

Using cloze tests to assess the reading needs of EAL learners



Linda Todd

Introduction

The four tests contained in this booklet were devised and trialled by the author as a research project for MA in Applied Linguistics in 2006. Tests were devised to provide a valid and reliable measure of assessing EAL students' reading skills to inform and monitor learning programmes.

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Wellington
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Cover photo: Faduma Salad and Thary Trann, students from Wellington East Girls' College, on a trip to Kapiti Island.

Contents

Rationale	4
These tests	
Using the tests	
Which test to start with?	
Administering the test	
Scoring procedures	5
What can the test scores tell us about the literacy proficiency of learners?	
Exemplars	6
Analysing the scores	8
What can we learn about the students' reading strategies?	
What can we learn about a learner's current level of language proficiency?	
Exemplar showing a student's language strategies	9
After the test	10
Making your own tests	
Research notes on cloze	11
References	12
Appendix: Tests: Stage 1	13
Stage 2	17
Stage 3	20
Stage 4	23

Rationale

Cloze tests, where deletions have been specifically chosen, produce diagnostic information on a student's integrated language skills. A reading passage must not be too difficult for a learner and be on a culturally familiar topic for a learner to engage with the text (Douglas 1998; Brown 2001; Sasaki 2002). Cloze tests are relatively easy to administer and provide valid and reliable information about a student's language proficiency by deliberate deletion of targeted language features such as verb forms, prepositions and lexical items. (See Research notes.)

These tests

The four tests contained in this booklet were devised and trialled by the author as a research project for MA in Applied Linguistics in 2006. Deletions are specifically selected to test a range of linguistic knowledge including lexical and grammatical structures. Each test contains a range of deletions that are solvable and no deletions require complex technical knowledge. The tests follow an increasing level of complexity based on reading stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the English Language Learning Progressions (ELLP).

The results provide a clear indication of a learner's ability to interpret text at a particular level. Close analysis of a learner's gapfill choices can reveal information about their vocabulary knowledge, knowledge of grammatical structures and syntax, and their ability to understand text without prior teaching. Analysis of results should provide a guide for programme planning for the learner and be used with other information about their proficiency and progress in all language skills, for example results from Nation's Vocabulary Survey, Probe tests, asTTle, ELLP writing and oral language assessments.

Using the tests

The tests can be photocopied from pages 13 – 25.

Which test to start with?

Ask a learner to read aloud to you from any text you think might be at an appropriate level for example a graded reader or a school journal or use a vocabulary test score to assess a starting level for the learner.

Administering the test

- Allow 40 – 50 minutes for the test
- Test only one level at a time; this should include all the passages unless a learner is clearly out of their depth. Each passage should be on a separate page.
- Read the instructions to the class
- Suggest that it is possible to use the word bank as a guide, and that some learners may wish to make their own choices
- Remind learners to check that their choices make sense.

Scoring procedures

There are 45 or 50 items to mark for each test. These should be converted to a percentage.

- Accept as correct answers that indicate the learner has “understood” the context even if there are errors in spelling or minor grammatical errors.
- Be consistent when marking a group or class and decide whether you will accept switches in tense, incorrect pronouns, article or prepositional errors, or errors in verb form or word form choices.

In the research study that trialled these tests the following practice was consistently applied:

- missing ‘s’ on third person singular present tense verbs but “eat insects” was not accepted for “**eating** insects” (test 2.3)
- missing ‘s’ for plurals was accepted
- some leniency was allowed in prepositional use, e.g. “in, around” was accepted for “**on**” the islands; but for “**in** the bush”, “on the bush” was not acceptable (test 2.2); “between 2001 **and** 2005” “to” was not accepted, although commonly used by the students (test 1.4). However, in test 3.1 there were two contrasted headings, the first: “Some ways to save water **in** the home” (followed by inside examples); the second heading: “Some ways to save water **outside** the home” (followed by outside examples), “in” was not accepted for the latter example
- article usage: “**an** award”, “a” or “the” were accepted (test 1.4), other article errors (the/a) were accepted in most cases
- pronoun concordance: “**our** lives” where there were two instances of “we” in the same paragraph, “your” or “their” were not accepted (test 3.2)
- spelling was allowed considerable leniency as long as the target word was understood, “then” was accepted in the place of “more **than** eight”, “off course” was accepted for “**of** course” (test 3.2)
- punctuation: capital letters at the start of sentences, frequently missed by many students, was deemed acceptable
- subject – verb concordance was allowed some leniency, “A Hindu do not eat beef” (test 2.2) was deemed acceptable.

