

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

Ref.: 97-D-52

Orig: EN

ENGLISH L I SYLLABUS

YEARS I - 7

(Previous version 96-D-209 and 96-D-219)

**Approved by the Board of Governors
on 28 and 29 January 1997 in Brussels**

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS
ENGLISH LI SYLLABUS

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1. AIMS

1.1 General aims

In the secondary phase, schools both pass on subject knowledge and contribute to the broader personal and social education of pupils. Subject teaching aims to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills of particular disciplines, which enable pupils, whatever themes or topics they encounter, to grasp issues, to articulate and solve problems and to transfer their understanding from one context to another. The broader educational function of a school concerns the development of the pupil as a person and as a member of society. Through a growing awareness of self and of society - the cultural heritage as well as the present day with its problems and challenges to action - pupils must develop their identity and learn to act as both independent and responsible members of society. In school, pupils' education in subject disciplines and their personal and social education are inter-related and the activities to which they give rise are interdependent.

These two main objectives of all secondary teaching take on a specific importance and momentum in the European context through a better understanding of the richness which is part of the European cultures. This awareness of experience gained in the context of life in Europe should give rise to attitudes which combine a sense of national identity with respect for the traditions of each European country.

1.2 Subject specific aims

The teaching of mother tongue has a special importance in the European Schools: it is a vital means of establishing and confirming the pupils' linguistic and cultural identity, and thereby providing a foundation for engagement with other subjects and particularly with other languages and cultures. The particular contribution of mother tongue lessons should be made increasingly explicit to pupils as they move through the secondary phase.

The English LI course aims to develop the pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and writing and to listen with understanding. It should also enable them to be enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers, and assist towards their development as effective students.

The course will seek to enrich the lives of pupils by offering them experiences beyond those encountered in their daily lives, and to contribute to the personal and social growth of pupils.

The course will in principle be accessible to all students in the English sections of the schools, no matter what their gender, ethnic origin or cultural background (this principle has implications for the choice of content of lessons and particularly of reading material). Meeting the needs of those with special educational needs, including very able pupils, will be a high priority

OBJECTIVES

a. To develop effective speaking and listening, pupils should be taught to:

- use the vocabulary and grammar of standard English;
- formulate and express their ideas clearly and audibly;
- adapt their speech to a widening range of circumstances and demands;
- listen, understand and respond appropriately to others and to a range of imaginative stimuli.

b. To develop as effective readers, pupils should be taught to:

- read accurately, fluently and with understanding;
- understand and respond to the texts they read;
- read, analyse and evaluate a wide range of literary and non-literary texts, including literature from the English literary heritage and from other cultures and traditions;
- read for variety of purposes, including personal enjoyment.

c. To develop as effective writers, pupils should be taught to use:

- compositional skills - developing ideas and communicating meaning to a reader, using a wide ranging vocabulary and an effective style, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and whole texts coherently;
- presentational skills - accurate punctuation, correct spelling, legible handwriting and, where appropriate, word processing skills;
- a widening variety of forms for different purposes.

d. Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their understanding and use of English and specifically:

- to understand the rules and conventions of standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation and to consider some dialectical varieties;
- to recognise that language changes and to understand some of the ways in which change occurs;
- to recognise the relation between language and situation;
- to appreciate differences between speech and writing;
- to make comparisons between the languages they use in school.

2. CONTENTS

Years 1 - 5

2.1 Speaking and listening

Range

a. Pupils should be given opportunities to talk for a range of purpose, including:

- explanation, description, narration and reporting;
- exploration and hypothesis;
- consideration of ideas, literature and the media;
- expression of personal feelings, opinions and attitudes;
- argument, debate and persuasion;
- analysis.

b. Pupils should be given opportunities to talk in a range of contexts, both formal and informal. They should be encouraged to adapt their presentation to fit the situation and to reflect on the outcome.

c. Pupils should be encouraged to listen attentively, both in situations where they remain mostly silent and where they have the opportunity to respond immediately. They should be taught to distinguish features of presentation where the intention is to be explanatory, persuasive, amusing or argumentative and should be taught to use this knowledge when preparing and presenting their own oral work.

d. Pupils should be given opportunities to participate in a wide range of drama activities, including role-play, and in the performance of scripted and unscripted plays. They should be given opportunities to consider significant features of their own and others' performances.

