WORKSHEET A

Title	Assessing and classifying: when and how?

Objective(s) To discuss and become aware of different principles and techniques usable to assess the same construct. To reflect upon the implications of timing on assessment and upon the impact of criteria and norms on assessment.

Keywords Norm-referencing/criterion-referencing, continuous assessment/ fixed point assessment, mastery criterion-referencing approach / continuum criterion-referencing approach

Ref to the Guide IV.6	**Ref to the CEFR** 9.3.2, 9.3.3, 9.3.4

Task A

Step 1 (⫯ ⫯)

In a perspective of continuous assessment the focus is on the progress of each single student whereas in the case of single spot assessment the focus is more on classification of students in relation either to one another or to a norm.
Read the paragraph of the Guide indicated above dealing with this major distinction.
Discuss the similarities and differences between the two types of assessment. For what reason is it necessary to distinguish between them? In what way are they complementary? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each of them?

Step 2 (⫯ ⫯)

For refining judgment, and therefore for a more targeted and transparent assessment, criteria are often used.
Discuss the importance of introducing criteria both for the teacher and for the learner.

Step 3 (⫯ ⫯ ⫯)

In groups, prepare mind maps on posters by using your notes from the first two steps. Illustrate and compare the mind maps in plenary.

Task B

Step 1 (⫯ ⫯)

Read 9.3.3 and discuss in what way mastery criterion-referencing and continuum criterion-referencing approach combine aspects of the two main distinctions introduced. Compare with what the CEFR presents in 9.3.2.

Step 2 (⫯ ⫯)

Moving from 9.3.4, discuss the different types of tests mentioned and what combination of them (and other types) you consider effective to give a sense both of the "vertical" and the "horizontal" dimension of assessment.

Step 3 (⫯ ⫯ ⫯)

Try and represent visually/graphically different implications referred to in the three paragraphs of

the CEFR you have examined. Discuss the rationale in plenary.

Task C (⸙ ⸙)

The Framework can be exploited with mastery or continuum approach. The scale of levels used in a continuum approach can be matched to the Common Reference Levels; the objective to be mastered in a mastery approach can be mapped onto the conceptual grid of categories and levels offered by the Framework.

(CEFR, p. 185)

Skim the tables in ch.3 and the categories of the descriptive scheme (Ch. 4 and Ch. 5) and discuss in what ways practitioners could use them.

Task D (⸙ ⸙ ⸙)

"Chapter 3 provides a 'vertical dimension' and outlines an ascending series of common reference levels for describing learner proficiency. The set of descriptive categories introduced in Chapter 4 and 5 map out a 'horizontal dimension' made up of parameters of communicative activity and communicative language competence"

(CEFR, p. 16)

Clarify the role of alternative pairs of assessment (impression/guided; holistic/analytic; series/category) in the learning process. In particular, discuss the choice of assessing achievement in different categories as a way for better defining the level of proficiency.

Paragraph 2.2 (pp. 16-18) can help you clarify the differences between the notions of achievement and of proficiency as they are presented in the CEFR.