What can the scores tell us about the literacy proficiency of the learners?

Oller (1979) established the following guide for the readability of a text:

- Scoring below 44%, a learner is likely to experience frustration
- Scores between 44 and 57%, a text may be suitable for instructional reading use.
- Scores of 58 to 100% should allow a learner an increasing level of independence in reading the text.

Exemplar showing the application of the marking guide to a passage from Stage 3

Why save water?

Stage 3.1

We are having longer, drier, hotter summers. This means there will be less water to go around. It also means people will use more water to keep cool and keep their gardens growing.

(1) *Should be homes or houses*

The number of (1) water ☒ in the Wellington Region is growing. (2) that ☒ means more people are going to (3) sea ☒ water (ie higher demand). More demand and (4) rain ☒ water could lead to water shortages.

Should be need or use (3) less (4) machine (8) them (9)

Some ways to (5) save ☒ water in the home:

- Don't leave the (6) water ☒ running while you wash hands, dishes (7) and ☒ vegetables.
- Only use the washing (8) hand ☒ or dishwasher for full loads, never use (9) water ☒ for half loads. (A full load uses (10) more ☒ water than 2 half loads!)
- Turn the tap (11) off ☒ after you have wet your (12) prash ☒ when cleaning your teeth.
- Take short showers (less (13) then ☒ 5 minutes) rather than deep baths.
- Check (14) your ☒ leaks in water pipes around the (15) home ☒.

(10) *Should be less if learner has engaged with context*

(12) *Should be brush than Phonetic spelling was acceptable*

(14) *Should be for but is acceptable in this context*

(16) *Should be outside 'in' is not acceptable in the context of the points following.*

Some ways to save water (16) in ☒ the home

- Turn outside taps off properly (17) after ☒ check for leaks.
- Use a bucket of (18) water ☒ to wash cars instead of leaving the hose (19) on ☒.
- Sweep the path with a broom, (20) or ☒ a hose.
- Water plants in the cool of the day, (21) once ☒ or twice a week in summer. (Up to 80% of (22) rain ☒ water used during the heat of the (23) summer ☒ could evaporate.)
- Mulch around plants to prevent evaporation (mulch (24) plants ☒ prevent up to 70% of water loss from evaporation). Mulch can (25) be ☒ made from used paper, old carpet or garden wastes.

(20) *Should be not if learner has engaged with context*

(17) *Should be and*

(24) *Should be can*

(22) *Should be tap or the and (23) day or afternoon, but rain and summer acceptable as they make sense*

(15/25 = 60%)

Adapted from *Why Save Water?* Wellington Regional Council.

Exemplar of the marked text extract from Stage 3 demonstrating corrections and possible student reading strategies

Why save water?

Stage 3.1

We are having longer, drier, hotter summers. This means there will be less water to go around. It also means people will use more water to keep cool and keep their gardens growing.

Should be 'homes' or 'houses'(1)
Miscued countable noun?

Should be 'need or use'(3)
'less'(4)
'machine'(8)
'them'(9)
Not reading past the gap, collocates with next or previous word?

The number of (1) water ☒ in the Wellington Region is growing. (2) that ☒ means more people are going to (3) sea ☒ water (ie higher demand). More demand and (4) rain ☒ water could lead to water shortages.