Key skills

a. Pupils should be given opportunities to make different types of contributions in discussions. They should be encouraged to:

- adapt speech to listeners and activity;
- structure they talk clearly;
- judge the appropriate level of detail;
- use a range of markers to aid the listener;
- use gesture and intonation appropriately;
- express personal feelings, opinions and attitudes with consideration for others;
- take different views into account;
- sift, summarise and use salient points;
- cite evidence;
- construct persuasive arguments

In taking different roles in group discussions, pupils should be introduced to ways of negotiating consensus or agreeing to differ. They should be given opportunities to consider their choice of words and the effectiveness of their expression. With appropriate preparation, they should be able to read a piece of text aloud with appropriate expression. On occasion, they should be able to address the class on a topic about which they are knowledgeable.

b. In order to develop as effective listeners, pupils should be taught to identify the major elements of what is being said, and to distinguish tone, undertone, implications and other indicators of a speaker's intentions. They should be taught to notice ambiguities, deliberate vagueness, glossing over points, use and abuse of evidence, and unsubstantiated statements. They should recognise if the speakers lexical choice is standard English, dialect or slang, and be alert to interference from other languages:

- in discussion, pupils should listen and respond;
- pupils should be encouraged to make contributions that clarify and synthesise others' ideas, taking them forward and building on them to reach a conclusion;
- pupils should be encouraged to ask and answer questions and to modify their ideas in the light of what others say.

2.2 Reading

Range

- a.** Pupils should be given opportunities to read a wide variety of literary and non-literary texts, and to respond to the substance and style of texts. They should also be encouraged to read widely and independently solely for enjoyment. Some texts should be studied in detail, but the main emphasis should be on the encouragement of wider reading in order to develop independent, responsive and enthusiastic readers. Pupils should be encouraged to read more demanding texts, to be discriminating in what they choose to read and to maintain a record of their reading.
- b.** The literature read should be drawn from a variety of genres, including plays, novels, short stories and poetry.

Plays selected should include work that:

- extend pupils' understanding of drama in performance (e.g. *direction, portrayal and interpretation of character*);
- show variety in the structure (e.g. *tragedy, comedy, farce*), and setting;
- extend pupils' ideas and their moral and emotional understanding;
- use language in rich, diverse ways.

Novels and short stories selected should include works that:

- include a range of narrative structures and literary techniques;
- extend pupils' ideas and their moral and emotional understanding;
- show the variety of language use in fiction.

Poetry and the work of individual poets selected should include poems that:

- feature range of forms and styles;
- draw on oral and literary traditions;
- extend pupils' ideas and their moral and emotional understanding;
- use language in imaginative, precise and original ways.

- c.** Pupils should read texts from other culture and traditions that represent their distinctive voices and forms, and offer varied perspectives and subject matter. These may include major European texts in translation as well as writers in English from outside Britain and Ireland.

- d.** Pupils should be introduced to major works of literature from the English literary heritage in previous centuries. They should also read literature by major writers from earlier in the twentieth century and works of high quality by contemporary writers.

Pupils should be encouraged to appreciate the distinctive qualities of these works through activities that emphasises the interest and pleasure of reading them, rather than necessitating a detailed, line-by-line study.

In the course of years 1 - 3, pupils' reading should include:

- at least one play by Shakespeare;
- drama by at least one other major playwright;
- one work of fiction published before 1900;
- two works of fiction published after 1900;
- poems of high quality from several periods.

