

# READER'S GUIDE

**T**his guide is designed to enrich your reading of the articles in this issue. You may choose to read them on your own, taking notes or jotting down answers to the discussion questions below. Or you may use the guide to explore the articles with colleagues.

For example, many teachers discuss *Forum* at regularly scheduled meetings with department colleagues and members of teachers' groups, or in teacher-training courses and workshops. Often, teachers choose an article for their group to read before the meeting or class, then discuss that article when they meet. Teachers have found it helpful to take notes on articles or write a response to an article and bring that response to share in a discussion group. Another idea is for teachers to try a selected activity or technique described in one of the articles, then report back to the group on their experiences and discuss positives, negatives, and possible adaptations for their teaching context.

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## Developing a Bilingual Thematic Vocabulary Workbook (Pages 2–11)

### Pre-Reading

1. Have you heard of a bilingual thematic vocabulary workbook before? What do you think it is? What purposes do you think it would serve?
2. You can guess that the workbook is used to support vocabulary building in some way. What materials do you use specifically to help your students develop their English vocabulary?
3. Which word (or words) in the title make you feel that the article will be relevant to your teaching? Why?
2. Pick a theme that you use in one of your classes. Now brainstorm vocabulary, related to that theme, that your students ought to learn. Then brainstorm again, this time focusing on vocabulary related specifically to your context (e.g., your school, community, or country). How does adding the context-specific vocabulary change the way you might teach? How might it change students' attitude toward studying?
3. The authors point out that this type of workbook is ideal for schools with limited resources. If your school has sufficient resources, how could the workbook supplement the resources you already have? What are some ways you and your colleagues could use it?

### Post-Reading

1. The workbook that the authors describe was created mainly by the people (teachers and students) who were going to use it in the classroom. What advantages does this have for teachers? For students? What challenges might it present?
4. Reread the section on "Student-Created Vocabulary Notebooks." How could you incorporate this project into a class you currently teach?

## A Systematic Process for Assessing Assessment (Pages 12–21)

### Pre-Reading

1. How effective do you think your assessments are?
  2. How do you and your colleagues evaluate the effectiveness of exams, quizzes, and other assessment tools you use? Do you do it individually? As a department? As an institution?
  3. In your studies, how much emphasis was placed on methods of effectively assessing assessment?
3. Think back to the last time you gave a summative assessment. Then go through the “Steps and Guidelines for Summative (Final) Assessments” section. How many of the steps and guidelines did you follow in the summative assessment you gave? What, if anything, will you do differently next time?

### Post-Reading

1. Evaluating assessments takes time and commitment. Think about the challenges you and your colleagues face. Where would assessing your assessments rank on the list of challenges: at or near the top, somewhere in the middle, or near the bottom? Why?
  2. Tables 3 and 4 show guiding questions and measures to maximize the validity and reliability of assessment instruments and procedures. Apply these to the assessment(s) you use in one of your courses—particularly a course with different sections taught by different instructors. What do the questions and measures reveal about your assessments and assessment procedures?
4. Next time you write a test, ask a colleague to take it. Or choose a colleague and take each other’s exam. What is the experience like? What do you learn about your exam? What do you learn by taking your colleague’s exam?

## Let’s Talk about It: Strategies for Integrating Writing and Speaking in the Classroom (Pages 22–31)

### Pre-Reading

1. If you teach a writing course, do you integrate speaking practice into the lessons? How do you do it? If you teach a speaking course, do you integrate writing practice into the lessons? How do you do it?
  2. In what situations might you write about something before you talk about it? When might you talk about something before you write about it?
2. The authors suggest starting with small steps, especially if you are not used to integrating speaking into writing courses. Pick one of the many suggested activities—perhaps a warm-up activity to begin—and try it with your students. How do they react? Do you notice a difference in your students’ writing and in their attitude toward writing?
  3. Can you think of ways to apply any of the concepts in the article to writing assignments you typically give in your courses? Which of your writing assignments best lends itself to integrating a speaking component? Write down—or discuss with a colleague—at least two ideas for adding speaking to that writing assignment. Try them out and see what happens.

### Post-Reading

1. The authors emphasize the role of cooperative learning. But people often think of writing as something each person does individually. What advantages do you see in basing writing tasks on cooperative learning? Are there any disadvantages?