Should be 'less' (10)
Not reading past the gap or considering wider context

Some ways to (5) save ☒ water in the home:

- Don't leave the (6) water ☒ running while you wash hands, dishes (7) and ☒ vegetables.
- Only use the washing (8) hand ☒ or dishwasher for full loads, never use (9) water ☒ for half loads. (A full load uses (10) more ☒ water than 2 half loads!)
- Turn the tap (11) off ☒ after you have wet your (12) prash ☒ when cleaning your teeth.
- Take short showers (less (13) then ☒ 5 minutes) rather than deep baths.
- Check (14) your ☒ leaks in water pipes around the (15) home ☒.

Should be 'for' (14) but is acceptable in this context

Should be 'brush'(12)
'than'(13)
phonetic attempt, acceptable
Spelling error

Should be 'outside' (16).
'in' is not acceptable in the context of the points following.
Not reading past the item?

Some ways to save water (16) in ☒ the home

- Turn outside taps off properly (17) after ☒ check for leaks.
- Use a bucket of (18) water ☒ to wash cars instead of leaving the hose (19) on ☒.
- Sweep the path with a broom, (20) or ☒ a hose.
- Water plants in the cool of the day, (21) once ☒ or twice a week in summer. (Up to 80% of (22) rain ☒ water used during the heat of the (23) summer ☒ could evaporate.)
- Mulch around plants to prevent evaporation (mulch (24) plants ☒ prevent up to 70% of water loss from evaporation). Mulch can (25) be ☒ made from used paper, old carpet or garden wastes.

Should be 'not'(20)
Not engaged with main idea of topic?

A linking word 'and'(17) was required
Miscued by verb form of 'check'?

Should be 'can' (24)
Miscued by surrounding verb forms?

Should be 'tap' (22) and 'day' (23)
Makes sense in context

Adapted from *Why Save Water?* Wellington Regional Council.

Analysing the scores

What can we learn about the learners' reading strategies?

A cloze tests a range of reading skills that are integrated with one another. The level of difficulty of the passage and the learner's background knowledge of the topic play a big part in determining their level of engagement and consequently their ability to fill the gaps correctly. Learners who are not familiar with the cloze format may not have developed strategies for solving gaps.

All learners use top down/bottom up processing. That is they apply their overall understanding of the topic as well as their knowledge of vocabulary (particularly the collocations of associated words), grammar and sentence structure.

- More capable readers respond to cues such as headings, the initial sentence or paragraph. They read "around" items and are not put off by unknown vocabulary. They check their gapfill choices as they go.
- Less capable readers become much more clause bound and choose words that collocate with the word prior to or immediately past the gap. They may appear to apply a scatter gun approach selecting words from the word bank that make no sense in the context if checked. They frequently ignore punctuation, even the use of capital letters at the beginning of a sentence.

What can we learn about a learner's current level of language proficiency?

By looking carefully at a learner's gapfill choices it is also possible to get some insight into their:

- control of vocabulary (word choices made correctly or incorrectly, did the student use their own word or choose from the word bank?)
- grammatical knowledge (consistent use of tense, pronouns, correct choices based on parts of speech, observation of plural, subject verb/ agreement)
- observance of punctuation
- accuracy of spelling
- ability to write neatly, form letters correctly.

Make observation notes on the learners' responses under the categories listed above. See next page.

Exemplar of a learner's response illustrating language strategies

What do you eat? Stage 2.2

(14) Cues correctly with relative pronoun 'who'

(15) Shows confusion with verb form preceding negative. Has some context awareness?

