

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

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Syllabus for English L1 Advanced

Board of Governors of the European Schools

Meeting on 25 and 26 January 2000

Advice of Teaching Committee, 16 November 1999

The Committee recommended the Syllabus for entry into force from September 2000.

1.0 OBJECTIVES

1.1 General objectives

The secondary section of the European Schools has a dual objective or function of providing formal, subject-based education and of encouraging pupils' personal development in a wider social and cultural context. Formal education involves the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, concepts and skills within each subject area. Pupils should learn to describe, interpret, judge and apply their knowledge. Personal development of pupils is done in a range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural contexts. It involves for pupils an awareness of appropriate behaviour, an understanding of the environment in which they work and live and the development of individual identity. In practice, these two functions are inseparable.

These two major objectives are developed in the context of an awareness of Europe and its cultures. This awareness, and the experience acquired as a result of shared European life, should lead to the development in pupils of clear respect for the traditions of each individual country in Europe, together with a full knowledge of their own cultural identity.

1.2 Subject specific objectives

- 1.2.1 to develop pupils' competence as readers and listeners: by using multiform texts, a variety of registers, approaches and techniques which only occasionally have a place in the basic course;
- 1.2.2 to improve pupils' linguistic competence through better knowledge of how language works and through the development of speaking and writing skills;
- 1.2.3 to introduce pupils to comparative literature, by studying works from foreign literature, European in particular, without excluding old texts in translation;
- 1.2.4 to deepen pupils' knowledge of the L1 literature and culture of the target language's country/countries, using authentic texts as the basis.

2. CONTENT

ORAL WORK

Range

Oral work is an important component of most lessons and each one should be an opportunity for students to develop their concentration, understanding and vocabulary, as well as to reinforce their confidence in expressing themselves. Building on their experiences in Years 1-5, students should have frequent opportunity to talk at length in a range of contexts, both formal and informal. They should enjoy increasing independence in determining the nature and scope of their contributions.

Skills

Students should develop the ability to:

- listen with concentration to exposition or discussion, noting salient points;
- listen critically to attempts to persuade;
- listen tolerantly to views opposed to their own;
- engage in co-operative discussion and sum up different views expressed;
- pursue a point by asking pertinent questions;
- adapt their speech to different audiences and purposes
- prepare and deliver informative or persuasive talks and answer questions from the audience;
- respond critically to what has been read, while making clear the criteria on which the judgement is based;
- speak coherently and at some length about a text (in the context of preparation for the oral exam);
- read aloud audibly and expressively from a range of texts including drama.

READING

Range

i) General requirements

In these two years, students should be expected to read both intensively and extensively (not all texts will be studied in the same depth):

- both fictional and non-fictional texts;
- writing from different periods of literature in English;
- a varied selection of works from different genres (drama, novel, poetry, short story, autobiography, travel writing);
- (in seventh year) a series of works related to a literary theme;
- a personal reading programme of other works not on the syllabus, chosen by them or suggested by the teacher.

Note:

1. the word "text" should be understood to include media texts eg film;
2. Students should be encouraged to exploit opportunities which present themselves of exploring links with other literatures.

Range

ii. Specific requirements

- at least one text by Chaucer;
- at least one play by Shakespeare
- at least one 19th Century novel;
- at least one further substantial pre-20th Century text (novel, play or collection of poems);
- at least one 20th Century novel;

- at least one 20th Century poet;
- at least one piece of literature from a different culture (eg African or Indian literature written in English) or European literature in translation (which could be used as a comparison with English texts – eg Balzac/Dickens).
- (Year 7): one set text and literary theme. [This will be chosen by ballot from the specific requirements above and therefore replaces that item as a syllabus requirement for a particular year].

Skills

Students should develop the ability to:

- adopt different reading strategies depending on their purposes, eg skimming, scanning, detailed analysis;
- read critically, distinguishing fact from opinion and literal from figurative uses of language;
- recognise and respond to a wide range of literary genres and literary techniques;
- distinguish between explicit and implicit meaning;
- discern and reflect on attitudes and values in texts;
- recognise the importance of form and structure in the understanding of texts;
- introduce classmates to new authors/texts by sharing their enthusiasm.

WRITING

Range

Students should be expected to write with clarity, precision and sensitivity on a range of topics, to a variety of audiences, in a variety of contexts, within the constraints of the time available. In addition to practising expository, critical and descriptive writing, they should be given the opportunity to write their own poems, stories and personal accounts. In addition they will undertake two major projects during the course.

