
HERE** →

Ask the child to recognize any 5 capital letters from the capital letter list. Let the child choose the letters herself. If the child does not choose, point out any 5 letters to her.

The child is not at **'Capital Letter Level'** if the child cannot recognize at least **4 out of the 5** letters.

The child is at **'Capital Letter Level'** if the child correctly recognizes at least **4 out of the 5** letters.

If the child is not at **'Capital Letter Level'** (cannot recognize at least 4 out of the 5 letters chosen), then mark the child at **'Beginner Level'**.

If the child is at **'Capital Letter Level'**, then ask the child to recognize small letters.

SMALL LETTERS

Ask the child to recognize any 5 small letters from the small letter list. Let the child choose the letters herself. If the child does not choose, then point out any 5 letters to her.

The child is not at **'Small Letter Level'** if the child cannot recognize at least **4 out of the 5** letters.

The child is at **'Small Letter Level'** if the child correctly recognizes at least **4 out of the 5** letters.

If the child is not at **'Small Letter Level'** (cannot recognize at least 4 out of 5 letters chosen), then mark the child at **'Capital Letter Level'**.

If the child is at **'Small Letter Level'**, then ask the child to read the words.

SIMPLE WORDS

Ask the child to read any 5 words from the word list. Let the child choose the words herself. If the child does not choose, then point out any 5 words to her.

The child is not at **'Word Level'** if the child cannot read at least **4 out of the 5** words.

The child is at **'Word Level'** if the child correctly reads at least **4 out of the 5** words.

If the child is not at **'Word Level'** (cannot read at least 4 out of the 5 words chosen), then mark the child at **'Small Letter Level'**.

If the child is at **'Word Level'**, then ask the child to read the sentences.

Continued on the next page...

EASY SENTENCES

Ask the child to read all four of the given sentences.



The child is not at '**Sentence Level**' if the child:

- Cannot read at least **2 out of the 4** sentences fluently.
- Reads the sentences like a string of words, rather than a sentence.
- Reads the sentences haltingly or stops very often.



The child is at '**Sentence Level**' if the child:

- Reads at least **2 out of the 4** sentences fluently
- Reads the sentence like a sentence and not a string of words
- Reads the sentence fluently and with ease, even if she is reading slowly

ON THE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY SHEET, MARK THE CHILD AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL SHE CAN REACH.

If the child is not at '**Sentence Level**', then mark the child at '**Word Level**'

AND

Ask the child to tell you the meaning of the words she has read correctly.

If the child can read 2 out of 4 sentence, then mark the child at '**Sentence Level**'

AND

Ask the child to tell you the meaning of the sentences she has read correctly.

PART 2: MEANING

For **WORD LEVEL CHILDREN**

For **SENTENCE LEVEL CHILDREN**

WORD MEANINGS

SENTENCE MEANINGS

Ask the child to tell the meaning of the words she has read correctly, **in her local language**.

Ask the child to tell you the meaning of the sentences she has read correctly, in her local language.



The child knows the meaning of the words, if the child can correctly tell the meaning of at least 4 of the read words. She can tell the meaning of the words by:

- Saying the correct meaning in her local language
- OR
- Pointing to an object, which explains the meaning of the word. For eg. pointing to her father while explaining the meaning of 'man'; pointing to something red to explain the meaning of 'red'.

The child knows the meaning of the sentences, if the child can correctly tell the meaning of at least 2 of the read sentences. She can tell the meaning of the sentences by:

- Saying the correct meaning in her local language
- OR
- Explaining the meaning of at least the main underlined words in the sentence. For eg. For a sentence like 'What is the time?' the child should at least be able to say 'kya/kitna' and 'samay/waqt'.

Note: Do not ask the meaning of the main underlined words by pointing at them one by one



If the child can correctly tell the meaning of **at least 4** of the words, then mark the child as '**Can say**' in the word meaning column.

If the child cannot correctly tell the meaning of at least 4 of the words, then mark the child as '**Cannot say**' in the word meaning column.

If the child can correctly tell the meaning of **at least 2** of the sentences, then mark the child as '**Can say**' under the sentence meaning column.

If the child cannot tell the meaning of **at least 2** of the sentences, then mark the child as '**Cannot say**' under the sentence meaning column.

NOTE: IF THE CHILD IS MARKED AT WORD LEVEL, THEN ASK ONLY WORD MEANING. IF THE CHILD IS MARKED AT SENTENCE LEVEL, THEN ASK ONLY SENTENCE MEANING.