(20) Does not observe punctuation nor read past the gap

(21) Uses preceding context to make a sensible choice

(24) Observes context clues, draws on background knowledge

(26) Is cued by need to use capital letter, insecurity with article usage

(27) Is miscued by punctuation (comma)? Understands the need for capital letter

(28) Understands the need for link word connecting nouns

(29) Selects correct verb from surrounding context

(25) Subject/verb agreement error

(16) Word form error, (uses noun instead of adjective)

(17) Does not observe punctuation nor cue from preceding list. vocab or structural error

(18) Observes context clues, draws on background knowledge

(19), subject verb agreement error

(22) Verb choice error, present tense + infinitive

(23) Spelling Is confused by homophone

Some people eat everything. Some people do not eat everything. They will not eat some types of food because of what they believe, or because of their religion. Who are these people?

The (14) people ✓ who choose what they eat or (15) believe ✗ not eat because of (16) religion ✓ beliefs include teetotallers, vegans and vegetarians. (17) they ✗ do not drink alcohol, vegans eat only (18) fruit ✓ from plants and a vegetarian (19) eat ✓ food from plants, but also eggs, (20) and ✗ well as cheese, yoghurt and (21) other ✓ products.

Buddhists, Jews, Hindus and Muslims (22) does ✗ not to eat certain foods for (23) there ✓ reasons. A Buddhist does (24) not ✓ kill anything to eat. A Hindu (25) do ✓ not eat beef or pork. (26) Also ✗ Jew does not eat pork or shellfish. (27) Muslim ✗, Jewish people do not mix milk products (28) and ✓ meat. They eat kosher food. A Muslim does not (29) eat ✓ pork, or drink alcohol. They eat halal food.

Adapted from Denny, H. ed. (2005). What Do You Eat? *Password*. Volume 29, Number 3.

✓ ✗ illustrates marking guide

After the test

- Conference learners when returning the marked tests. Question learners on some of their choices to more fully understand the strategies they were applying to the gap filling process and their engagement with the text as a whole. With the learner, identify key areas that they need to work on.
- Use test scores as a contributor to an individual and class profile. Administer a higher level test later in the year to track progress.
- Use test results to help to establish approximate ELLP reading levels. For example, Test Stage 3 is at ELLP Stage 3 and within the range of English Language Intensive Programme (ELIP) Stage 3.

Making your own tests

- Choose an appropriate text for your student group. It can be a text based on a subject already studied where the vocabulary and concepts are already familiar and could take the form of a post-test. If choosing text on an unfamiliar subject, care should be taken to select a text that has a familiar structure. For example a biography or information report is more likely to relate in some way to the learners' general knowledge. Remember if a text is too hard less capable readers will be unable to engage with the text and are less likely to attempt to fill gaps with sensible choices. Use ELLP or ELIP to check the language features of texts at different levels.
- Make deletions to test a variety of language skills. The tests in this publication were designed to ensure there was a balance of items that could be solvable by reference:
 1. within the clause
 2. outside the clause within the sentence
 3. across sentences
 4. outside the text, (to a learner's background knowledge)

Bachman (1985)

It is advisable, when testing reading comprehension, to select a higher proportion of items from categories 2 and 3.

- Note the distribution of vocabulary levels in your text. You can do this electronically using the Compleat Lexical Tutor website as follows:
 1. Save your text as a text file
 2. Go to <http://www.lextutor.ca/>
 3. Select "vocab profile, English" from the home page of the website (<http://www.lextutor.ca/vp/eng/>) and follow the instructions. There are guidelines in the ELLP document about the range of high frequency vocabulary expected in reading texts at each progressive level.

The Compleat Lexical Tutor website also has the facility to generate cloze tests for you as long as your text is saved as a text file. Go to the cloze generator which is accessible from the home page. At http://www.lextutor.ca/cloze/n_word/ select the rational deletion option. The method that works most successfully at the time of writing was:

1. Put an underscore after every word to be deleted.
2. Double click the words for the deletion box (word bank).
3. Put an underscore after every word in the word bank.
4. Select from the option of a paper format or an electronic copy complete with an audio feedback tool.
5. Choose 'submit'.

Please note that this website is constantly being developed. One advantage of using this tool is the fact that you can also generate the cloze to be done online so that a learner can work independently and has immediate feedback on his or her word choices. There is also scope to insert an audio or video file option.

