

COW TALK

John Stanford International School,
Partial Immersion Program
Seattle, Washington

**An Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment
(ELLOPA)**

Japanese Script for Kindergarten, 2002
Developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics

Overview: This interactive listening and speaking assessment is designed for children ages 4 - 8 learning a foreign or second language in a school setting. Two children at a time participate in a series of language games where they interact with a Japanese-speaking cow puppet (or other puppet), _____ (Mrs. Cow). The puppet speaks only Japanese. Along with an adult interviewer and rater who speak some English (if necessary) during the session, the puppet explains the games to the children in Japanese. Following the natural development of language skills, the assessment focuses first on the children's listening skills and secondly on their speaking skills. The games are *The Magic Bag*, *Speaking with Mrs. Cow*, *Let's Sing!* and *The Three Little Pigs*. The games take about 20 minutes to complete.

Who is this assessment for? The ELLOPA game activities are appropriate for most children in Pre-K - Grade 2 who have studied Japanese. The topics covered include typical curriculum areas for pre-school and early elementary language classes: family members, colors, numbers, size, food, animals, weather, and more. Any language class that covers a similar curriculum, regardless of program model (foreign language in the elementary school - FLES, total and partial immersion, or two-way immersion), will find this assessment useful.

Opening: Greet the children. Give them nametags with their names on them, and introduce yourself, the rater, and Mrs. Cow, the puppet. Tell the children the purpose of the interview. Place the Activity Page in front of the children. As you go through the games, use the Activity Page to make smooth transitions and to help the students know where they are by pointing to the picture of each activity before you begin it.

Hello, I am (name of interviewer) and this is (name of rater). We would like to play some games in Japanese with you. We are going to speak in Japanese and you are going to answer in Japanese. Okay? This is Mrs. Cow, and she is going to help us and speak to us in Japanese too. She doesn't speak English.

Game 1: The Magic Bag

Mrs. Cow greets the students in Japanese and asks them what their names are.

Hi, I'm Mrs. Cow. What is your name? 2X

Mrs. Cow then points to the picture on the Activity Page, identifying Game 1. Mrs. Cow places in front of the students the Magic Bag, containing objects of various geometrical shapes and colors. Mrs. Cow asks one child to open the bag and put everything out on the table.

The first game we are going to play is the Magic Bag. I have the bag here. (Student's name), please open it and take everything out.

Ask the children to point to different colors and objects:

Touch/Point to an object that is _____ (green, yellow, blue, purple, pink, etc.)

Touch/Point to a _____ (circle, triangle, square, rectangle, etc.)

Ask the children to name different colors and objects:

What color is the _____ (circle, square, triangle, etc.)

What is the name of this shape? (Point to the various shapes)

Ask students to group objects and do Math equations:

Group all the _____ (pink, purple, yellow, green, etc.) objects.

How many _____ are there? **2X**

You know how to add, right? Okay. Here are (number) (shape) and (number) (shape). How many are there in all? Tell me the equation. _____ and/plus _____ are _____.

You also know how to subtract numbers, right? Here you have (number) (shape). Take away (number) (shape), and now how many remain? Tell me the equation. _____ minus/take away _____ makes/equals _____.

Additional questions:

Are there more _____ or more _____?

What geometric shapes are not on the table? Can you think of other shapes?

What is your favorite color? Why?

Mrs. Cow tells the students they have done well and that it is time to count the figures and put them back into the bag. She thanks them.

Good job. Now we're going to put all of these shapes back into the Magic Bag. _____ and _____ take turns counting them as you put them into the bag. _____, you begin, then _____ continues. Thank you.

Game 2: Talking with Mrs. Cow

Mrs. Cow points to the picture on the Activity Page that identifies Game 2. She explains that she is going to ask them some questions in Japanese and that they are going to answer the questions in Japanese.

Now, Mrs. Cow would like to ask you some questions but she does not speak English. So you need to answer in Japanese. Okay?

Mrs. Cow asks some of the following questions related to the Game 2 Pictures (or other questions related to the pictures). Point to the corresponding picture or part of the picture for each of the questions.

What is the weather like today?

Look outside. What is it like out there today? Is it ____ (sunny, cold, hot, windy)? Is it _____ (raining, snowing, cloudy)?

____, how old are you? When is your birthday? What month of the year? Do you know what day of the month you were born?

What do you like to eat? Do you like ____ (pizza, apples, etc.)?

Do you have a pet at home? What is it? or What kind of pet? What color is it? Is it big or small? What does your ____ eat?

What is the name of your school? Do you like school?

Do you want to tell me anything more about your school or your classes, what you like to do?

To make the transition to Game 3, ask the students if they sometimes sing songs in Japanese at school.

Game 3: Let's Sing!