In the course of years 4 - 5, pupils' reading should include:

- at least one play by Shakespeare;
 - drama by at least one other major playwright;
 - one work of fiction published before 1900;
 - two works of fiction published after 1900;
 - poems of high quality from several periods to include study of at least one poet published before 1900 and one published after 1900.
- e.** Pupils should be introduced to a wide range of non-fiction texts, e.g. *autobiographies, biographies, journals, letters, travel writing*;
- f.** Pupils should be introduced to a wide range of media, e.g. *magazines, newspapers, radio, television, film*. They should be given opportunities to analyse and evaluate such material, which should be of high quality and present a range of forms and purposes, and different structural and presentational devices.
- g.** Pupils should be familiar with the use of dictionaries and should, where possible, be introduced to a range of computer-based material. Pupils should be familiar with the school library and with reference materials available there, such as encyclopedias and CD-ROM/Internet...

Key skills

a. Pupils should be taught to:

- extract meaning beyond the literal, explaining how choice of language and style affects implied and explicit meanings;
- analyse and discuss alternative interpretations, unfamiliar vocabulary, ambiguity and hidden meanings;
- analyse and engage with ideas, themes and language in fiction, non-fiction, drama and poetry;

b. Pupils should be given opportunities to talk and write about a wide range of reading, learning to articulate informed personal opinions. They should be encouraged to respond, both imaginatively and intellectually, to what they read. Within a broad programme of reading, they should be given opportunities to:

- reflect on the writer's presentation of ideas, the motivation and behaviour of characters, the development of plot and the overall impact of a text;
- distinguish between the attitudes and assumptions displayed by characters and those of the author;
- appreciate the characteristics that distinguish literature of high quality;
- appreciate the significance of texts whose language and ideas have been influential, e.g. *Greek myths, the Authorised Version of the Bible, The Mabinogion, Arthurian legends*;
- Consider how texts are changed when adapted to different media, e.g. *the original text of a Shakespeare play and televised or film versions*.

c. Pupils should be given opportunities to read factual and informative texts in order to:

- select and summarise information;
- compare and synthesise information drawn from different texts, e.g. *IT based sources and printed articles*;
- make effective use of information in their own work;
- evaluate how information is presented;
- adopt different strategies depending on their purposes *skimming or scanning*;
- in using information sources, pupils should be taught to sift the relevant from the irrelevant, and to distinguish between fact and opinion, bias and objectivity.

2.3 Writing

Range

- a.** Pupils should be encouraged to extend their confidence in writing for a variety of purposes and to develop their own distinctive and original styles, recognising the importance of commitment and vitality in what they write.
- b.** Pupils should be given opportunities to write for specific readers, for a large, unknown readership, and for themselves. They should be encouraged to write:
 - for personal, aesthetic and imaginative purposes;
 - to inform others through instruction, explanation, argument, narration, reportage, description, persuasion and paraphrase;
 - to develop thinking through review, analysis, hypothesis, recollection and summary.
- c.** The range of forms in which they write should be extensive, e.g. *notes, diaries, personal letters, formal letters, chronological accounts, reports, pamphlets, reviews, essays, advertisements, newspapers, articles, biography, poems, stories, playscripts, screenplays.*

Key skills

- a.** Pupils should be taught to improve and sustain their writing, developing their competence in planning, drafting, redrafting and proofreading their work on paper and screen. They should be encouraged to judge the extent to which any or all of these processes are needed in specific pieces of work. Pupils should be given opportunities to analyse critically their own and others' writing. They should be taught to write with fluency and when required, speed. In presenting final polished work, pupils should be taught to ensure that it is neat and legible, and makes full use of presentational devices where appropriate.
- b.** To develop their ability to write **narrative**, pupils should be encouraged to:
 - draw on their experience of good fiction;
 - develop their use of techniques;
 - use their knowledge of story structure, description of settings, organisation of plot, and the means of conveying characters and relationships.

To develop their ability to write **poetry**, pupils should be encouraged to:

- draw on their experience of a range of poetic forms;
- develop their use of poetic devices;

- write poetry closely related to the poems they read, in their own distinctive style, and also poetry based on their own experience.

To develop their ability to write **scripts and dialogue**, pupils should be encouraged to:

- use their experience of reading, performing and watching plays;
- develop their use of dialogue to convey character.