Research notes on clozes

Research carried out over the last 30 years has sought to examine what language skills cloze measures and how tests can be designed to ensure the validity and reliability of test results. Cloze tests were originally designed for the placement of EFL learners in university courses by researchers (Oller, 1973). Using fixed ratio deletion (1:5 or 1:7) results appeared to correlate well with TOEFL and could be used to assess reading comprehension and the readability of a text; it was regarded as an integrative language test. Results of further study raised questions about the reliability of tests because changing the deletion pattern could produce wide variation in results. Cloze was criticized for being too clause bound and was considered unsuitable to assess reading comprehension (Alderson, 1979).

Further studies were carried out that demonstrated cloze items do not carry the same amount or kind of information. It was found that deleting specific items such as cohesive devices, function words or lexical items required test-takers to move outside the clause and engage higher level strategies (Bachman 1982,1985; Jonz 1990,1991; Cohen 1998; Storey 1997; Yamashita 2003). The tests became known as rational cloze or gap-fill tests (Alderson, 2000).

If reading passages are too difficult, learners can't activate their background knowledge and become clause dependent (Douglas, 1998). Therefore it is important to ensure a passage is of an appropriate level of difficulty for the learners being tested (Brown, 2001) and that it contains culturally familiar content (Sasaki, 2000).

Further information regarding this research can be obtained by reading Todd and Gu, (2007, p16-29).

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Stage 1:

Name:

Date:

In the following four passages some of the words have been left out.

First read over the whole passage and try to understand what it is about.

Then try to fill in the spaces. It takes only one word to fill in each space.

You may use the words in the text box at the bottom of the page to help you. Any word that makes sense in the space will be accepted.

Try to fill all the spaces.

Here is an example showing how to fill a space:

I can speak English _____ now.

I can speak English well now.

1.1

The world

There are seven continents in the world – Europe, Asia, North America, South America, Africa, Australia and Antarctica. There are also _____ large oceans – Pacific, Atlantic, Indian and Arctic.

Asia is the largest _____ and Australia is the smallest. Africa has the _____ countries. It has 53 countries. Europe is a _____ continent with 25 countries. There are 22 _____ in North America and 13 countries in _____ America. Australia is a continent, a country _____ an island.

most

countries

has

and

four

small

South

island

continent

Adapted from Ministry of Education (2003c). The World. *English Language Intensive Programme Years 7–13 Resource*. Auckland: Ministry of Education. Stage 1, Reading.

1.2

Antarctica

Antarctica is the coldest, windiest and loneliest of all the seven continents. It also has high _____.

Temperature

In the coldest parts of Antarctica the _____ is usually between -40° and -70° Celsius _____ the winter.

Amount of daylight

In Antarctica, day and _____ are different from what we _____ used to. During the coldest time, _____ is dark all day as well as _____ night.

Ice shelf

Antarctica is so _____ that some of the oceans around _____ freeze as well. This is called an _____ shelf. Sometimes bits _____ the ice shelf break off. _____ are called icebergs.

of	all	ice	temperature	from
it	These	it	cold	are
winter	during	night	mountains	

Adapted from Ministry of Education (2003c). The World. *English Language Intensive Programme Years 7–13 Resource*. Auckland: Ministry of Education. Stage 2, Reading.

1.3

Sharks

Sharks are fish. They belong to the group called Elasmobranchii. _____ live in waters all around the _____. They live in every ocean and _____ some rivers and lakes.

Other _____ have bones but sharks don't. Their skeletons _____ made from cartilage which is not _____ hard as bone.

Sharks have about 5 rows of _____. The front teeth are the biggest. Sharks _____ chew most food. They eat _____ in big pieces. Many people are _____ of sharks because of their _____ teeth. But sharks don't usually attack _____.

