

Here are a few top tips to help you use the Progression Tools and get the most out of them:

- Explain what the Tools are and what they assess. Depending on the age of the young person you can go in to more or less detail. For example, a 12 year old might just need to know that they're a way for you to check out how they're doing with their talking and understanding. For older students, they may be aware of some of their difficulties, so you can explain to them that this might be a start to helping them out and finding out more about the things that they're struggling with
- Make sure you've got everything ready that you need. For older students we recommend you use a recording device to make sure that you can accurately capture what the young person says as some answers may be quite long
- Show the young person the reference booklet, answer sheets and recording device and explain them. Tell them that the session is all about talking and understanding and that you'll be the one doing all the reading and writing from the booklet and on the answer sheets
- Find a quiet room and sit next to the young person to complete the Tool. Take breaks as you need to and you can negotiate when these might be, e.g. 'once we've finished the green section you can take 5 minutes'
- If the young person is worried about or interested in how they're doing during the test, explain that you'll be checking that out afterwards and you can arrange a separate time to talk to them about how they've got on if they'd like, but during the test they should just concentrate on what you're asking them to do
- Encourage the young person throughout – don't make it obvious if they've got an answer right or wrong, but encouragement like 'I can see you're trying really hard' or 'there's loads to listen to and you're doing really well' will help keep them motivated
- Speak clearly and make your voice interesting when you're giving the instructions and asking the questions
- You can repeat the question or instruction once only. If you do need to repeat it, make sure you repeat it in full, not just part of it
- If you find a young person really struggling with any item, or if they need more than one repetition, you can just move on to the next item. Saying something like 'that is really hard, let's leave that one' will help to keep their motivation up
- If the young person notices you in their class during the observation part of the test and asks about what you're doing, you can explain that you're checking out how they're using their language and communication skills in class