To develop their ability to write **non-fiction**, pupils should be encouraged to:

- use their experience of reading a wide range of non-fiction texts;
- use their knowledge of distinctive ways of organising and expressing ideas, feelings and information in discursive, argumentative, persuasive and other types of non-fiction writing;
- present a developed argument or train of thought;
- take notes from written and oral sources, summarise carefully and report accurately.

c. In **spelling**, pupils should be helped to increase their knowledge of regular patterns of spelling, word families, roots of words and their derivations. They should be taught to spell increasingly complex polysyllabic words that do not conform to regular patterns, and to proofread their writing carefully to check for errors, using dictionaries where appropriate. Pupils should be given opportunities to develop discrimination in relation to other complexities in spelling, including heteronyms, e.g. *minute*, *lead*, *wind*, and sight rhymes, e.g. *tough*, *dough*.

d. Pupils should be taught to use neat, legible **handwriting**.

2.4 Language awareness and study

This area is approached through the three categories: **speaking and listening; reading; writing.**

1. Speaking and Listening

- a.** Pupils should be taught to be fluent, accurate users of standard English vocabulary and grammar, and to recognise its importance as the language of public communication. They should be taught to adapt their talk to suit the circumstances, and to be confident users of standard English in formal and informal situations. In role-play and drama, the vocabulary, structures and tone appropriate to such contexts should be explored.
- b.** Pupils should be given opportunities to consider the development of English including:
- how usage, words and meanings change over time;
 - how words and parts of words are borrowed from other languages;

- the coinage of new words and the origins of existing words;
- current influences on spoken and written language;
- attitudes to language use;
- the differences between speech and writing;
- the vocabulary and grammar of standard English and dialectal variations.

2. Reading

a. Pupils should be taught to recognise, analyse and evaluate the characteristic features of different types of text in print and other media. They should be given opportunities to consider the effects of organisation and structure, how authors' purposes and intentions are portrayed, and how attitudes, values and meanings are communicated.

b. Pupils should be taught:

- about the main characteristics of literary language, including figures of speech and sound patterning;
- to consider features of vocabulary and grammar of standard English that are found in different types of text, e.g. *technical terms in reports, rhetorical devices in speeches, appropriate use of passive voice*;
- to analyse and evaluate the use of language in a variety of media, making comparisons where appropriate, e.g. *comparing the treatment of a traditional story in a children's picture book with its original source; a comparison of a television news bulletin with a report on the same event in a newspaper*;
- about different genres and their characteristics, including language, structure and organisational features;
- to analyse techniques, e.g. *the portrayal of setting and period, the weaving of parallel narratives, time shifts, the building of suspense, the use of imagery*.

3. Writing

- a.** Pupils should be encouraged to be confident in the use of formal and informal written standard English, using the grammatical, lexical and orthographic features of standard English, except where non-standard forms are required for effect or technical reasons. They should be taught about variation in the written forms and how these differ from spoken forms and dialects. Pupils should be given a range of opportunities to use the syntax and vocabulary characteristic of English in formal writing, e.g. *business letter, critical review, informative article*, and to distinguish varying degrees of formality, selecting appropriately for a task. They should be encouraged to relate their study of language to their reading and their previous linguistic experience, written and oral.
- b.** Pupils should be encouraged to broaden their understanding of the principles of sentence grammar and to be taught to organise whole texts effectively. Pupils should be given opportunities to analyse their own writing, reflecting on the meaning and clarity of individual sentences, using appropriate terminology, and so be given opportunities to learn about:
- **discourse structure** - the structure of whole texts: paragraph structure; how different types of paragraphs are formed; openings and closings in different kinds of writing;
 - **phrase, clause and sentence structure** - the use of complex grammatical structure and linking of structures through appropriate connectives; the use of main and subordinate clauses and phrases;
 - **words** - components including stem, prefix, suffix, inflection; grammatical functions of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and demonstratives;
 - **punctuation** - the use of the full range of punctuation marks, including full stops, question and exclamation marks, commas, semi-colons, colons, inverted commas, apostrophes, brackets, dashes and hyphens.
- c.** Pupils should be encouraged to consider apt and imaginative choices of vocabulary and the precise use of words, including consideration of synonyms and double meanings. Pupils should be given opportunities to use dictionaries and thesauruses to explore derivations and alternative meanings.

