

# iLowerSecondary English

## Teacher's Guide



Pearson



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## Welcome to your *iLowerSecondary Teacher's Guide*

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Welcome to the Pearson iLowerSecondary teacher community. We hope that you find your *iLowerSecondary Teacher's Guide* a useful resource as you start your iLowerSecondary curriculum journey. We are confident that it will support you in teaching lessons where all students enjoy learning, make good progress and do well in examinations.

The iLowerSecondary curriculum for English develops important learning skills for students. Broadly based on the English National Curriculum, it is written with the specific needs of the international student at heart and focuses on developing key learning skills. This will give your students the confidence to successfully meet a range of challenges in and out of school and help prepare them for examinations and a successful secondary education.

This guide will give you:

- tips for recognising whether a new technique is working
- ideas for seeing how much impact a new strategy has on your students' learning
- techniques for reflecting on your practice
- ways you can discuss teaching and learning with your colleagues.

As you work with your guide you should see all your students:

- solving more problems
- asking effective questions and actively listening
- thinking deeply, creatively and critically
- making connections between ideas and transferring their learning from one context to another
- taking greater responsibility for their own learning
- working together in different ways to develop their thinking and knowledge
- developing lifelong learning skills to equip them for International GCSE-level and beyond.

Learning is supported throughout. The iLowerSecondary curriculum objectives are written to provide students with the necessary coverage of skills and knowledge to prepare them fully for examinations.

Your guide is easy to use and packed full of practical teaching tips and ideas for you to try out. You may be familiar with some concepts and find that others are new to you. You may choose to work with other colleagues to select the ideas you would like to use. No two classrooms are the same, so you will find what works best for you and your school's priorities.

## HOW TO USE YOUR *iLOWERSECONDARY TEACHER'S GUIDE*

You can use your *iLowerSecondary Teacher's Guide* in a number of ways. It is *your* guide to be used *by you* and *for you*. The following suggestions may be helpful.

- Select the ideas that seem most manageable and give a couple of them a go!
- Decide to try out a new good idea each week.
- Think about your professional development targets and select the good ideas that will help you achieve your targets.

This guide is separated into seven easy-to-navigate sections.

- 1. Welcome to your *iLowerSecondary Teacher's Guide*:** an overview of this guide and the curriculum, including guidance to help you to keep track of your progress as an *iLowerSecondary* teacher and information on where you can go for further support.
- 2. Creating an *iLowerSecondary* classroom environment:** ideas and tips for integrating active learning, positive behaviour management strategies and a variety of classroom arrangements into your classroom. These techniques help to engage students and support them in making progress.
- 3. *iLowerSecondary* planning:** advice and information on how to plan and adapt effective lessons using the *iLowerSecondary* curriculum.
- 4. Principles for progress:** the top ten general principles (identified by our pedagogical experts) that can be applied to your teaching in order to help achievement and progression, such as how to involve all your students in a class discussion and how to plan lessons that provide all students with the right amount of challenge.
- 5. Teaching in English:** a variety of techniques and approaches to teaching to help students succeed in this subject, compiled by a subject-matter expert. This includes practical tips and guidance designed to support students' progress and engagement.
- 6. *iLowerSecondary* assessment:** a general overview of formative and summative assessment in the *iLowerSecondary* curriculum, outlining what summative assessment is provided as part of the curriculum and offering general tips and guidance on how to best prepare students for this.
- 7. Assessment in English:** specific advice and guidance on teaching assessment in this subject, including examples of formative assessment, common question types and things to watch out for.

As you work through this guide you will notice cross references linking various key sections and concepts. These are designed to help you easily navigate to the information you need and to demonstrate how the strategies and principles described in the guide can be used to complement one another in the classroom. For example:

  
Speaking and listening:  
using poetry to develop  
language p. 36

can link to...

  
Engaging  
everyone  
p. 15

## SUPPORTING YOUR *iLOWERSECONDARY* DEVELOPMENT

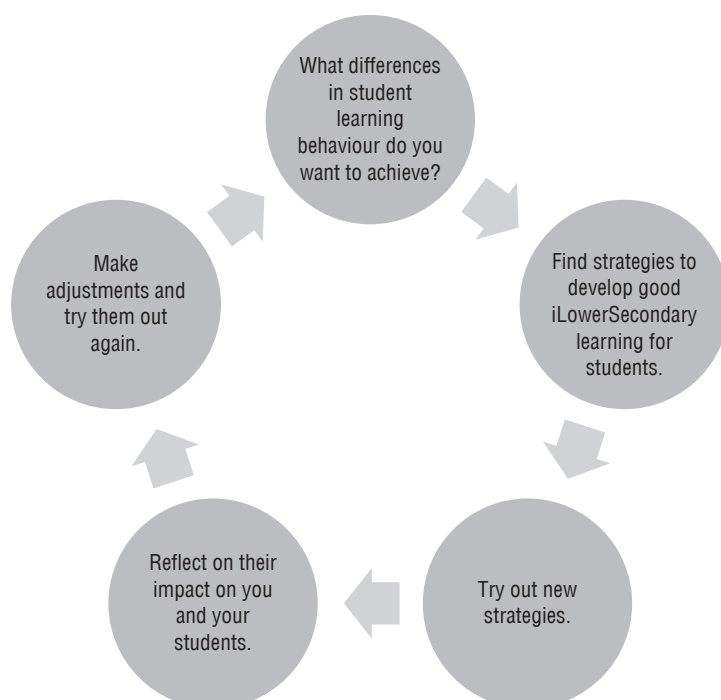
An important part of being an *iLowerSecondary* teacher is that you demonstrate the habit of developing and assessing your own practice. Focusing on your own development can directly help outcomes in the classroom, which means students learn more effectively and achieve more highly.

When embarking upon your journey as an iLowerSecondary teacher, it is important to remember that:

- you are not working in isolation; there is a network of support available through your iLowerSecondary colleagues and the iLowerSecondary online community
- there are clear practical tools and tips within this guide to help you to deliver the curriculum effectively
- iLowerSecondary colleagues can support each other by discussing challenges and sharing good practice
- you can work with your peers to observe practice and to give each other feedback.

## Reflective teaching practices

You are likely to develop the following reflective teaching practices, which work in a circular way.



## Tools and templates at your disposal

In **Appendix A** you will find a *Try it out* template and accompanying guidance. Make as many copies of this template as you like. The template supports you through the following five steps:

Choose an idea → Think about what you want to achieve → Make a plan → Try it out → Reflect and adapt practice

In **Appendix B** you will find a 'My iLowerSecondary checklist' template that you can use to record practice and plan next steps. You can make as many copies of this as you need and keep revisiting practices until you are confident.

## Where to go for help

- To download support, lesson plans or the details of your local Pearson representative, please visit the iLowerSecondary website.
- Information and support from the iLowerSecondary Schools Community can be found on the iLowerSecondary forum of the Pearson International Schools Community.
- Contact your local Pearson representative for details of our Professional Development offering or with any questions you may have.



## Creating an iLowerSecondary classroom environment

The iLowerSecondary curriculum supports a classroom environment that engages all students in learning activities and in which all students can progress.

A classroom environment that is engaging for students usually contains some or all of the following characteristics.

- Learning objectives are shared with students and the teacher checks that all students understand what is being asked of them.
- Class discussions involve all students participating in some way.
- Teacher talk is important but is always accompanied by opportunities for students to consider the new content/problem/ideas being presented by the teacher.
- Students see the connections between what they are learning and their lives.
- Students will have a go even when they are not sure of the answer.
- Students enjoy lessons and take their share of responsibility in making progress.
- Classrooms have attractive resources and student work on display which are used by both teacher and students.
- Seating arrangements will vary to suit the learning objectives, including desks arranged for small-group work.
- Students will often use resources to work on problems and carry out inquiries together where the teacher guides – rather than directs – this process.
- Noise levels can be quite high but the talk is productive and on-task.

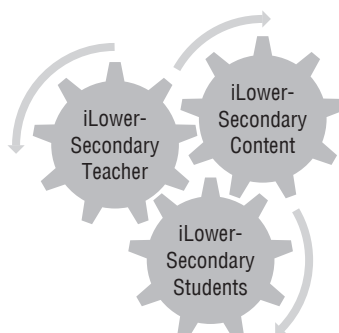
This next section will outline some of the key instructional methods you will have at your disposal in the iLowerSecondary classroom to create an effective learning environment and explain why these are an effective way of engaging students.

### ACTIVE LEARNING

Broadly, a positive classroom environment will involve the teacher leading what can be called ‘active learning strategies’. Active learning can sometimes mean that students are literally more physically active, but it *always* means that all students are required to think about what they are doing. As an iLowerSecondary teacher you will ensure students *engage* in learning activity. You will view learning as an interactive process and help students to take some responsibility for their own learning. There are three key areas:

1. students interact – or engage – with you, the teacher
2. students interact – or engage – with resources and new content
3. students interact – or engage – with each other.

These three axes of engagement interact and feed into each other as illustrated in the following diagram:



## Strategies for implementing active learning

This guide is full of ideas that will support you in creating an active learning environment in your classroom where *all* students can engage, contribute and make progress. See in particular the sections on **Engaging everyone**, **Collaborative activities** and **Developing thinking skills**.

Engaging everyone  
p. 15

Collaborative activities  
p. 24

Developing thinking skills  
p. 27

## POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Positive behaviour management simply refers to the effective management of student behaviour in the classroom in a way that is conducive to a positive classroom environment. This involves establishing a kind of social contract with students that is based on mutual respect.

### The benefits of positive behaviour management

A positive iLowerSecondary classroom environment will bring the following benefits.

- Creating and maintaining positive relationships with students can be of great benefit to the students and to teachers themselves; teachers will find that learning progresses more smoothly as students are positively engaged.
- Students will be more motivated in their learning because they value being respected and involved in the learning process.
- Teachers and students will have a far more enjoyable classroom experience if they are able to maintain mutually positive relationships.

### Strategies for implementing positive behaviour management

The following suggestions aim to support positive student-teacher relationships.

