

The Framework for Developing Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Nepal Testing Tools

1. Introduction

This framework is designed to guide the preparation of testing tools for Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) in Nepal. The objective of this framework is to provide standard guidelines to the item writers for the development of ASER test items in Nepal. The framework has been informed by efforts in the Nepali context as well as best practices found in the global People's Action For Learning (PAL) network. This framework has learned from the EGRA and NASA assessment tools used by the Education Review Office, Nepal. It has also drawn from testing approaches used by ASER in India, ASER in Pakistan, and Uwezo (conducted in three East African countries). ASER Nepal tests are pegged to the Nepali national curriculum at the Standard 2 and 3 levels. This reflects the best practices of Citizen-led Assessments around the world as well as conformity with SDG 4 demands. This framework is important as it allows for the development of uniform and standard tests across the samples, contexts and the years. The development of this framework is particularly need at this moment where ASER Nepal methodologies are being adapted across contexts - as a way to reach the very marginalized in households in Province 2 and Province 3 as well as a simple easy to use way to assess all school going students in various municipalities in Province 5.

The framework is pegged to the literacy and numeracy skills at the grade 3 level as per national curriculum of Nepal. However, ASER Nepal will not assess all competencies of literacy and numeracy as stipulated in the Syllabus and recommended textbooks. Rather it will assess the foundational competencies at the specific grades which are specified in the following sections.

This framework has been divided into following sections:

1. Framework and Minimum Proficiency of Nepali Literacy Test
2. Framework and Minimum Proficiency of English Literacy Test,
3. Framework and Minimum Proficiency for Numeracy Test.

2. Framework and Minimum Proficiency for Nepali Literacy Test

Level	National Curriculum of Nepal	ASER Nepal Minimum Proficiency	Description
Beginner		Below Basic	-
Letter	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1 notes this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : वर्णमालाका सग्ला, संयुक्त र मात्रा सहितका वर्ण र ती वर्ण प्रयोग भएका शब्दको शुद्ध उच्चारण गर्न ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : वर्णमालाका सग्ला वर्णको शुद्ध उच्चारण गर्न ।</p> <p>Student should be able to recognize alphabets. There will be 10 random Nepali alphabets. There will be at least 2 vowels, and balance between the range (Ka-Gha, Cha-Jha, Ta-Da, Pa-Ma). The confusing letters (ड, ञ, ठ, ड, ढ, ण, ष, श, क्ष, ञ, ज्ञ) will be omitted.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 10 Total Number of Attempts: 5 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 4 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows basic proficiency by being able to recognize 5 Devanagari alphabets.</p> <p>He/she has to pronounce them correctly.</p> <p>Basic: Requires least cognitive skills</p> <p>The font will be in "Preeti."</p>