(Year 6): Either a language project (eg a study of language development in children aged 6-8) or a media study (eg study the differences in language and image in the way a variety of media treat the same subject or story) or creative writing (eg a collection of poems). The project will be 2,000 to 4,000 words long and may be made up of one long or two shorter pieces.

(Year 7): An extended essay of 3,000 – 5,000 words on a literary topic.

Project titles will be selected by students themselves in consultation with their teachers.

Skills

Students should develop the ability to:

- write legibly, with accurate observance of the conventions of punctuation, spelling, syntax, paragraphing and grammar;
- write effectively in the appropriate register: to instruct; to describe; to argue a case; to explore an idea; to persuade; to entertain;
- write with understanding about literature, using both evidence from the text and other critical sources;
- describe how rhetorical and stylistic devices enhance a text;
- write clear summaries;
- plan and draft an answer to a question in a limited period of time, in order to prepare for the written examination;
- undertake longer, research-based papers over a specified period of time;
- make notes efficiently from teachers, peers and other sources.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE

Range

Building on their learning in years 1-5, students in year 6-7 should be encouraged to develop an increasingly systematic awareness of the characteristics of the English language, including some knowledge of its history, development and relations to other European languages today and in the past.

Some possible fields of study, depending on the interests and expertise of teachers and students could be:

- theoretical frameworks for language study, including systematic development of phonetics, lexis, semantics and grammatical forms and structures;
- variations in language according to context, including the role of personal and social factors in determining form and meaning;
- changes in language;
- comparative linguistics;
- regional accents and dialects in English worldwide.

3.0 **METHODOLOGY**

Classroom organisation should be flexible, allowing easy changeover from class to group to individual methods.

The role of the teacher will be:

- to organise efficiently the work of the class and of individuals within it, using a wide range of classroom management strategies as appropriate to the main purpose of the task. This may include individualised work, pair work, different group approaches - mixed ability, set, friendship groups etc – teacher-led work, pupil-centred work, team-teaching, resource-based learning and drama techniques such as role play;
- to ensure that listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed in an integrated and balanced way;
- to stimulate the interest and motivation of pupils; pupils should have opportunity to share their own ideas and experiences and to meet and respond to the ideas and experiences of others;
- to make pupils aware of the aims and objectives of the course at the outset of each year, teachers should give pupils an outline of the course and its aims. The teacher should ensure that pupils are aware of the specific purposes of assignments undertaken and the main criteria for assessing pupil performance;
- to diagnose particular learning difficulties and direct pupils to appropriate assignments;
- to assess the work of pupils and communicate to them the results and learning implications of assessments;
- to act as an expert consultant to pupils, giving advice and assistance as and when required; in particular, to guide students in their choice of language project in Year 6 and the literary dissertation in Year 7, to help students develop the research, drafting and organisational skills necessary to produce such projects

4.0 **ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

4.1 **Functions and principles**

Assessment is both a formative and a summative process. Formative assessment of learning outcomes is an ongoing process. Its purpose is to provide information about pupils' learning. It should also support pupils' further achievement and play an important role for pupils, parents or guardians and school in the provision of educational guidance. Assessment of learning outcomes need not involve the award of a mark reflecting performance in every case and it should not be punitive, but it should evaluate performance, enable pupils to engage in self-assessment and motivate them to improve their performance. For teachers, the assessment of learning outcomes provides an opportunity to review the objectives, methods and results of their teaching.

Summative assessment provides a clear statement of the knowledge and skills possessed by a pupil at a particular point in time.

The following general principles of assessment of learning outcomes should be observed.

- Performance against all the objectives as defined in the syllabus should be assessed. This will be done through the knowledge and skills set out in the syllabus.
- Assessment must relate to work which has been covered in the course.
- All types of work done by pupils on the course should be part of the assessment process – eg oral and written contributions, class tests, practical work.
- Pupils should be aware of the work to be done and the standards to be achieved in order to attain each level in the assessment scale.
- Pupils should know how their performance compares with other pupils, in the same and other sections. This requires co-ordination between the teachers of the same and different sections to ensure comparability.

4.2 Participation in class

In Year 6 a significant proportion of the A mark for one semester will be accounted for by the students' project work. In Year 7 the literary dissertation will account for a significant proportion of one semester's A mark.