Mrs. Cow points to the picture related to Game 3 and says:

Let's sing. Do you know a song in Japanese?

If the students cannot think of a song, Mrs. Cow can suggest tunes that the class has sung, and the children and puppet can sing together.

Important Note: If children do not want to sing, omit this game.

Game 4: The Three Little Pigs

Getting ready to tell the story

(For students with novice/low intermediate levels of proficiency)

Ask students if they know the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. Prepare ahead of time, by placing the magnetic story figures on a board. Use some of the following questions/commands related to the Game 4 figures and story scene to be sure that the students are familiar with the objects before they retell the story. [Use Magnetic Play Set # 7661, Smethport Specialty Co.]

Ask students to identify some of the objects

Point to the pig with the blue dress.

Point to the pig with the glasses.

Point to the pig with the long stick.

Point to the wolf.

Point to a/some _____ (house, flower, tree, clock, fire, straw, sticks, bricks).

Put all the pigs together in a group.

To review, ask the students to name some of the objects:

Who are they? (Point to the three pigs.)

Who is this? (Point to the wolf.)

What is this? (Point to house, road, tree, brick, straw, etc.)

Placing objects in the story scene

As you go through the story, ask the children to pick up various items that are in front of them and place them in specific places in the story scene and ask some of the questions below.

(Student's name), put _____ in/on/under/ the _____.

For more proficient students:

To encourage more student-student interaction, invite the students to ask each other to place some of the magnetic pieces in the story scene.

_____, tell _____ where to put an object in the story scene.

Questions to ask after placing objects in the story scene:

What is the mother pig saying?

What is this pig doing? (Point to a specific pig.)

What is this pig using to build his house?

Who is coming down the road?

What do you think the wolf is going to do here?

More proficient students may be able to answer additional questions:

What is the wolf planning to do?

Could the wolf knock down the house? Why?

How does the little pig feel now? Why?

Retelling the story

Use a picture book of *The Three Little Pigs*

(For students with intermediate/advanced levels of proficiency)

Explain to the students that they will work together to retell the story by taking turns. One student tells the story on one or two pages while the other student listens. Then they switch. Continue alternating until the story is finished. If the narrating student hesitates, prompt him/her, using questions such as those listed above or ask the other student if s/he can help. Be sure that the students have equal opportunities to tell the story. [Use story pictures with text covered.]

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before asking any questions, allow the students to tell as much of the story as they can on their own to elicit sentence-level or paragraph-level speech, if possible. **If students know past tense verbs, use past tense verbs for the prompts to elicit past tense in their language production.**

¿(Use student's name), would you like to begin the story?

Now it is (use student's name) turn. (Use student's name), would you continue, please. [Students keep taking turns until they finish the story.]

Thank the students for telling the story and continue with the Wind down to give them opportunity to complete the assessment successfully at an easier level.

Wind down

To wind down the interview give the students a few TPR commands, ending with applause for their good work.

Now, stand up.

Touch your _____ (ears, nose, eyes, shoulders).

Put your hands on top of your head.

Put your hands under the table.

Raise your right hand.

Touch your left shoulder with your right hand.

Sit down, please.

Clap your hands. Good job.

Clap your hands too and congratulate the students. Let them know that you are finished playing the games. Thank the students for their participation and offer them a sticker or other small object as a reward.

Thank you, children. We are finished with the games. You played very well, and now you can choose a gift before you leave. Good bye.

Rating the interviews

How are the students rated? The students are rated holistically on the ELLOPA Rating Profile, a scale that measures oral fluency, vocabulary (speaking), language control (grammar), listening comprehension, communication strategies, and cultural awareness.

Materials

Hands-on items for *The Magic Bag* activity and for *The Three Pigs*.

- ✓ Puppets: Mrs. Cow and Tom Cat
- ✓ The Magic Bag (geometric shapes)
- ✓ Activities Page
- ✓ *The Three Little Pigs* (Magnetic Play Set # 7661, Smethport Specialty Co.)
- ✓ Game 2 Pictures

Cultural items needed for optional Game #5

Cat puppet, plastic hamburger, Statue of Liberty, baseball, U.S. flag, book written in Japanese, postcard with a Japanese greeting written on it, and the flag of Japan

Supplies for test administrators --

- ✓ Rating scale for rater
- ✓ Rating sheet for each pair of students
- ✓ Name tags for students and interviewers
- ✓ Stickers or pencils (or other small treat) to give students for completing the game activities
- ✓ Video camera and blank videotapes
- ✓ Tape recorder and blank cassette tapes

Comments and questions are most welcome! Please send feedback to: Lynn Thompson at the Center for Applied Linguistics, 4646 40th St. NW, Washington, DC 20016 (lynn@cal.org, tel. 202-362-0700)

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