<p>Word</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : वर्णमालाका सगला, संयुक्त र मात्रा सहितका वर्ण र ती वर्ण प्रयोग भएका शब्दको शुद्ध उच्चारण गर्न । सरल शब्दहरू पढ्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : संयुक्त वर्ण भएका र उस्तै ध्वनि सुनिने शब्दहरूको को शुद्ध उच्चारण गर्न । जोडे मोडेका सरल शब्दहरू पढ्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : संयुक्त वर्ण भएका शब्दहरूको को शुद्ध उच्चारण गर्न ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : वर्णमालाका सगला र मात्रा सहितका वर्ण र ती वर्ण प्रयोग भएका शब्दको शुद्ध उच्चारण गर्न ।</p> <p>Student should be able to identify 4 out of 5 words correctly, with the correct pronunciation. Words should include maximum 3 single letter, and 2 Matras.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 10 Total Number of Attempts: 5 (50% of the total items.) Total Number must be correct: 4 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows basic proficiency by being able to recognize words.</p> <p>He/she has to pronounce them correctly.</p> <p>Proficient: Requires a reasonably moderate level of cognitive skills</p>
<p>Sentence</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : वर्णमालाका सगला, संयुक्त र मात्रा सहितका वर्ण र ती वर्ण प्रयोग भएका शब्दको शुद्ध उच्चारण गर्न । सरल शब्दहरू पढ्न । सरल वाक्यहरू (चारपाँच शब्दसम्मका कर्ता, कर्म र क्रिया भएको वाक्य) पढ्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : सरल वाक्यहरू (चारपाँच शब्दसम्मका कर्ता, कर्म र क्रिया भएको वाक्य) पढ्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : सरल वाक्यहरू, साधारण सुचना, विवरण, पोष्टर, भित्तेपात्रो (चारपाँच शब्दसम्मका संयुक्त वर्ण प्रयोग भएका शब्दहरू समेत हुनेगरी कर्ता, कर्म र क्रिया भएको वाक्य) पढ्न ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : सरल वाक्यहरू (चारपाँच शब्दसम्मका कर्ता, कर्म र क्रिया भएको वाक्य) पढ्न ।</p> <p>Student should be able to read at least 2 out of 4 sentences correctly or with 1 mistake per sentences. A sentence might have up to one joint letters. The words in a sentence will be no longer than 5 letters.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 4 Total Number of Attempts: 2 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 2 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows slightly advanced proficiency being able to recognize sentences. He/she able to pronounce each word in the sentences correctly in flow.</p> <p>Higher Proficiency: Requires higher level order of proficiency</p>
<p>Story</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : सरल बालगीत र कथाहरू सस्वर पढ्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : सरल बालगीत र कथाहरू सस्वर पढ्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : आफुले जानेका बालकथा भन्न । सरल बाल साहित्यहरू सस्वर पढ्न ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : तीन वा सो भन्दा कम गलत उच्चारण सहित सरल बाल साहित्यहरू सस्वर पढ्न ।</p> <p>Student should at least be able to read the story fluently with 3 or less than 3 mistakes. Use simple present and simple past tense. There will be not more than 10 sentences having maximum 5-7 words per sentences. Use full stop, comma, inverted comma and question mark as punctuation mark. No more than 5 joint words will be included.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 1 Total Number of Attempts: 1 (100% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 1 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows advanced level proficiency by being able to read the story fluently. Student also has to make sense of the story.</p> <p>Advanced: Requires an advanced level of cognitive skill</p>

<p>Comprehension</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कथाको मुख्यविषय बोध गर्न, पात्र पहिचान गर्न र मुख्य मुख्य घटना कारण सहित भन्न ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कथाको मुख्यविषय बोध गर्न, पात्र पहिचान गर्न र मुख्य मुख्य घटना कारण सहित भन्न ।</p> <p>Student should be able to tell some sense of the story, a conclusion, and/or a character’s motivations or intentions. The first question will be simple direct question coming from either second, third or fourth sentence. The second question will be inference question which might include ‘how’ or ‘why’ and answer can be found in the last few sentences.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 2 Total Number of Attempts: 2 (100% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 2 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows higher level proficiency by being able to answer the comprehension questions correctly.</p> <p>Advanced: Requires an advanced level of cognitive skill</p>
-----------------------------	---	---	---

3. Framework and Minimum Proficiency of English Literacy Test

Level	National Curriculum of Nepal	ASER Nepal Minimum Proficiency	Description
Beginner		Below Basic	-
Small Case Letters	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, and Grade 2 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>Grade 1: To recognize and pronounce sounds of small letters.</p> <p>Grade 2: To recognize all letters by sounds.</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision: “Grade 1: To recognize and pronounce sounds of small letters.”</p> <p>Only small letters are to be included and arranged random. The difficult and confusing letters (q, x, i, l) will be avoided. Test children’s ability to differentiate at least a pair of b & d, n & u, w & m.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 10 Total Number of Attempts: 5 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 4 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows basic proficiency by being able to recognize small case (small) alphabets with ease.</p> <p>The pronunciation and the shape recognition have to be correct.</p> <p>The Font will be in “Times New Roman”.</p>
Word	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have mentioned about this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>Grade 1: To read well-known words. To read figures 1-10.</p> <p>Grade 2: To recognize sounds of common diphthongs and read words containing them. To recognize all active vocabulary words. To read figures 1-100.</p> <p>Grade 3: To recognize all diphthongs and consonant blends and read words containing them.</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision: “Grade 1: To read well-known words.”</p> <p>Student should be able to identify words correctly, with the correct pronunciation. There will be balanced mix of noun and verbs which are familiar in national textbooks and composed of 4 or 5 letters. The word with silent letters (hour, knife) will not be included. Some samples of high frequency word from the Grade 1 textbooks are: small, driver, book, father, playing, mother, evening, night, sister, white.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 10 Total Number of Attempts: 5 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 4 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows slightly advanced proficiency by being able to recognize the words and also comprehend the meanings of these words.</p> <p>The student is able to pronounce the words correctly and fluently.</p>