All sharks are carnivorous (meat eaters) and they may _____ fish, squid, other sharks, marine mammals _____ other small animals.

world	as	teeth	and	don't
it	fish	afraid	can	in
people	eat	Sharks	are	big

Adapted from Ministry of Education (2003c). The World. *English Language Intensive Programme Years 7–13 Resource*. Auckland: Ministry of Education. Stage 2, Oral.

1.4

Tana Umaga

Tana Umaga is a famous New Zealand rugby player. _____ was born in Lower Hutt in 1973. His parents came to New Zealand from Samoa.

In 1994 Tana first _____ for Wellington in the NPC competition. _____ was captain of the Hurricanes between 2001 _____ 2005.

He was first picked to play _____ the highest rugby team, the All _____, in 1997. In 2003 he was given _____ award for outstanding sportsmanship. Umaga was made captain of the _____ Blacks in 2004.

In 2006 Umaga decided _____ to play for the All Blacks _____ more. He wanted to spend more _____ with his family. He still plays _____.

Tana Umaga is a popular and talented rugby player.

Blacks	not	first	He	time
to	Tana	any	player	an
played	All	and	for	rugby

/45

Stage 2:

Name:

Date:

In the following three passages some of the words have been left out.

First read over the whole passage and try to understand what it is about.

Then try to fill in the spaces. It takes only one word to fill in each space.

You may use the words in the text box at the bottom of the page to help you. Any word that makes sense in the space will be accepted.

Try to fill all the spaces.

Here is an example showing how to fill a space:

I can speak English _____ now.

I can speak English well now.

2.1

Why do people do dangerous jobs?

Wherever people live together in a community, there are many different jobs to be done. People work to produce and sell goods or to provide services. Some people, however, must do dangerous jobs to help a community run smoothly.

Some people face danger in their _____ every day, but they take _____ to minimise the risks _____ face.

But why would people _____ themselves in danger to do a job?

_____ workers, such as police officers and fire fighters, _____ dangerous jobs to help people _____ are in trouble.

Other workers, such _____ lion tamers, jockeys and racing car _____, do dangerous jobs because they _____ the excitement and the thrill. _____ do dangerous jobs because they are paid _____ to do their jobs. People may do _____ jobs for a combination of reasons.

Some	like	do	dangerous	put
as	care	help	jobs	Others
they	well	who	drivers	because

Adapted from Rankin, John. (1996). Dangerous Jobs. Galaxy Readers.

2.2

What do you eat?

Some people eat everything. Some people do not eat everything. They will not eat some types of food because of what they believe, or because of their religion. Who are these people?

The _____ who choose what they eat or _____ not eat because of _____ beliefs include teetotallers, vegans and vegetarians. _____ do not drink alcohol, vegans eat only _____ from plants and a vegetarian _____ food from plants, but also eggs, _____ well as cheese, yoghurt and _____ products.

Buddhists, Jews, Hindus and Muslim _____ not to eat certain foods for _____ reasons. A Buddhist does _____ kill anything to eat. A Hindu _____ not eat beef or pork. _____ Jew does not eat pork or shellfish. _____, Jewish people do not mix milk products _____ meat. They eat kosher food. A Muslim does not _____ pork, or drink alcohol. They eat halal food.

their	choose	do	A	does
as	Also	religious	food	Muslim
Teetotallers	People	eat	and	eats
not	Plants	milk	believe	vegetable

Glossary:

Kosher = according to Jewish law

Halal = according to Muslim law

Adapted from Denny, H. ed. (2005). What Do You Eat? *Password*. Volume 29, Number 3.

2.3

Wax – eyes

About a hundred and thirty years ago, people at Waikanae, north of Wellington, saw great numbers of strange birds.

They were little green birds _____ a white ring of feathers round _____ eyes.

Scientists soon found out that these _____ had come all the way _____ the Tasman Sea by very strong _____.

The Maoris called the new bird “tauhou”, their _____ for “stranger”. Today they are also known _____ wax-eyes, white-eyes, or silver-eyes.