4.3 Written work/tests

Semester examinations in Year 6 and the post examination in Year 7 will be set by teachers to test the areas of the syllabus they have covered. During the course a range of written assignments will be set including the two major projects.

4.4 The written examination

4.4.1 Objectives

The examination seeks to evaluate the candidate's ability to comprehend, interpret and make a personal response to different types of texts, using general, subject-specific and literary knowledge,

- mastery of written language as shown in the ability to write creatively, use a variety of registers, approaches and techniques and present complex ideas and arguments in a precise and comprehensible manner,
- understanding and knowledge of specific themes and works from a range of literature including some from cultures outside their own (other countries; translations from other languages, living or dead).

4.4.2 Syllabus for the examination

The written examination will relate to work done in the sixth and seventh years but will draw on knowledge and skills acquired earlier.

4.4.3 Length of the examination

The examination lasts for 240 minutes.

4.4.4 Form of the examination

Question 1 will be based on an extract from the set text (usually about 700 words long for prose passages, but with no requirement for poetry) 20 marks will be allocated for this question.

Question 2 will offer students a choice of essay on the set text and related theme. 40 marks.

Question 3 will offer students a choice between two texts: an unseen prose passage and an unseen poem or poems for comprehension, analysis and response to 40 marks.

Nature of text

“Text is defined as any form of written, pictorial or audio-visual source. A text can be either one or several items.

Any form of an authentic or translated text may be set but a text of a largely factual or descriptive nature or texts likely to offend candidates’ sensibilities or disturb their consciences should be avoided.

The level of difficulty of the text, as manifested through such factors as lexical range, syntactical complexity, density of information level of abstraction and register used, should be appropriate for the evaluation of pupils who have studied the subject for a period of 12 years in the corresponding language section, including study at an advanced level during the two preceding years.

The text connected to a task will usually be about 700 words long, but this number does not apply for lyrical texts such as poems or songs.

4.4.5 Material aids

No material aids are permitted.

For unseen texts, annotations concerning words, expressions and facts which are not expected to be known by the candidates may be provided to a limited extent (not exceeding 6 annotations).

4.4.6 Marking

Assessment will be based on the objectives in section 4.4.1 above.

4.5 The oral examination

4.5.1 Objectives

The examination seeks to evaluate the candidate’s ability to

- speak at length, ie to express oneself fluently, correctly and coherently in the language with appropriate pronunciation, intonation and register,
- express oneself freely, autonomously and in a structured manner,
- participate in a dialogue, ie to understand and respond to prompts put by the examiner,
- comprehend, analyse and interpret the text set – incorporating relevant comparative references – and communicate a personal response,
- incorporate relevant knowledge (linguistic, literary and cultural), ie to relate knowledge about the theme of the text to its meaning, to the culture from which it stems and to work done through the course.

4.5.2 **Syllabus of the examination**

The oral examination relates to the contents of the sixth and seventh year syllabus, but will draw on knowledge and skills acquired earlier.

4.5.3 **Length of the examination**

The examination will last 20 minutes, including marking. Before each examination candidates will be allowed approximately 20 minutes preparation time.

4.5.4 **Form of the examination**

The form of the examination is the same, irrespective of the subject in question.

The examination will be based initially on a text or texts, previously unseen but issued to candidates 20 minutes before the examination. Written prompts (1 or 2) will be given to candidates to guide their preparation.

The examination will fall into two parts and will give candidates opportunity to

- read aloud and to develop at length structured findings arising from the text and related to the prompts,
- engage with the examiners in dialogue, relating to the text and/or to wider issues studied

4.5.5 **Nature of the text**

The text should be a prose literary extract which allows candidates to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have gained during the course. Any form of **authentic or translated text is acceptable, but text of a largely factual or descriptive nature** and those likely to offend candidates' sensibilities or disturb their conscience, should be avoided.

The level of difficulty of the task, as manifested through such factors as lexical range, syntactical complexity, density of information, level of abstraction and register used, should be appropriate for the evaluation of pupils who have studied the subject for a

period of 12 years in the corresponding language section, including study at an advanced level during the two preceding years.

The text should be about 400 words long.

The text should have lines numbered in fives and the source should be given.

4.5.6 **Material aids**

None.

4.5.7 **Marking**

Assessment should take account of the objectives in section 4.5.1 above.