1. Create opportunities for one-to-one conversations with students to get to know them as individuals. This can be done outside class (at break times or at the school gate/class door) or achieved during group activities where the teacher aims for one-to-one chats with each student. It doesn't matter if it takes several days to fit in a chat with each student, providing everyone has had the opportunity for some individual time.  
*For example: So, Aisha, let's look at your last homework activity. Tell me a bit more about how you did x? What might make it even better? Next time could you try y?*
2. Try to personalise the written feedback you give to students. It will not necessarily be possible to do this every time you mark a student's work, but try to write something that shows you know the student as often as you can.  
*For example: Rajesh, you have done x, y and z well. I am particularly impressed with the way you... For your next piece of work try a, b and c...*
3. Aim to be curious rather than judgemental when interacting with your students. Ask yourself why a particular response or a behaviour that you are unhappy with might be happening. Think hard about the root causes rather than the surface behaviour.  
*For example, if students are easily bored you could ask yourself: Is the work challenging enough? Or does it need more structure for them to really understand it? Do they have enough input into the task? And so on.*
4. During group work, circulate the room and lean in to praise some good work or constructive learning behaviour where relevant.  
*For example: That was an excellent explanation, Ivan, or I like the way you asked such a good question there, Yu Yan, or I can see that this group is working very well together by working well within your assigned roles.*
5. When providing feedback to students, aim to make this as specific as possible to help students to act upon it.  
*For example: Next time, Elisabeth, write sentences of no more than ten words. This will help you focus on the main message of your sentence.*

6. Ensure that students are clear on what the goals of a specific piece of work or activity are.

For example: *YongJae, can you explain what you should be able to do by the end of this task?*

7. Show an interest in students' lives and bring in examples of their interests outside school so that you can add meaning to their learning.




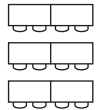
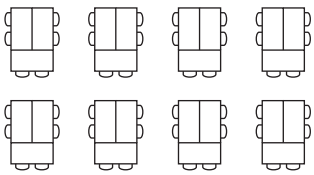
For example, if you know that Luka is interested in fishing, say: *Luka, how have you learned to be so patient that you can wait hours at a time to catch a fish?* Or make reference to a cultural event that will involve the students and may be occupying their thoughts (such as an end-of-term event, a local pop concert or a sports competition).

## SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Seating arrangements are a very simple yet powerful tool for creating an engaging and effective classroom environment for your students. As an iLowerSecondary teacher, you will find it helpful to vary your seating arrangements to suit the task in hand.

### Examples of seating arrangements to use in various classroom situations

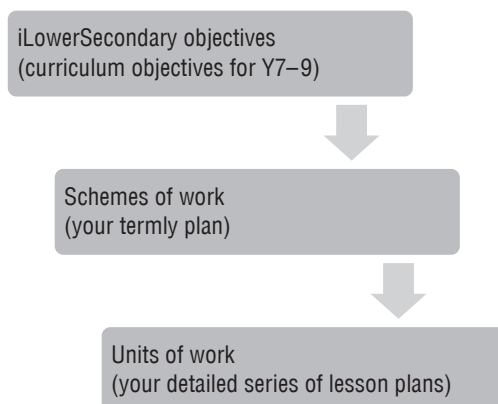
Here are some examples of seating arrangements you may try:

Seating arrangement	Learning purpose
 <p>Single desks in rows</p>	Single desks facing the front particularly suit test conditions. Here, students can concentrate and work individually.
 <p>U-shape or horseshoe</p>	A U-shape formation lends itself to whole-class discussion. It can also accommodate a combination of whole-class discussion and pair work.
 <p>Small groups of desks</p>	The small-group desk arrangement suits activities involving students in inquiries or other kinds of small-group work.
 <p>Paired rows</p>	Paired rows can be suitable for a combination of whole-class presentation and pair work. Paired rows can also be turned quickly into small groups of four.
<p>----- (front of class)</p>  <p>Group desks with all chairs able to see front board</p>	This may be good for a semi-permanent arrangement as it enables groups to work together as well as whole-class work where everyone needs to see the board.



# iLowerSecondary planning

The iLowerSecondary curriculum provides you with detailed curriculum objectives to guide the planning for termly schemes of work and more detailed week-by-week lesson planning.



## THE iLOWERSECONDARY CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES

You will find topics and objectives in the curriculum specification. The iLowerSecondary curriculum has been developed to give students the breadth and depth of knowledge they will need in order to confidently take external tests and be fully prepared to begin their International GCSE years.

The curriculum objectives cover the knowledge, understanding and application that students are expected to demonstrate in clear detail. Further guidance or examples are provided as appropriate. For example, a curriculum objective might say: *Use grammatical terminology for parts of speech with some accuracy.* This will be accompanied by examples of what students should know or be able to do, for example: *The student is able to recognise and name parts of speech used in text, e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.*

## DEVELOPING SCHEMES OF WORK

You may work with colleagues or independently to develop a termly scheme of work for your subject area using the curriculum objectives and topic outlined in the curriculum specifications. Here you will decide upon how to divide topics and select the relevant curriculum objectives. The scheme of work is a general plan that outlines what you will cover – and expect students to learn – over the course of a term.

Developing the termly plan or scheme of work will give you and your colleagues the opportunity to match curriculum objectives to topics that:

- go together well
- complement each other
- build upon each other in order to consolidate understanding
- coincide with a local or national event (sporting, musical, cultural).

For example, the following scheme of work, taken from Year 7 of the iLowerSecondary English curriculum, contains objectives that have been grouped together because they complement each other when teaching students about non-fiction texts; they cover a number of shared areas such as making inferences from a text, gathering key points and using the appropriate grammatical forms and conventions.

## ENGLISH

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## Year 7 English Scheme of Work

Teaching week	iLowerSecondary English objectives	Activities
Year 7 Unit 4: Non-Fiction (10 days)	<p><b>R7.1.2A</b> Identify and retrieve key points of information in a text or in spoken language.</p> <p><b>R7.1.2B</b> Identify and paraphrase key information in a text or in spoken language.</p> <p><b>R7.1.3</b> Make broad inferences from a text or in spoken language, supporting them with a range of evidence.</p> <p><b>R7.1.4</b> Read age-appropriate texts from a range of genres and forms (e.g. fiction, non-fiction, short stories and plays) from different origins (e.g. contemporary, pre-1914, Shakespearean and world literature), and begin to develop personal preferences.</p> <p><b>R7.2.1</b> Identify a writer's or speaker's intention and viewpoint.</p> <p><b>R7.4.1</b> Identify some of a writer's or speaker's choices of grammatical features and sentence structure.</p> <p><b>W7.1.1</b> Gather some relevant ideas before writing.</p> <p><b>W7.2.3</b> Use some of the organisational conventions of a range of forms, for a range of purposes and audiences.</p> <p><b>W7.3.1</b> Understand that different contexts require different registers; understand that Standard English is dependent on determiner/noun/verb agreement, verb form, vocabulary choice and sentence structure.</p> <p><b>W7.3.2</b> Understand the reasons for starting a new paragraph.</p> <p><b>W7.3.3</b> Use a variety of subordinating conjunctions with clarity and precision.</p> <p><b>W7.3.6</b> Use pronouns to achieve cohesion and clarity.</p>	<p>Explore ideas, texts and issues through a variety of dramatic approaches; Use skimming and scanning to locate the main points; Identify and understand the main ideas; Make a personal response to a text; Understand the different ways in which texts can reflect their social, cultural and historical contexts; Recognise and comment on how writers' choices and techniques have an effect on readers; Draw on the conventions of written forms; Develop character and voice in their own writing; Develop their own viewpoint; Make ideas and purpose clear; Shape the overall organisation, sequence and presentation of a text; Understand and use grammar appropriately; Identify some of the ways in which spoken English varies; Understand and make use of the most common terms used to describe language.</p>

## PLANNING UNITS OF WORK

Once you have your high-level termly plan, or scheme of work, you will then plan for a series of lessons. Here you will outline the detailed activities you plan to carry out in each lesson. Your individual lesson plans will involve deciding upon key vocabulary and concepts you aim to convey. You will also outline information about individual students or groups of students and, for example, any additional challenge or support that you may need to provide. You should also decide which specific curriculum objectives you are addressing in that lesson. The following lesson plan provides an example structure that you might use.


## MATHEMATICS

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Year 7 Autumn Term 1 Lesson 1					
Main Focus	Prior Knowledge		Key Vocabulary	Curriculum Objectives	
Use two-way tables Interpret and draw dual bar charts and compound bar charts	Students have experience of data handling and drawing and interpreting simple bar charts.		Mode, modal, dual bar chart, compound bar chart, frequency, frequency diagram, two-way table	<b>S7.1E</b> Compare sets of data using their ranges and averages  <b>S7.2 A</b> Represent data in tally charts, frequency tables, bar charts, bar-line charts and pie charts  <b>S7.2B</b> Interpret simple tables and bar charts for grouped data  <b>S7.2E</b> Read and interpret information from bar charts, bar-line charts, dual and compound bar charts and line graphs	
Teaching Summary					
Provide a simple bar chart on a topic of interest. Ask students to read and interpret it, in pairs.					
Display this table of Year 7 favourite potato dishes.					
Potato dish	Mashed	Baked	Chipped	Boiled	
Frequency	6	3	11	5	
Explain the term 'frequency' and draw a 'frequency diagram' (bar chart). Describe the features of the chart: title, axis labels, horizontal (values), vertical scale, bars of equal width, same colour and equally spaced.					
Add another row to the table for Year 8 and introduce the term 'two-way table'.					
Potato dish	Mashed	Baked	Chipped	Boiled	Total
Year 7	6	3	11	5	
Year 8	5	5	10	4	
Total					
Ask for the totals and what they mean, including the grand total.					
Draw a dual bar chart for the data. Emphasise the need to add a key to the chart.					
Draw a compound bar chart for the data. How would the charts change if you added data for Year 9? (another set of bars, new colour)					

As an iLowerSecondary teacher you will ensure that you include activities that engage the students using a variety of techniques. Your planned activities will involve students in interacting with new content, with each other and with you in interesting and energising ways. Your plans will include a range of activities, including: using mini-whiteboards, structured small-group discussions, whole-group discussion where students have thinking time, student presentations, jigsaw grouping, hot seating, gallery walks and other active learning techniques. This guide is full of ideas to help you do this.