2.5 Years 6 - 7

Range

The course extends over two years, develops skills and knowledge acquired in previous years and prepares students for oral and written Baccalaureate exams. Oral work, reading and writing are the main activities of these two years.

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 natures 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 cooperative discussion and sum up different views expressed;
- pursue a point by asking pertinent questions;
- adapt their speech to different audiences and purpose;
- 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

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, including at least one play by Shakespeare and one other substantial pre-twentieth century text;
- 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 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 e.g. film;
2. students should be encouraged to exploit opportunities which present themselves of exploring links with other literatures.

Skills

Students should develop the ability to:

- adopt different reading strategies depending on their purposes, e.g. 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 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.

Skills

Students should develop the ability to:

- write legibly, with accurate observance of the conventions of punctuation, spelling, syntax, paragraphing, 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. ORGANISATION AND METHODS

3.1 Teaching and learning approaches

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

The role of the teacher will be:

- a.** 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;
- b.** to ensure that listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed in an integrated and balanced way;
- c.** 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;
- d.** 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;
- e.** to act as an expert consultant to pupils, giving advice and assistance as and when required;
- f.** to diagnose particular learning difficulties and direct pupils to appropriate assignments;
- g.** to assess the work of pupils and communicate to them the results and learning implications of assessments.

3.2 Homework

Homework is an integral part of the English course. It is important for developing independent learning skills and good work habits. It is also essential for assessing pupils' A- marks. Homework should always be given with a clear objective in mind.

A wide range of assignments may be considered appropriate but, in general, the higher the year group, the more demanding the assignment should be.

Pupils in years 1 - 3 should not be expected to spend more than 30-45 minutes on a piece of written homework whereas in years 6 and 7 a lengthier task would be appropriate, given an adequate period of time for its completion.

3.3 Curricular links

It is incumbent on the teachers of LI to be aware of the syllabus content and the methodology of other related subjects, particularly the other vehicular languages and subjects taught in them.

Teachers in year 1 - 3 need to be aware of the English curriculum taught in the primary section, and to confer regularly with their primary colleagues about issues of curriculum and assessment.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 General principles

- a. Assessment may be carried out for any of three main purposes, only one of which necessarily involves awarding a mark or grade:
 - diagnostic assessment is carried out for the purpose of identifying specific learning difficulties;
 - formative assessment, in the course of ongoing work or as part of a draft/redraft process, aims at enabling pupils to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses in relation to the task in hand with a view to improving that piece of work;
 - summative assessment is the awarding of a mark or grade which indicates the level of performance/competence achieved by the student.

Any teacher assessing a pupil's work should be clear about the purpose of the assessment.

- b. Pupils should be made aware of the main learning objectives of any piece of work, and the criteria applied by the teacher in assessing the work should be clearly related to these objectives.
- c. The type of assessment undertaken should be appropriate to the capabilities being tested *i.e. the curriculum should determine the assessment techniques used and not vice-versa.*
- d. In the course of a year, pupils should experience a wide range of assessment methods.
- e. Pupils should be informed not only of the result (grade) but also of the learning implications of an assessment.

4.2 Written work

If marking symbols are used in the assessment of written work, their meaning should be explained to the class, as should the criteria used for evaluation.

It is generally more useful to the pupil for the teacher to highlight significant errors selectively, rather than to mark all the mistakes which may be present.

Peer and self-assessment, for example reading a piece of written work aloud to a partner or group, should be encouraged.

When reading skills are tested by evaluating a written outcome, deductions for poor writing skills should be made only if communication is impaired.

In the course of the year, the teacher should record grades which reflect the pupil's achievement in a range of different writing activities.

4.3 Oral work

In weighing oral performance, grammatical accuracy, fluency and accent should be assessed, in the context of judging overall communicative competence.

A continuous record of each pupil's oral achievement should be kept; most often this will be written, but oral or video records may also be made.

Pupils' performances in a range of oral tasks should be recorded in the course of a year.

4.4 Baccalaureate

[To be added when Language Committee has reported].