Because they can _____ all sorts of food, and _____ they can live in many different _____ of places, wax-eyes have _____ in numbers. They are now found _____ over New Zealand – along the coasts, _____ the islands, in scrub, in tussock country, _____ the bush, on farms and in city _____. There are probably more wax-eyes in New Zealand _____ any other kind of bird.

Usually, you _____ them in groups, hopping very _____ through bushes and trees. They _____ a high twittering noise most of the time as they work along, _____ insects, nectar and berries. Their _____ may help them to recognise each other and to keep the group together.

in	Noise	as	their	all
eating	Birds	winds	eat	than
see	With	quickly	increased	around
across	because	found	can	make
word	gardens	kinds	on	

Adapted from Brockie, R.E. (1981). Wax-eyes. *School Journal*. Wellington: Learning Media. Part 2, Number 4.

Stage 3:

Name:

Date:

In the following two passages some of the words have been left out.

First read over the whole passage and try to understand what it is about.

Then try to fill in the spaces. It takes only one word to fill in each space.

You may use the words in the text box at the bottom of the page to help you. Any word that makes sense in the space will be accepted.

Try to fill all the spaces.

Here is an example showing how to fill a space:

I can speak English _____ now.

I can speak English well..... now.

3.1

Why save water?

We are having longer, drier, hotter summers. This means there will be less water to go around. It also means people will use more water to keep cool and keep their gardens growing.

The number of _____ in the Wellington Region is growing. _____ means more people are going to _____ water (i.e. higher demand). More demand and _____ water could lead to water shortages.

Some ways to _____ water in the home:

- Don't leave the _____ running while you wash hands, dishes _____ vegetables.
- Only use the washing _____ or dishwasher for full loads, never use _____ for half loads. (A full load uses _____ water than 2 half loads!)
- Turn the tap _____ after you have wet your _____ when cleaning your teeth.
- Take short showers (less _____ 5 minutes) rather than deep baths.
- Check _____ leaks in water pipes around the _____.

Some ways to save water _____ the home

- Turn outside taps off properly _____ check for leaks.
- Use a bucket of _____ to wash cars instead of leaving the hose _____.
- Sweep the path with a broom, _____ a hose.
- Water plants in the cool of the day, _____ or twice a week in summer. (Up to 80% of _____ water used during the heat of the _____ could evaporate.)
- Mulch around plants to prevent evaporation (mulch _____ prevent up to 70% of water loss from evaporation). Mulch can _____ made from used paper, old carpet or garden wastes.

tap	outside	toothbrush	once	off
and	less	the	save	on
them	home	not	water	houses
than	machine	This	day	can
want	be	for	less	and

Adapted from *Why Save Water?* Wellington Regional Council.

3.2

Are you getting enough sleep?

Nothing is worse than lying awake hour after hour, night after night, when all you really want to do is sleep.

'Insomnia' is the _____ used to describe the habit of sleeplessness. For some unlucky people, sleeping difficulties may continue not just for days, but for weeks, or even _____.

Being overtired can have a very _____ effect on every part of _____ lives. We may get angry easily _____ often marriages and friendships suffer. _____ can make us unhealthy and _____. We may catch colds easily or _____ more serious sickness. Our work or _____ suffers. Our judgement suffers – many fatal accidents are _____ by drivers falling asleep at the _____ of a car.

How much sleep _____ adults need? Most of us _____ about eight hours sleep a night, although, _____ course, some people need more and _____ need less. Children and teenagers need _____ ten hours. If you have a few _____ in a row of sleeping less _____ eight hours, you should try to _____ up for this by sleeping more _____ you get the chance. A 1959 American Cancer study _____ one million Americans showed that _____ who sleep about eight hours a night _____ likely to live longer than those _____ sleep less than seven hours. _____ studies agree with these findings.

do	who	about	suffer	people
nights	Insomnia	of	caused	Other
bad	some	word	are	wheel
make	and	need	when	of
unhappy	than	study	years	our

Adapted from Hallam, E and Jones, C. (2003) Are You Getting Enough Sleep? *Practice Makes Perfect 1*. Auckland: New House Publishers.