As part of the planning process, you will also include opportunities to carry out formative assessment in each lesson. This will help you to know where to support and challenge individuals or groups of students. It will also help you to assess how much the whole class has understood and whether you need to skip over content or repeat ideas. You can plan for formative assessment opportunities at the beginning, part way through and at the end of lessons.

 Formative  
assessment  
p. 57

Your planned formative assessment opportunities are likely to include some of the following.

- Traffic-light cards to assess students' understanding halfway through an activity. Students may hold up a green, amber or red card indicating their level of understanding.
- A variety of questioning techniques, including open-ended questions that may reveal student misconceptions or assess the level of secure understanding.
- Mini-whiteboards to determine prior knowledge or remaining questions. You can check students' responses at a glance, or concentrate on certain students or groups.
- KWL charts (what students **K**now, what they **W**ant to learn and – at the end of the lesson – what they have **L**earned) or posters to assess and activate prior knowledge and to assess how much has been learned.
- Asking students to keep an individual 'shared' learning log that allows for the student to capture their learning against certain criteria, to make reflective comments, to ask questions and then to gain individual comments and responses from the teacher. This enables the student to invite and receive some high-quality *individual* dialogue, input and feedback. Shared learning logs work best when they include clear assessment criteria in the form of levelled rubrics in order to be very specific about the feedback given.
- Focused talks with individual students help to determine levels of understanding and progress (you can plan to see individual students while the class is conducting group work, for example).

Your plans will allow for these formative opportunities in order to determine the pace and level of your students' progress. You will therefore also need to plan for some flexibility, such as additional activities for students who grasp ideas very quickly or going over key concepts in different ways to ensure all students have grasped the ideas sufficiently.



## Principles for progress

The principles for progress are a collection of the ten principles (identified by our pedagogical experts) that will give your students the best opportunity to make progress in their learning. Each principle is accompanied by guidance relating to specific teaching approaches, tips and issues to watch out for, all written in clear, practical steps that you can use in the classroom. Formative assessment underpins and runs through all of these principles. Knowing each student's starting point, understanding their learning and reflecting on their development helps to ensure progress for all.

	Principle	Summary
1	Engaging everyone	Techniques to ensure that all students are involved in the lesson and participate in discussion, including whole-class question-and-answer sessions.
2	Differentiation	Provides techniques for adapting your teaching to ensure that all students can access the learning according to their level and achieve good outcomes. These techniques also convey the importance of having high expectations of all students.
3	Enabling independent learning	Outlines suggestions to support your students, encouraging them to 'have a go' and not to be put off by challenging ideas or tasks. It also has techniques for helping all students to take more responsibility for their own progress.
4	Effective questioning	Offers practical tips for asking questions that make students think. It outlines question types (for example, closed, open, factual, conceptual, probing, discussion) and provides examples of each.
5	Teacher talk	Teacher talk is important and this section outlines how to make it as effective as possible with ways of engaging your students as you introduce new content and explain activities.
6	Collaborative activities	Outlines lots of practical ideas for grouping students and ensuring that group work is really focused and productive. It also outlines ways of developing student ownership of their learning and the ways in which group work can build confidence too.
7	Teacher demonstration	Focused on how to conduct effective teacher demonstrations and how you can model important learning behaviours too.
8	Developing thinking skills	Provides good ideas for developing your students' abilities to think critically, to problem-solve and to carry out their own mini-inquiries.
9	Reflection on learning	Ideas to encourage students to think constructively about their own learning and to take control over how to make better progress.
10	Feedback (in both directions)	Offers practical ideas for conducting good two-way feedback between you and your students in order to improve learning and achievement.

## ENGAGING EVERYONE

As an iLowerSecondary teacher, you will work hard to involve everyone in your lesson activities, including whole-class discussion. The following ideas will support you in conveying your own enthusiasm for the lesson content, finding connections to engage students' interests and using techniques to ensure that all students *have to* participate in discussion and activities.

### Teaching approaches for engaging everyone

#### 1. Convey enthusiasm

- Remember that enthusiasm is infectious (in a good way!) so aim to share your own interest in the subject.
- Even if you are not enthusiastic about a particular subject, try to act as if you are. You are likely to find that your enthusiasm and your students' keenness grow as a result.
- Make connections between the subject and examples in your own life or in the wider world and aim to show that learning about the topic matters.

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#### 2. Find links to students' interests and existing knowledge

##### • Create a KWL chart

One simple technique is to ask students to complete a KWL chart. This asks them to say what they already **K**now, what they **W**ant to learn and – at the end of the lesson – what they have **L**earned. This is very useful information as it can help you plan group tasks, to know when to provide supporting resources for some students or to skip over part of a topic quickly because the students are already familiar with it. It also provides students with the opportunity to show what they are interested in.

##### • Use a gallery walk to activate existing knowledge

This technique involves you creating four to six prompt questions (or images/drawings) that you write on flip chart posters and display around the room. Each of the four to six prompts relates to a new topic. Arrange students into small groups and assign each group their first chart/poster. Invite students to write their ideas and comments relating to the prompt for about three minutes. Then ask each group to move to their next poster where they read the comments from the previous group and add their own. Ask probing question as you circulate. Note any ideas where students have strong previous understanding, gaps in their knowledge or misconceptions.

#### 3. Engage everyone in whole-class discussions

##### • Use 'hands down' and 'wait time'

One effective way of engaging everyone in a class discussion is to insist that students keep their hands down when you pose a question. This allows you to provide your students with 'thinking time' as you wait before asking a particular individual to provide an answer.

##### • Think-pair-share

During this 'wait time' after posing a question you can ask your students to engage in a minute of **thinking** on their own. They then turn to their partner to work in **pairs** to develop and exchange their thoughts. You then ask pairs of students to **share** ideas with the whole class.

- **Use mini-whiteboards**

When posing a question or setting a task, give each student a mini-whiteboard (or plain paper/card) to work on his or her answer. Then – at a set time – ask all students to hold up their answers for you to see. This allows students to work quietly without too much pressure from the ‘quick responder’ who usually provides the answer. It also enables you to see the different levels and types of response to help you plan your next steps/question.

- **Use name cards for randomly selecting students**

Create a set of cards displaying each student’s name. After asking a class question, give students time to think (wait time) and then pull out a card at random and ask the named student to respond. Alternatively, you could pull out two names at a time and start a discussion between two students. When students get into the habit of expecting to think and understand that they may be asked for the answer publicly they will start to engage with the learning more. You can pull out more cards to encourage other students to respond to the original student’s answer in constructive ways. That way, your whole-class discussion feels more like basketball (lots of people bouncing ideas around) than singles tennis (you getting answers from individual students).

#### **4. Work the room to engage with individual students**

When you have set a class task you can then work the room to check in with certain individuals and ensure that they are engaged and making progress. Depending on what you find when working the room, you could:

- identify three students that are a bit withdrawn and engage them in a conversation
- suggest that particular students take on the role of reporting ideas back to the whole class in order to encourage them to speak out in front of the other students. You could give them a few starter suggestions about how to do this if you feel they will need that level of support.

#### **Watch out for...**

- The same students always answering the class questions. This can discourage other students and lead to them giving up or relying on these students.
- Shyer students who may need some extra support in speaking out in front of the whole class (think–pair–share is a good technique to use here).



## DIFFERENTIATION

Effective differentiation means adapting your teaching to enable students to access learning. This involves lesson planning that pitches and scaffolds tasks for all students to make progress. It is *not* about locking down or limiting potential by only providing easy tasks for students with limited (existing) ability. This approach is based on conclusive research that intelligence and ability can grow and is not fixed. Therefore, as an iLowerSecondary teacher you will differentiate activities while keeping high expectations for everybody and keep individual students' progress under review.

### Teaching approaches for differentiation in the classroom

#### 1. Differentiation by outcome

This approach consists of setting the same task for all students and providing levelled success criteria outlining what different level answers would look like. This enables you to show what you expect all students to achieve and to provide guidance on how to achieve a high standard. You are not making any advance assumptions about what certain students can or cannot do. For example:

**Topic:** Rainforests

**Outcome:** Identify and explain key features of a rainforest

**Task:** After watching a short video and slide presentation (with opportunities for think–pair–share ideas), students work in groups to plan a presentation explaining the importance of the world's rainforests to the survival of our planet for a fictitious student geography conference. Students are given packs containing key information about rainforests but are also expected to conduct some independent research to find information beyond what is provided. Students are also given success criteria explaining what a good answer looks like. The 'presentation' could take the form of an electronic pamphlet, a video or a group presentation using good media technology. Students then present to the whole class. The students in the 'audience' engage in some peer review of each presentation and are provided with a simple rubric to guide this peer review. After all the presentations are complete there is a whole-class discussion capturing the strengths and areas for development for each presentation.

**Success criteria:**

- Satisfactory: two or three well-argued key reasons, use of basic communicative media, two or three illustrations, short explanations (three sentences or fewer), all the provided research information included and one or two other sources of independently sourced information included.
- Good: four or five well-argued key reasons, good use of communicative media, three or four clear and labelled illustrations, longer explanations including references to the provided information and three or four sources of independent research.
- Outstanding: A strong integrated explanation of the importance of rainforest; excellent use of communicative media, well-referenced arguments using all provided information and several (five or more) sources of independent information gained from independent research.

Some students may find it harder to understand the success criteria or to visualise what a good answer looks like. Here you can share a 'pretend' answer relating to a different topic that exemplifies 'good' or 'below standard' so they all know what to aim for or avoid.

Students will provide answers of varying standards according to several factors, such as their writing ability. Once the task is completed, share anonymised examples from the class of what 'good' looks like to all students and discuss how to improve for the next task. You can follow up with specific feedback for individual students on how to improve.

## **2. Differentiation by levels of support for a specific task**

This involves providing certain students with more support to achieve a (common) task, therefore you can plan how to intervene to support those students who may have grasped the ideas very quickly and to support those who are struggling.