<p>Sentences</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>Grade 1: To read short, well known sentences.</p> <p>Grade 2: Read out simple sentences with acceptable pronunciation including instructions.</p> <p>Grade 3: To read and follow simple instructions.</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision: “Grade 2: Read out simple sentences with acceptable pronunciation.”</p> <p>Student should be able to read at least 2 out of 4 sentences made of 4-6 words correctly or with 1 mistake per sentences. Not more than 1 word having silent letters in any of sentences.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 4 Total Number of Attempts: 2 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 2 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows advanced proficiency by being able to read the sentences, pronouncing each word correctly and reading the sentence fluently.</p> <p>Student also has to comprehend the meaning of the sentences and has to explain the meaning in their own native language.</p>
<p>Story</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>Grade 1: To read very simple, well-illustrated “story”.</p> <p>Grade 2: Understand and enjoy simple stories.</p> <p>Grade 3: Develop interest in reading short poems and stories. To read simple stories (including comic-strip style and guessing word-meanings)</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision: “Grade 3: To read simple stories.”</p> <p>Student should at least be able to read the story fluently with 3 or less than 3 mistakes. Use simple present and simple past tense. There will be not more than 10 sentences having maximum 5-7 words per sentences. Use full stop, comma, inverted comma and question mark as punctuation mark.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 1 Total Number of Attempts: 1 (100% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 1 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows advanced level proficiency by being able to read the story fluently. Student also has to make sense of the story.</p> <p>Advanced: Requires an advanced level of cognitive skill</p>
<p>Compre- hension</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 2 and Grade 3 have mentioned about this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>Grade 2: Understand and enjoy simple stories.</p> <p>Grade 3: Understand and enjoy simple stories including comic-strip style and guessing meaning.</p>	<p>Student should make some sense of the story by generating conclusions about a character’s motivations or intentions. The first question will be simple direct question coming from either second, third or fourth sentence. The second question will be inference question which might include ‘how’ or ‘why’ and answer can be found in the last few sentences.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 2 Total Number of Attempts: 2 (100% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 2 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows higher level proficiency by being able to answer the comprehension questions correctly.</p> <p>Advanced: Requires an advanced level of cognitive skill</p>

4. Framework and Minimum Proficiency for Arithmetic test

Level	National Curriculum of Nepal	ASER Nepal Minimum Proficiency	Description
Beginner		Below Basic	-
1 Digit Number	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have mentioned about this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : एक देखि सय अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन, चिन्न र लेखन । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक, अङ्कमा)</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : तीन अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन र लेखन । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक, अङ्क र अक्षरमा)</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : छ अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन र लेखन ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : एक देखि १० अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या पढन र चिन्न । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक कुनै एकमा)</p> <p>Student should be able to recognize digits (between 0-9 either in Devnagari or in Hindu-Arabic) correctly. All 0-9 numbers will be included in different positions in different question sets.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 10 Total Number of Attempts: 5 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 4 (80% - 100% of the total attempts)</p>	<p>Student shows basic level proficiency in arithmetic ability by being able to recognize one-digit numbers.</p> <p>Basic: Requires a basic level of cognitive skills</p>
2 Digit Number	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : एक देखि सय अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन, चिन्न र लेखन । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक, अङ्कमा)</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : तीन अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन र लेखन । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक, अङ्क र अक्षरमा)</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : छ अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन र लेखन ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : दश देखि सय अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या पढन र चिन्न । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक कुनै एकमा) ।</p> <p>Student should be able to identify numbers (between 10-99 either in Devnagari or in Hindu-Arabic) correctly. The items will be balanced on even-odd, last digit below-above 5, and at least one from all the range of 10 (10-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80-89 and 90-99). A digit will not be repeated more than 4 times within a set.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 10 Total Number of Attempts: 5 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 4 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows basic level proficiency by being able to recognize two-digit numbers.</p> <p>Basic: Requires a basic level of cognitive skills</p>
3 Digit Number	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : एक देखि सय अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन, चिन्न र लेखन । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक, अङ्कमा)</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : तीन अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन र लेखन । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक, अङ्क र अक्षरमा)</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : छ अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या गन्ती गर्न, पढन र लेखन ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : तीन अङ्कसम्मका सङ्ख्या पढन र चिन्न । (देवनागरी र हिन्दु अरेबिक कुनै एकमा)</p> <p>Student should be able to recognize at least 4 out of 5 numbers (between 100-999 either in Devnagari or in Hindu-Arabic) correctly. The items will be balanced on even-odd, tenth digit below-above 5, and at least one from all the range of 10 (100-190, 200-290, 300-390, 400-490, 500-590, 600-690, 700-790, 800-890 and 900-990). A digit will not be repeated more than 4 times within a set.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 10 Total Number of Attempts: 5 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 4 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows advanced ability by being able to recognize three-digit numbers.</p> <p>Proficient: Requires a reasonable moderate level of cognitive skills</p>