Stage 4:

Name:

Date:

In the following three passages some of the words have been left out.

First read over the whole passage and try to understand what it is about.

Then try to fill in the spaces. It takes only one word to fill in each space.

You may use the words in the text box at the bottom of the page to help you. Any word that makes sense in the space will be accepted.

Try to fill all the spaces.

Here is an example showing how to fill a space:

I can speak English _____ now.

I can speak English well now.

4.1

Why do I blush?

Don't you just hate it when you feel awkward and your face turns red? It's as though the whole world _____ exactly how you're feeling – without you _____ them!

Blushing usually happens when you're around _____ people because a group situation makes _____ more sensitive to what's being _____ or done. Sometimes embarrassment causes the _____. Sometimes not telling the truth can _____ you blush – which can be very _____ for the person you're talking _____ will have a pretty good idea that _____ not telling things the way _____ really are!

Blushing is connected to feelings, but _____ is actually happening to you physically, when _____ face does the horrible red thing? _____ a start your brain signals to your _____ that something's wrong. In response, your _____ beats faster, you breathe more _____, and you start to overheat.

For	what	your	not
blushing	said	heart	body
telling	you	other	you're
they	because	to	awkward
quickly	knows	make	red

Adapted from Wall, J. (2006). Why Do I Blush? *School Journal*. Wellington: Learning Media. Part 4, Number 1.

4.2

Money Trees

At last, scientists have been able to confirm that money really does grow on trees.

After six years of arduous research, Chris Anderson at Massey University emerged from his experimental greenhouse with a range of fast-growing herbs that can _____ minute gold particles from the soil.

Using a garden-variety mustard, Dr Anderson has been able to show that the _____ can pull tiny gold particles from the gold-_____ soil, along with the other soil-bound _____ they need to grow. So far the tests have been _____ on a small scale, _____ with a field trial in Brazil _____ this year. The next step is to do full-_____ field trials.

culminating

rich

only

earlier

later

insects

extract

particles

scale

nutrients

interesting

plants

Adapted from Author unknown (2003) "Money trees" *New Zealand Education Gazette*, 6 October, Page 14. In Ministry of Education (2008). *The English Language Learning Progressions: Years 9–13*. Wellington: Learning Media.

4.3

The Gene Seekers

Years of tragic deaths from stomach cancer brought members of a Bay of Plenty whānau, medical specialists and genetic scientists together to seek a solution.

Hira had seen eight of _____ brothers and sisters die from _____ cancer. “In the space of _____ a few years, I _____ five brothers, three sisters, and several nieces and nephews. And one of _____ was only sixteen years old.”

Not _____ was the personal loss _____ to bear, so too was the fear the _____ constantly carried. “We were _____ thinking the worst,” says Hira. “_____ would think - who is _____? Will it be my brother, my _____, or me? Every pain you get, you think – _____ it. And you become too frightened to go to the _____.”

Rates of stomach cancer differ around the _____, but in New Zealand, the chances of _____ from this disease _____ just over 6 per 100 000 for _____ of European descent. In the Maori and Pacific Islands _____, the rate is _____ at 22 per 100 000. However, in Hira’s whānau in the Bay of Plenty, the incidence was very much _____. Worse still was the _____ onset of _____ often fatal disease. Normally, stomach cancer strikes people _____ the age of sixty, but in the whānau, it was common for people in their twenties and thirties to be _____. Even teenagers were dying from the cancer.

early	this	her	stomach	just
were	doctor	that’s	higher	continually
family	afflicted	another	very	them
sister	next	only	We	world
lost	beyond	those	suffering	heavy
are	people	higher	They	population

Glossary:

whānau = extended family

Adapted from O’Brien, B. (2001). The Gene Seekers. Wellington: Learning Media.