For example, with the rainforest lesson on the previous page, you would identify students with specific needs that may make certain aspects of the task more challenging for them (such as reading or writing levels). You could arrange students into groups and spend more time supporting particular groups in preparing for the task.

Teachers will work with all abilities to encourage them to achieve more highly so that 'teacher support' is viewed as a 'normal' expectation of every task.

## **3. Differentiation by resources**

This involves providing different students, or groups of students, with different resources aimed at supporting them in achieving a common task.

For example, with the rainforest lesson on the previous page, this might mean that you create 'learning packs' with different 'levels of difficulty' for different groups of students. The packs might contain explanations in more complex or simpler language or you may vary the amount of information in each pack. You could also provide some information for higher achievers to enable them to create their own resource to support the presentation.

## **4. Differentiation by time to master key concepts**

This approach helps you to support all students to achieve mastery of a particular concept by not moving on to the next level of difficulty until *all* are ready to do so. Those who have grasped the idea quickly should have the opportunity to go deeper into the concept and those who are struggling should be provided with extra support.

For example, with the rainforest lesson on the previous page, this may mean identifying the essential concept that you want the students to grasp, for example, photosynthesis. You would ensure that all students have grasped this idea before moving on to the next topic. This could involve giving those who grasped the ideas quickly opportunities to analyse photosynthesis in different contexts. Students who are struggling to grasp the idea might be given a number of short videos to watch and be asked to answer specific questions to ensure they understand the process and significance of photosynthesis.

## **5. Differentiation by task**

This involves giving different tasks (relating to the same topic) to different students according to their current level of understanding and achievement.

For example, with the rainforest lesson on the previous page, you could ask lower-achieving students to carry out lower-level tasks like 'describing' features of rainforests, including photosynthesis, and ask the higher-achieving ones to research and explain how botanists measure rates of photosynthetic activity.

The advantage of this approach is that you tailor learning to suit current needs and therefore students are able to succeed and achieve the outcomes more easily. This can boost student confidence. However, when using this approach it is easy to make judgements about student ability that keep them somewhat 'fixed'. To avoid this, aim to only use this approach when there is a specific concept or skill that requires concentrated input. Monitor achievement closely and ensure that you are providing tasks that always contain some stretch for students regardless of their current ability. Alternatively, you could frequently provide open-ended tasks which will allow you to differentiate by outcome too.

## ENABLING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Engaging students so that they know the ‘big picture’ purpose of the lesson, the main activities and why they have been chosen encourages students to take more responsibility for their part in the learning process. Independent learning is further supported by:

1. arriving at a clear, shared understanding of what success looks like (i.e. the ‘success criteria’)
2. understanding the steps needed to achieve this success.

Having clear success criteria and steps to success will develop students’ confidence to ‘have a go’. This understanding also helps students work with each other more effectively and makes them less reliant on the teacher.

### Teaching approaches for enabling independent learning

#### 1. Communicating learning objectives

- Use student-friendly language to describe the learning objectives for the lesson, for example, *Today, we are learning to...*
- Ask students to predict the learning objectives for this lesson based on what they have learned in previous lessons. For example: *What do you think we should be learning today given what we did last lesson?*
- Once you have established the objectives of the lesson, ask students to complete the following sentences (this can be done verbally or in written form, but it has to be short and lively).

*This lesson will be successful if:*

- *the teacher...* (for example: explains clearly, gives us time to think...)
- *all the students...* (for example: listen to each other, can discuss our ideas)
- *I...* (for example: contribute my ideas, ask good questions).
- Ask students to show red, amber or green cards following a traffic-light system to communicate how well they are meeting the objectives.
- At the end of the lesson, invite students to look back at the objectives to see in what ways and to what extent they have been achieved. You can do this by asking each student to fill out an ‘exit slip’ (a small piece of paper to capture their view on whether or not they met the objectives) or to add to their shared learning log for a series of lessons.

#### 2. Developing shared understanding of success criteria

- Use student-friendly language to describe the success criteria, for example, *What I am looking for today is...* or *What we should achieve during this unit/term/topic is...*
- Encourage your students to come up with their own ideas for what success should look like once you have described the learning objectives. Ask them: *What do you think all of us should be able to do by the end of today’s lesson?*



- Standardise your use of certain verbs in your lesson outcomes so that these become familiar to students, for example:

*You will be able to:*

- **remember** the fact that...
  - **explain** to someone else how to...
  - **create** a...
  - **evaluate** (or judge or assess) how to...
- Make sure learning outcomes are very specific. For example: *You will be able to write a paragraph on x subject.*

### **3. Establishing class norms**

- Involve students in the process of creating and agreeing behavioural standards.
- Express expected standards in positive language, for example, 'be on time' rather than 'don't be late'.

### **4. 'Three before me'**

- When working in groups, encourage your students to ask three classmates a clarifying question before they turn to you for information.

### **5. Peer evaluation**

Peer review is a powerful learning technique which needs to be supported by clear criteria. In other words, students need to know what 'good', 'excellent' and 'poor' performances look like. You can communicate these criteria in different ways for different ages of students and incorporate the following techniques.

- At early stages of introducing peer evaluation, create peer-assessment pairs so that students can assess each other's work in relative safety.
- Return marked tests and encourage students to work in pairs to check their partner's grades.
- In preparation for a test, give students a mark scheme and a set of anonymous work (of varying quality) and ask them to work in pairs to mark it.

### **6. Encouraging a 'have a go!' attitude**

- Model thinking through a difficult question or problem.
- Explain that very successful people make – and learn from – mistakes.
- Publicly reward effort by students who try hard to solve or tackle a difficult task.

## EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

Asking good questions that *lead to thinking* is one of the most important techniques that iLowerSecondary teachers can use. There are many types of questions and these can either be open (e.g. *What do you think about this idea/story?*) or closed (e.g. *What is a verb?* or *What does the term 'metaphor' mean?*). It is important to have a balance of both and to ask the type of question that suits your purpose.

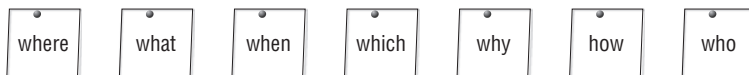
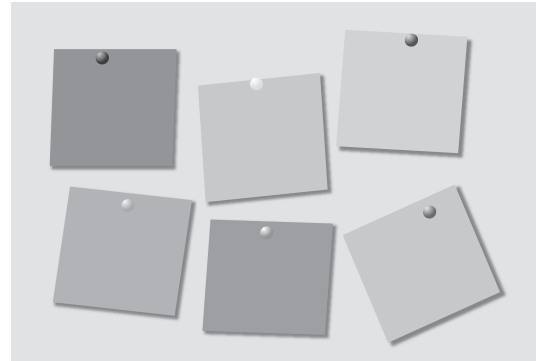
### Examples of questions with different purposes

Question purpose	Examples
Make predictions	<i>What do you think might happen next?</i> <i>How many more of x might be needed if y happened...?</i>
Analyse	<i>What is the connection between... and...?</i> <i>What are the most important facts/issues here?</i>
Assess understanding	<i>What are the big ideas for this lesson?</i> <i>What have you tried so far?</i>
Think divergently	<i>Who can add to that idea?</i> <i>What might be another way to tackle this problem?</i>
Identify problems	<i>Can someone repeat those instructions in their own words?</i>
Clarify thinking	<i>What are your next steps?</i>
Reflect on learning	<i>How would you explain this to a friend?</i>
Make guesses	<i>What might have happened if...?</i>
Compare	<i>How is x similar/different to y?</i>
Probe for deeper thinking	<i>What is another way of looking at this or solving this problem?</i>
Redirect focus	<i>How does this discussion on x relate to the problem with y?</i>
Ascertain interest	<i>How does this relate to your experiences outside the classroom?</i>
Demonstrate curiosity	<i>What further questions would you like to answer about this?</i>
Assess prior knowledge	<i>How does this relate to what you've done before?</i>
Assess progress	<i>Where are you confident and where are your challenges?</i>

### Tips for effective questioning in the classroom

- Discourage 'hands up' and tell the class that you expect everyone to be prepared to answer.
- Use PPP ('pose, pause, pounce'):
  - **Pose** the question to the whole group
  - **Pause** to allow all students to think of (or discuss) the answer
  - **Pounce** by naming a student to provide an answer.
- Ask students to explain the reasons for their answers. Spread the questions around the class so that all can participate. Encourage all to join in – in a regulated manner – for example: *Ivan, can you give an example of what Mohammad means?*

- Encourage student questioning. For example, provide an 'answer' such as the number 12. Then ask students to come up with questions for which only the number 12 could be the answer.
- Create a question wall and invite students to capture their questions throughout the activity or day or week. Address the questions at regular intervals in front of the whole class. Questions can be anonymous if necessary (which can allow for more 'risk-taking').
- Once students are confident with the question wall technique (described above), task a different student (or groups of students) with taking ownership of the question, conducting research and making a presentation to showcase the answers.
- Introduce a topic and invite students to think of as many questions about the topic as they can. Working in small groups, get the students to ask their classmates the questions.
- Ask higher-order questions, which encourage students to go beyond basic information, for example: *Which of these ideas/answers is the strongest? Why do you think that? What if we add this new information? Does that change your view/answer?*
- Have a series of question cards. Plain pieces of card with key question words written on one side, like *what*, *when*, *where*, *which*, *who*, *why* and *how*. Have students shuffle these and choose a card a random, then come up with a question using this prompt word.



### Watch out for...


- Do not make the assumption that if hands go up everyone understands the question or knows the answer. Sometimes putting hands up is a habit rather than a real show of understanding.
- If lots of hands go up too quickly this may mean the questions are too easy.

## TEACHER TALK

As an iLowerSecondary teacher you will probably find that you spend less time giving long explanations to the whole class and more time engaging with students directly. However, the way you present information, for how long and the language you use remains very important.