<p>Subtraction</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : दुई अङ्कले बनेका सङ्ख्याहरूको घटाउ (सापटी लिनुपर्ने) गर्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : तीन अङ्कसम्मले (दुई वा तीन अङ्क) बनेका सङ्ख्याहरूको घटाउ (सापटी लिनुपर्ने) गर्न ।</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : ४ अङ्कसम्मले बनेका (कुनै तीन स्थानमा सापटी लिनुपर्ने) सङ्ख्याहरूको घटाउ गर्न र तत्सम्बन्धी व्यावहारिक समस्या बनाउन र हल गर्न ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : दुई अङ्कले बनेका सङ्ख्याहरूको घटाउ (सापटी लिनुपर्ने) गर्न ।</p> <p>Student should be able to solve at least two of four subtraction problems with borrowing correctly.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 4 Total Number of Attempts: 2 (50% of total items.) Total Number must be correct: 2 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows slightly complex level of proficiency by being able to compute subtractions with borrowing with two digit numbers.</p> <p>Advanced: Requires higher order cognitive skills</p>
<p>Division</p>	<p>The curriculum of Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 have noted this proficiency as follow:</p> <p>कक्षा - १ : अधिकतम २० ओटासम्मका वस्तुहरूलाई २ देखि ५ ओटा सम्मको बराबर समूहमा बाँडन ।</p> <p>कक्षा - २ : दुई अङ्कसम्मको सङ्ख्यालाई एक अङ्कको सङ्ख्याले भाग गर्न र जाँचन (निशेष भाग जान्ने)</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : तीन अङ्कसम्मको सङ्ख्यालाई दुई अङ्कसम्मको सङ्ख्याले भाग गर्न र जाचन । (भाजक ह भागफल + शेष = भाज्य हुन्छ भन्ने धारणा दिन ।</p>	<p>ASER Nepal aims to test the basic level of the curriculum provision:</p> <p>कक्षा - ३ : तीन अङ्कसम्मको सङ्ख्यालाई एक अङ्कसम्मको सङ्ख्याले भाग गर्न (शेष आउने) ।</p> <p>Student should be able to solve one 3 digit by 1 digit numerical division problem with remainder correctly.</p> <p>Total Number of Items: 2 Total Number of Attempts: 1 (50% of total items) Total Number must be correct: 1 (80% - 100% of the total attempts.)</p>	<p>Student shows advanced proficiency level by being able to compute division sums with three-digit numbers as the dividends and one-digit number as the divisor.</p> <p>Advanced: Requires higher order cognitive skills</p>

5. General Guiding Principles of ASER Nepal

ASER Nepal aims to develop and use assessment tools that are low cost, simple and easy to use. All items should be selected to the level found in the national curriculum and its recommended text books. The test items shall be original. The direct lifting of items from the textbooks is not be recommended. The items shall take into consideration concerns about gender, environmental, cultural, political and religious biases. For each subject, four test sets will be developed to assess the same level of competencies. All the set of tests should be at the same level of difficulty.