### Tips for effective teacher talk

- As you plan a lesson involving presenting new content or class discussion, plan several questions that require an elaborated response from students, such as those that begin with 'Why' or 'How'.
- As you engage students in the lesson, pause often to ask questions that require more than a single-word response.
- Value some silence.
- Give students thinking time to absorb what you've said and don't answer your own questions.
- As students share their ideas, ask others to elaborate or respond to their peers' ideas. Continue the discussion by probing student responses to foster more in-depth thought.
- Encourage students to ask any questions when they are halfway through your presentation.
- Ask students to predict what might come next in your presentation.
- Avoid speaking for too long without engaging students in a task for them to process the information.
- Frequently check for understanding by asking questions that assess students' understanding and progress.

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### Teaching approaches for teacher talk in the classroom

#### 1. Write-pair-share

This is similar to the think-pair-share technique. Here, students write a response to a question or prompt, then share with a partner. During lessons in which delivering new content is most appropriate, pause every five to ten minutes to allow students two minutes to consolidate their notes and/or share their summary with a partner. You may also provide opportunities for students to engage in short, one to two minute writing exercises that then lead to class discussion.

#### 2. Brainstorm before presenting new content

Arrange for students to work in a small group to create a list of ideas on a given topic. This can be used to activate prior knowledge or to summarise concepts and make connections. Students can also engage in some peer evaluation by placing sticky notes with comments next to ideas in other groups' lists relating to ideas they would like to ask more about or challenge. This will mean they are highly engaged when you carry out your presentation.

### Watch out for...

- The same students giving you correct answers as you present new content and assuming that this means the whole class has secure understanding.
- The length of your (uninterrupted) presentations of new content and aim to keep these to a maximum of ten minutes (usually less).
- The feeling that you have done more work in processing ideas than your students. They should be (generally) talking more than you in most lessons.



## COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES

Research shows that *structured* group work can lead to very high-quality learning. The best-quality group work requires each member of the group to take genuine responsibility for the successful outcomes of the task. The iLowerSecondary curriculum gives you plenty of opportunities to incorporate this kind of collaborative work. This will enable students to work together well, learn from each other and work on a problem together to arrive at a solution.

### Teaching approaches for collaborative activities

#### 1. Assigning group roles

- Present some new content and then divide the class into small groups to carry out a task that will deepen their understanding of the new content or enable them to apply their understanding. Groups should have no more than four members. Assign each member a role, for example:
  - group chair/leader
  - spokesperson (who reports back to the whole class)
  - scribe (who writes down the main ideas)
  - ‘fact checker’ or ‘quality controller’ (who has to make sure that the ideas are accurate or to ensure the best-quality responses).
- Assign group members different responsibilities during a discussion task, where they have to take on the role of the:
  - critical thinker
  - positive thinker
  - person who has to think of all the things that could go/be wrong
  - neutral person who sees all sides of the discussion.

#### 2. Jigsaw grouping

The jigsaw approach is a cooperative learning strategy in which each member of a group is assigned a portion of a task to complete. Students then work within their small group to piece together the individual pieces into one coherent task.

Here are some tips for using this approach.

- Plan an activity, such as reading and reviewing a story, that can be split into smaller chunks.
- Create student groups and assign each group one part of the task.
- Direct students to complete their part, then talk with their peers who had the same task. This allows students to dig deeper into their part of the task.
- Then create new student groups in which each group has a student that completed each part of the task.
- Allow all students to share their ideas or understanding from their part of the original task so that the whole group has a complete picture of the whole task.

### **3. Using a gallery walk**

A gallery walk is an activity in which students rotate to various stations around the classroom, completing tasks at each station. A gallery walk can also be used to showcase work completed by other students, giving an opportunity for students to learn from their peers.

Here are some tips for using this approach.

- As you plan a lesson, create several 'station' ideas. For example: students answer a question, students read and discuss a document, students respond to some quotations, etc.
- Place each station's materials in a designated spot in the classroom and place flip chart paper and marker pens at each station.
- To start, create student groups and assign each group one station.
- Provide an appropriate amount of time for students to complete the task at their station (five to seven minutes is generally acceptable but adjust as needed). Ask students to complete the task and write their ideas onto the flip chart paper.
- When the time is up, ask students to rotate to the next station to complete the next task.
- Continue the process of providing time at each station before having students rotate to the next station until groups are at their original station.
- Provide time for students to review the responses on their original station's flip chart paper to summarise the main ideas.
- Allow each small group to share out the responses on their flip chart paper in a whole-class discussion.

### **4. Hot seating/ask the expert**

- First, you act as the expert and ask students to work in pairs or small groups to come up with as many questions as they can. You might be a famous inventor, scientist, mathematician or historical figure. Students then take it in turns to ask you questions.
- Then encourage a group of students to act as the expert panel (consisting of scientists, inventors, etc.), while other students create and ask questions. Rotate the expert-panel group so that all students get to be experts as well as questioners.

### **5. Developing positive relationships between students**

- Small-group tasks: set each small group a challenge and reward their ways of working together as well as the outcome of the task.
- Assign different group leaders to tasks over time to build up confidence and skills for all students.
- Peer marking of quick quizzes: encourage students to swap their quiz papers and to mark each other's work (with you providing answers from the front).
- Reward collaborative behaviour: give a weekly prize for the group or pair of students that have worked in the most collaborative and constructive way that week.

## TEACHER DEMONSTRATION

As an iLowerSecondary teacher you will be modelling learning behaviours for your students. You will also have lots of opportunities to demonstrate ways of thinking, problem solving and structuring tasks that will be especially useful for students.

### Teaching approaches for teacher demonstration

#### 1. Modelling behaviour

- Create a positive and supportive emotional environment in your classroom. This will increase student confidence and allow more students to take risks in their thinking and problem solving too. Model respectful behaviour, do not allow belittling and reward or acknowledge thoughtful behaviour.
- Be curious rather than critical when responding to students and model this using appropriate language. For example: *I am curious about why you chose to... Can you tell me a bit more about why you have focused on x rather than y?*
- Use polite and respectful language, even when you are reprimanding a student.

#### 2. Think alouds

A 'think aloud' is when a teacher talks the class through his or her thought process when solving a problem or engaging in an activity. Students rarely get a chance to see a teacher struggle with a problem, but sharing these experiences can be a very powerful technique for students to witness. You should aim to model internal dialogue, self-questioning, decision making, false starts and self-corrections to show students what problem solving looks like.

You might ask aloud questions such as:

- *What are some of the ways I can begin?*
- *What might be the benefits of these different ways to approach this problem?*
- *What do I already know that might help me?*

Students will benefit from this approach in the following ways.

- They will make connections between their own and an expert's experiences with material.
- They will begin to understand that mistakes are a normal part of trying something new and will learn how to self-monitor and make corrections.
- Listening to students thinking aloud can provide you with useful formative assessment data.

#### 3. Teacher-led demonstrations

- These allow you to demonstrate model answers to the class and to show your working out as you go. Try to include various ways of approaching the problem or task and demonstrate how to tackle each.
- Use video clips of demonstrations and invite students to comment during intervals by asking focused questions, such as: *What do you think he or she will do next? Is this the only way it could be done?*

#### 4. Student-centred demonstrations

- Involve students in demonstrations by asking them to work in pairs at the board to show how to structure an approach to an answer.
- As students develop confidence, encourage them to be an 'instructor' and carry out a demonstration at the front of the class.
- Invite students to demonstrate their planning of an investigation or project report.
- Give students opportunities to demonstrate the ways they have conducted research for a report through a class presentation (and allow the student to decide the format of the presentation).

## DEVELOPING THINKING SKILLS

As an iLowerSecondary teacher, you will know that developing thinking skills – especially critical and creative thinking – are very important for students to do well in examinations. Metacognition (i.e. thinking about thinking) is also essential for students and will enable them to make a smooth transition to Upper Secondary school as well as improve their lifelong learning skills.

### Enabling students to develop thinking skills

#### 1. Critical thinking skills

The following table outlines some of the main critical thinking skills and the accompanying command verbs and task instructions that you can use to structure tasks and develop these skills.

Critical thinking skills	Command verbs	Example task instructions
Analyse	Compare; Explain Calculate; Estimate Conclude; Outline Plan; Organise Summarise; Classify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare the items in this list and sort them into three categories (most important, important, least important).</li> </ul>
Evaluate	Judge; Measure Predict; Select Justify; Persuade Conclude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judge the order of this list by giving arguments for and against each point.</li> </ul>
Creative thinking	Design; Compose Imagine; Adapt Develop; Propose Invent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose changes to the list and decide how you would improve it.</li> </ul>

#### 2. Concept mapping

Concept or mind mapping is a small or large group activity which is separated into two parts.

1. Students generate as many ideas as possible around a question, topic, idea, or problem. At this stage, the focus is on generating ideas, not on judging the ideas.
2. Students organise the ideas into common categories or concepts.

To support students in this process you could model one example before asking students to go through the same process in a small group.

Then ask students to share their concept maps in a 'gallery' by displaying maps on the classroom wall and conduct a gallery walk where all students review each other's work.

#### 3. Metacognition

You can encourage students to think about their own thinking by prompting them to ask themselves questions before, during and after lessons and also in preparation for tests. For example:

##### Before the lesson

- What do you already know about this topic?
- What do you think I am asking you to do in this assignment/task?

- How are you going to actively monitor your learning in this lesson?
- What questions do you already have about this topic that you want to learn more about?
- What resources do you need to complete this task?
- Have you done something like this before? If so, how can you use what you learned to do better this time?

### **During the Lesson**

- What questions are coming up?
- How are you determining which information is important?
- What strategies have you tried, and which are working well/not working well?
- What is challenging to you, and how can you address these challenges?
- How are the learning supports helping you?

### **After the Lesson**

- What was the lesson about?
- What did you learn that was new or that challenged what you already knew?
- How did today's lesson relate to prior lessons?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses with respect to this lesson?
- How did you use the resources that were available to you?
- If you were to do this activity/task again, what would you do differently?
- What worked well/did not work well for you?

### **In preparation for tests**

- How will you prepare for the upcoming test or quiz? Why have you chosen that approach?
- What resources are available to you and how will you use them?
- How does your strategy compare to the strategies of three of your peers?
- What are your main areas of weakness/strength? How should you use that information to plan your study time?
- Based on your prior assessments, what advice would you give yourself for preparing for the next test or quiz?
- What are the big ideas from the unit or chapter?
- How do you feel before a test or quiz? What will you do to ensure that you are calm before the test or quiz?



## REFLECTION ON LEARNING

As an iLowerSecondary teacher you will regularly reflect on your students' learning and progress and use this information to make adjustments to your lessons. In addition, you will encourage strong learning habits in your students that will stand them in very good stead for examinations and lifelong learning.

### Teaching approaches for reflecting on learning

#### 1. Developing a growth mindset among students

- Create a classroom culture where students are encouraged to see their own ability as 'expandable' and not 'fixed'.
- Praise effort as well as outcomes and be specific, explaining what was good about the way students went about the task.
- Give examples of brilliant people who have persisted before coming to a new theory or invention which will inspire students to achieve more. For example: Nikola Tesla (who invented an earlier version of the electric motor used in electric cars today) and Thomas Edison (who patented the first commercially viable light bulbs).
- Praise the success of the task rather than directly praising the student. For example, say: *The way you planned that project was very impressive because...* NOT *You are very clever.*
- Use questions to encourage your students to think about their own thinking.

  
Developing  
thinking  
skills p. 27

#### 2. Providing reflection points during learning

- Traffic-lights: ask students to rate their level of understanding or rate of progress by showing red, green or amber cards. Students can place the cards on their tables as they work so that you can monitor and intervene with groups or individuals as needed.
- Mini-whiteboards: at key points during an activity, invite students to share an answer or make a statement about their progress on whiteboards and to hold them up for you to see. Note which students to follow up with, based on their answers, as some may need stretching further and others may need support.
- TYP (Turn To Your Partner): ask students to turn to their partner and discuss a 'progress' question. After five minutes, ask for feedback on what went well so far (WWW – **W**hat **W**ent **W**ell) and what could be even better (EBI – **E**ven **B**etter **I**f). Summarise points and provide support to the whole class or individuals/groups as necessary.

#### 3. Providing reflection points at the end of a task

- Give students the opportunity to mark their own work before they hand it to you.
- Ask students to reflect on why they think they achieved the score they did and ask them to create their own improvement points.
- Conduct plenaries that allow students to share reflections on their own learning, for example, one thing they are proud of and one skill they would like to strengthen. There are fun ways of conducting plenaries, including using a ball of string to pass between students as they make statements about their learning that connect to each other.

## FEEDBACK (IN BOTH DIRECTIONS)

Specific, actionable feedback improves learning. Feedback can be written or oral. Giving students immediate spoken feedback is a powerful technique, leading to improved achievement. You should plan lessons carefully to provide opportunities for you to engage with individual students.

### Teaching approaches for incorporating feedback into the classroom

#### 1. Teacher-to-student feedback

- Implement a 'beacons and targets' system in your classroom.
  - 'Beacons' tell the student they have done well. It is important to set out why the student work is deserving of a beacon in specific terms, for example: *This is very good in terms of the way you addressed x...* (NOT *Well done – this is a good answer*).
  - 'Targets' are individual goals that help the student focus on what they need to do to improve their work.
  - Each new target is an opportunity for you to adjust your students' learning.
  - Checklists, prompts and marking frameworks will be a useful aid for tracking targets and beacons feedback.
  - Encourage students to think of their own beacons and targets.
  - Have dialogue with students to agree on beacons and targets together.
- WWW and EBI: speak with students one to one to give five minutes of verbal feedback containing What Went Well (WWW) about a task and one thing that they could be Even Better If (EBI) for next time. Speak with everyone over the course of a few lessons.
- Personalise written feedback when possible. For example: *You have done x well; I am impressed with the way you did x because...; For your next piece of work try y...*
- Show how to invite and welcome feedback – even if it is not all positive. Share examples of constructive feedback you have received and how this has helped you develop. Demonstrate a feedback conversation with some students showing growth points and targeted praise. You could also show an ineffective conversation (too critical or vague and no actionable points) and good feedback with growth points as well as praise.

#### 2. Student-to-student feedback

- Conduct gallery walks where students write constructive comments on and ask questions of displayed work by other students.
- Provide assessment criteria and invite students to mark their own and their partner's homework, then to compare their assessment with yours.
- Return marked tests and encourage students to check their partner's grades.
- Provide opportunities for students to take notes during group tasks in order to gain insight into improving their own learning.

### 3. Student-to-teacher feedback

- Provide exit cards (pieces of paper or card) which students complete with thoughts about the lesson, their current level of understanding and what they need more help with. This provides you with feedback to help plan subsequent lessons.
- Ask students to keep an individual 'shared' learning log that allows for the student to capture their learning against certain criteria, to make reflective comments and ask questions and to gain feedback from the teacher. This enables the student to invite and receive some high-quality *individual* dialogue and input from the teacher. Shared learning logs work best when they include clear assessment criteria in the form of levelled rubrics in order to be very specific about the feedback given.
- Students complete an evaluation of a unit of lessons, including the learning activities. This is not intended for students to rate you as the teacher but it can provide useful information about activities that students enjoyed and helped them make good progress.

#### Watch out for...

- Avoid feedback that makes students defensive as this shuts down their learning. Ensure feedback is outcome-based (focused on an aspect of behaviour in completing the task) rather than ego-based (focused on the student themselves).
- Avoid over-praising students with vague positive feedback. This can lead to them seeking personal approval rather than constructive strategies to improve their work.

# Teaching in English



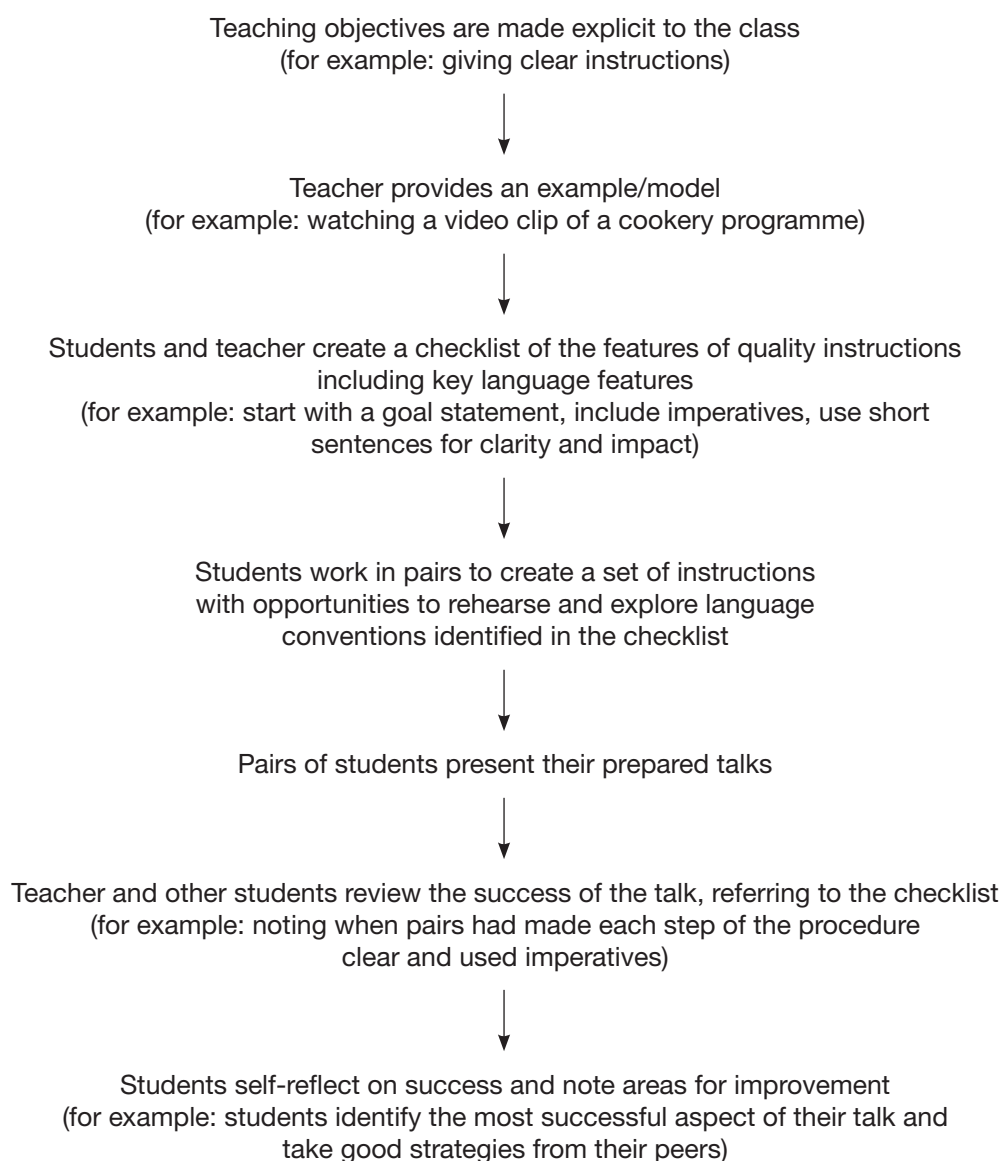
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## SPEAKING AND LISTENING: PLANNING AND ORGANISING ACTIVITIES

Planning for a range of different speaking and listening activities will ensure all students develop their abilities. Some activities may evolve into writing tasks, but talking as a means of explaining understanding should be valued in its own right. It is not enough for teachers to create a range of situations and trust that this will automatically develop students' spoken language. Many of the genres of spoken language necessary for success in school, and beyond, will need to be planned for and taught specifically.

In secondary school, students need to become familiar with spoken English, both to convey more complex ideas and to listen responsively to others. Teachers need to provide good models of different types of spoken language through teacher demonstration, video or audio. Students should be supported as they investigate and generalise about particular types of speaking and listening before trying them out for themselves.

### Example of a teaching sequence for a speaking and listening activity



## Teaching approaches for planning and organising activities

### 1. Rehearsal

Do not just fire questions at students as this will encourage them to give unconsidered one-word answers. Give students time to plan answers to questions. For example, say: *In one minute, I'm going to ask you to say what you think about banning the use of plastic packaging. I would like you to answer in a full sentence and I would like you to use the conjunction 'because' in your sentence. Think about your answers now.*

### 2. Pair talk leading to whole-class discussion

Identify a topic the whole class will be discussing. This could be linked to a particular curriculum area. For example, if the class have been reading a novel in English, a theme from that novel would be a suitable topic. Alternatively, you could choose a subject of topical interest, such as: *Should animal testing be legal or illegal?* Give students time (a couple of days or a week) to collect their thoughts on the topic, then put students into pairs, either of similar ability or mixed ability (for example, confident speakers with less-confident speakers). Next, model the interaction to students either with another teacher or using video. Pairs face each other and take turns to talk and to listen while you move around the class, joining in with pairs to improve the accuracy of the grammar or to supply a more accurate word. Some pairs can share their discussion with the rest of the class. Encourage all students to identify good examples of spoken language and occasions when a student has listened attentively and responded appropriately.

### 3. Pair talk leading to pair writing

Put students into pairs, then give each student a mini-whiteboard and clear instructions on what the pairs should do. For example, students could share ideas about what to include in a forthcoming writing task, each student could write a sentence and then swap boards for their partner to read and discuss or students could complete a writing frame together. The advantage of starting with pair talk is that everyone is taking part and learning through talk and students have an immediate audience for their writing. Importantly, students hear their own writing read back to them. This often means they identify errors they have made, for example, missed a word out/used the wrong verb tense. Finally, give students the opportunity to practise reading aloud.

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### 4. Using speaking frames

Speaking frames are frameworks for directed speaking and listening activities. Their purpose is to help students move from the speech patterns of spoken language to the more complex patterns of written language. Speaking frames provide sentence starters to structure speech and they can be used for reviews of fiction/poetry. For example: *... and I have been discussing... This is a classic poem about... The main theme of the poem is...* Alternatively, speaking frames can be used to structure a recount or an explanation. For example: *This is an account of a trip to... We travelled by... and set off at...* For good ideas about using speaking frames see the book *Speaking Frames* by Sue Palmer.



## SPEAKING AND LISTENING: DEVELOPING VOCABULARY

The easiest way for students to acquire new vocabulary in English is for them to experience new words in meaningful contexts – rather than as a list of words to learn – so they can relate the word to their understanding in their first language. Oral language supports the learning of new words because it includes intonation, body language and shared physical surroundings. These factors aid learning and help students to fix the words in their memories.

### Teaching approaches for developing vocabulary



#### 1. Explaining the meaning of words

Dictionary definitions of words are often difficult for students to link to the specific context in which that word has arisen. For example, a popular dictionary definition of 'usually' is: 'such as happens or is done or used always or most of the time', which is quite difficult for the EAL student to absorb. Although dictionaries do have their place in extending vocabulary, a very effective way of embedding new vocabulary is to explain the meaning of words clearly to students by creating 'friendly' definitions of new words. To explain the meaning of words as clearly as possible to students, try the following techniques.

- Link the word to students' first language. For example, when teaching the word 'usually', explain that this is an adverb and then talk about things that are 'usually' done, such as: *We usually have our lesson in this classroom* or *I usually stand here and you usually sit there*. Ask students to describe something they usually do, such as: *How do you usually come to school?* or *What time do you usually eat your lunch?* Ensure that students use the focus word (in this case, 'usually') in their answers and link this word with related time words such as 'sometimes' and 'never'.
- Ask students to work with a partner. Give the class different situations to consider. For example, receiving a gift, losing their temper or forgetting their homework. Encourage each pair to respond to their situation using a time word, for example: *I sometimes lose my temper* or *I never forget my homework*. Then ask them to share with the class.
- Invite three students to come to front of the class. The rest of the class asks them questions such as: *Do you sometimes forget your homework?* to which the three students can respond.
- After introducing a range of words linked to time, give students opportunities to extend their sentences. For example: *I never argue with my sister but sometimes my brother annoys me and I usually get cross with him*.
- Write three or four of the time words on the board. For example, 'sometimes', 'never', 'usually', 'often'. Draw attention to the spelling. Give students five minutes to write as many sentences as they can which use at least two of the time words. For example: *I often go to bed late at night and I am sometimes tired in the morning*. Collect in all the writing. Then invite a student to choose a student book and to read out someone's time sentences. The rest of the class should guess who wrote that sentence.

#### 2. Playing language games

- Write two words on the board. For example: 'friend' and 'green'. Ask students to name the word class of each (for example, noun and adjective). Divide the students into two teams: A and B. Give the first word of a sentence and point at someone in group A to repeat the word and then say another one that could follow it. For example, if you say 'Yesterday' the student could follow it with 'I' or 'we' or 'it', etc. Then point at someone in group B who must repeat the words spoken so far and add one of his or her own. The new word must fit grammatically and logically in the unfolding sentence. The object of the game is to score a point by using one of the nouns on the board. So, the student in group B could say: *Yesterday we went* but could not say *Yesterday we green*. The groups must try and steer the sentence so that someone in their group is able to use one of the nouns on the board. If a student forgets part of the sentence built up so far, that is the end of their turn and play moves to the other team. The game finishes when both words on the board have been used and the team with the most points wins. This game encourages students to listen carefully, to recall all the words in the sentence and also to think grammatically about how they can incorporate the words on the board.

### 3. Listening to audio books

Audio books are a great way for students to tune in to the English language as they provide students with an excellent example of the pronunciation of words in the enjoyable context of a story. This immersion in the language will aid students' comprehension and retention of new vocabulary and develop their listening skills. To use this approach effectively in the classroom, follow these tips.

- Provide each student with a copy of the text to follow while they listen. Seeing the words while they are listening to the story will help students to associate the sound of the word with the look of the word on the page.
- Where possible, give students headphones, so that they can concentrate more easily on listening to the language.
- If you cannot acquire audio versions of books you have in your classroom, consider making audio recordings yourself. There are plenty of apps that will enable you to record onto a mobile phone or tablet and then upload onto a computer.

### 4. Building a word

- Give pairs of students a mini-whiteboard to share. Write a word on the board, for example: 'happy'. Explain that it is an adjective. Give students two minutes to write as many words as they can that use 'happy' as a root. For example: 'unhappy', 'happiness', 'happily', 'unhappily', 'unhappiness'. After two minutes, stop the clock and ask students to hold up their boards. Give one mark for each real word written and two marks if the word is spelled correctly. For bonus marks, the students can mark the word class of each word. For example: 'happy' and 'unhappy' are adjectives; 'happiness' and 'unhappiness' are nouns; 'happily' and 'unhappily' are adverbs.
- As an extension of this game, in pairs students can create sentences using two of the words that use happy as a root. For example: *I was happy because it was nearly the holidays but my friend was unhappy because she likes school.*



Engaging  
everyone  
p. 15

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING: USING POETRY TO DEVELOP LANGUAGE



Developing  
vocabulary  
p. 34

Speaking and listening are central to students' acquisition of English. Students need many opportunities to listen to spoken English in order to internalise its sounds and language patterns. A very effective way of doing this is to regularly read poetry aloud to the whole class. (If you prefer, you might like to use an audio book of the poem.) The advantage of using poetry to develop language is that the meaning of the words are supported by the context in which they arise. The rhythm and rhyme of a poem also aid memory. The same poem should be read to the students many times so that they tune in to the words and hear the intonation of how the words are spoken.

### Teaching approaches for using poetry to develop language

#### 1. Pre-teach vocabulary

- Choose a poem that includes vocabulary that is unfamiliar to your students but not one where you will have to explain nearly every word. A rhyming poem will give your students the opportunity to recall words based on the pattern of sounds in other words.
- Pre-teach some of the key vocabulary that will be unfamiliar to the students before introducing the poem. Write these words on cards and fix them to the board.
- Ask students to work with a partner and to try to make links between the newly introduced words. For example, if you have pre-taught the words 'lonely', 'miserable' and 'new student', the pairs could predict the theme of the poem using these words. Students could say: *The poem might be about a new student who is lonely and miserable because they have no friends.* Encourage students to make as many links and predictions as possible, then read the poem to the class or play a recording of the poem. Discuss how close the students' predictions were.
- Provide copies of the poem or display it to the class using a visualiser. Read the poem again and encourage students to read along with you. Talk about the metre of the lines and how to continue with the flow of a sentence even if it is split over a number of lines. Encourage reading with intonation and expression.
- Make word cards containing synonyms of some of the key vocabulary in the poem. Hand out the word cards to different students. As you read the poem, if a student has a word card that is a synonym of a word you have just read, they should come out to the board and place the synonym next to the word. Discuss with the class how close in meaning the synonym is and why the poet might have chosen the word they did and not its synonym.
- Allocate verses of the poem for different groups of students to learn by heart. They should practise saying their verse aloud in their groups until they are fluent. Then the class should perform the poem, with each group reciting their verse from memory.
- If possible, record the class recitation of the poem and play it back to them.

#### 2. Synonym race

- Choose a rhyming poem that will appeal to your students. Humorous poems are usually popular. Provide copies of the poem or display it to the class using a visualiser.
- Read the poem to the class, explaining any unfamiliar words as you go. Aim to read as expressively as possible. Pay attention to the rhythm of the lines and the metre.
- Ask the class to join in with you as you read the poem again.
- Put students into pairs and give them a mini-whiteboard. Obscure some of the rhyming words at the end of the line. Read the poem again and stop when you come to a covered word.
- Tell students to discuss with their partner and to agree which word is hidden. They should write it on their mini-whiteboard and hold it up for you to see.

- Check which students chose the right word and also spelled it correctly. Reveal the hidden word and ask those pairs who did not select the right word (or who did not spell it correctly) to copy the word from the board.
- Read the poem again. This time, stop before an adjective or an adverb and challenge pairs to write a synonym for the word. For example, you might stop before the word 'miserable' and students might write on their mini-whiteboards 'unhappy' or 'sad'. Write all the synonyms on the board and then add two of your own, for example, 'tearful' and 'broken-hearted'. Do the same with other words in the poem.
- In a subsequent lesson, pair students and give them an adjective or adverb from the poem and challenge them to recall as many synonyms as they can from the earlier activity.

### **3. Reciting poetry**

- Choose a poem that includes dialogue that will appeal to your students and that does not contain many words that will be unfamiliar to them, such as *The Dark Avenger* by Trevor Millum or *The Spider and the Fly* by Mary Howitt.
- Provide copies of the poem or display the poem using a visualiser. Read it expressively to the class and check that all students understand the meaning and the vocabulary. Discuss with the class how to make the recitation interesting for an audience, including fluency, expression and the use of voices to create atmosphere and to entertain. Demonstrate the effects of reading some lines slowly and some quickly. Change your speaking volume from shouting to whispering. Discuss with students when each might be suitable to use in the poem.
- Give students different roles to read in the poem. For example, the role of a narrator or one of the characters. Discuss how students can bring the character alive through their voices.
- Demonstrate using different emotions as you read aloud some lines to the class. For example, you could read in a dramatic tone, a flat tone or trying to sound mysterious. Ask the students which voice is most appropriate for the poem.
- Divide students into groups of three and ask them to select a section of the poem to prepare for a performance. They can decide to read it in unison or divide the lines between them.
- Tell students the importance of using gesture to convey action and emotion and keeping direct eye contact with the audience to draw them in.
- Above all, encourage students to communicate the meaning of the poem and not just recite the words.

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING: CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH

The language of texts are excellent models for students to imitate but teaching conversation can be more challenging as the rules of language use are less well defined. Students will need plenty of practice in order to be confident to communicate effectively in English in a range of situations.

### Examples of conversational English skills for Lower Secondary students

In Lower Secondary, students will need learning opportunities to demonstrate that they can:

- sustain a conversation with peers, teachers and other adults
- share ideas and opinions
- negotiate to consensus politely
- adapt speech to meet different situations
- select appropriate vocabulary for the topic
- use language to predict, recall, reason, argue, enquire, explain, persuade and describe.

Along with these skills, students will also need to show confidence in their use of spoken English. They should be encouraged to have a go in unfamiliar situations and be willing to express ideas that convey speculation, such as *I wonder...* and *What if...*

### Tips to prepare students for a class discussion

- Agree some basic principles or rules with students ahead of a class discussion. You can find examples of these in the following table. Display the rules somewhere prominent in the classroom so that everyone can refer to them and be reminded of them.

Class rules for good discussions	
Respect the speaker (even if you do not agree with their opinions).	Listen carefully. Do not interrupt until a speaker has finished making a point.
Keep an open mind. Look forward to hearing points of view that may differ from your own.	Do not monopolise the conversation. Give others a chance to speak.
Support your opinions with evidence.	Ask questions to learn more about what someone has said.

- Give students a range of sentence starters, such as those featured in the following table, that endorse the class rules for good discussions and give less proficient speakers the confidence to participate.

Sentence starters for joining in discussions	
Asking for an explanation	<i>I don't really understand...</i> <i>Are you saying that...</i>
Giving your opinion	<i>It seems to me that...</i> <i>I believe...</i> <i>What I actually meant was...</i>
Giving an explanation	<i>What I mean is...</i> <i>The reason is...</i>
Agreeing with an opinion	<i>I agree with you on that.</i> <i>That's what I think too.</i>



## Teaching approaches for developing conversational English

### **1. Let students choose the topics for discussion**

Ask each student to write a topic they would like to discuss on a piece of card. You should examine the suggestions to ensure that there is no topic that might offend or embarrass any students. Put all suitable suggestions in a box. In discussion time, pick a card and reveal the topic to the class. Ask students to work in pairs and to respond to and reflect on the topic before opening the discussion to the whole class. Ask the student who suggested the topic to say why they chose it. Set a time limit on how long the discussion should go on for.

### **2. Prepare the vocabulary**

Once a topic for discussion has been selected, it is a good idea to introduce key phrases and words related to the topic so that all students feel confident to participate in the ensuing discussion. Write these words on the board and ask students to share any knowledge or experiences they may have associated with the word to generate lots of useful vocabulary and ideas to be used in the discussion.

### **3. Prepare the key points**

Before moving to large-group/whole-class discussions, let students practise their points with a partner. They should take turns to speak and, after each point made, the other student should respond either by agreeing (for example, *I also think that...*) or disagreeing (for example, *I understand what you're saying but...*). Pairs should refer to the vocabulary and key phrases on the board to support their points of view.

### **4. Interviews**

Another way to equip students with the language for an upcoming discussion is for pairs of students to interview one another on the chosen topic. This enables students to practise the vocabulary that will later be needed in the whole-class discussion but in the more controlled environment of a question-and-answer format. For example, if the discussion is about how to obtain your ideal job, one student should ask the other questions related to this topic, such as: *What difficulties might be in the way of obtaining your ideal job?* Then the students should swap roles.

### **5. Standard English**

It is important that all models of language are in standard English, however, if the teacher repeatedly interrupts a student during a discussion to correct their grammar and use of language, this can inhibit the flow of the discussion. Instead, you should note two or three instances when a student's English has not been accurate and, at the end of the student's presentation or contribution to the discussion, ask the student to reflect on what they said and if they would like to correct it. For example, the student might say: *My ideal job is to been a software designer.* After the student's presentation, say the sentence back to the student and ask them if they can identify the error. Keep other students engaged by asking them to write on a mini-whiteboard what the correct verb form should be.

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING: DRAMA

Drama provides students with opportunities to develop their communicative skills in authentic and dynamic situations. In role-play and drama, English is used in real-life situations that require real-life problem solving using language. Drama can make the learning of a new language fun and memorable for students because it is interactive and visual.

### Teaching approaches for drama

Role-play and drama techniques develop students' confidence in using English and encourage cooperation and interaction. They are the perfect preparation for writing tasks.

#### 1. Freeze-frame

- **Setting it up:** small groups of students select a key scene from a familiar text (usually a moment of tension or mystery) and position themselves as the characters. They should think how to use their bodies and facial expressions to communicate the story and create a dynamic image.
- **Engaging the class:** after the scene has been held for 30 seconds, students watching the group can ask questions. For example: *Why did you choose that scene? What were you thinking at that moment?*
- **Review:** praise students who have either asked or answered questions in quality standard English.

#### 2. Hot seating

- **Setting it up:** one student takes on the role of a character from a book or from real life/history. Other students plan and ask questions, and the student responds in role.
- **Teacher in role:** it is a good idea for the teacher to be first in the hot seat to give a good model of how to respond.
- **Reflect:** ask students for examples of good answers given by the student in the hot seat and ask how the answers helped them to understand more about the character.

#### 3. Reader's theatre

- **Setting it up:** give groups of four students a short story, poem or part of a longer text to read. Each student will need a copy of the text and a different coloured highlighter pen to divide the text between them (indicating different speakers by the coloured highlighters). The group may decide to read a sentence each, take on different speaking roles or split sentences between them.
- **Outcome:** the goal is to give a dramatic reading of the text to the rest of the class.

#### 4. Improvisation

Divide the class into groups of four. Give each group a 'conflict' situation. For example, a younger brother spills milk on a student's homework or another student blames them for something they have not done. Give the groups three minutes to prepare their drama, then invite them to present the scene to the rest of the class.

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING: DEBATING

Collaborative  
activities p. 24

A debate is a game in which two opposing teams make speeches to support their arguments and disagree with those of the other team. It is an excellent activity for language learning because it engages students in a variety of cognitive and linguistic ways. For example, it gives students practice in persuasive speech which can be linked to persuasive writing and it gives students a real purpose for speaking clearly. As students learn the techniques of debating, they gain confidence in expressing opinions and disagreeing with peers politely. A debate follows a patterned structure of language, which can be very helpful for students to become more proficient in spoken English.

### Enabling students to carry out a debate

- Introduce a topic statement for the class to debate that is relevant to their lives. For example: *We believe that students have to sit too many tests.* Assist the class in forming arguments for and against the topic. You should support students by writing on the board the key vocabulary that they will need to refer to.
- Before the debate starts, give students the opportunity to practise the arguments for and against. Use the following table to prepare students for the structure of the debate and the language structures that should be used.
- Then, pick names from a hat to determine which students will speak in the debate.

Structure of a debate	Language structure
1. All students vote for or against the topic and the results are tallied.	
2. A student in favour of the topic speaks first. His/her role is to set out the team's first argument.	<i>We believe that...</i> <i>Our main reason for believing that is...</i>
3. A student speaking against the topic speaks next. His/her role is to set out the team's first argument.	<i>Therefore...</i> <i>Let me give an example...</i>
4. A second student in favour of the topic speaks next. His/her role is to set out the team's second argument.	<i>We also believe that...</i> <i>Our main reason for believing that is...</i>
5. A second student against the topic speaks next. His/her role is to set out the team's second argument.	<i>Therefore...</i> <i>Let me give an example...</i>
6. The students in favour of the topic now refute the other side's arguments.	<i>The other team said that... but...</i> <i>That may be true but...</i>
7. The students against the topic now refute the other side's arguments.	<i>I disagree because...</i> <i>To sum up...</i>
8. All students vote again to see how many have been persuaded to change their minds on the topic.	

## READING: READING ALOUD TO STUDENTS

Reading aloud to students for ten minutes every day can make a huge difference to their language acquisition. It can inspire students to become better speakers, listeners and readers of a language. We have to hear language before we can speak it, therefore hearing texts read aloud is the foundation of language development.

### The benefits of reading aloud to students

- It develops and improves literacy skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening. It stimulates growth and understanding of vocabulary and improves language acquisition.
- When students hear texts read to them they are able to tune in to the speech patterns and intonations of the English language. Students can learn from your example: where to place the stress in a word, how intonation carries meaning (for example, using a rising inflection to indicate a question) and how to pronounce polysyllabic words.
- When students read aloud they may be concentrating on how to pronounce a word and that can distract them from the meaning of the word. Also, if you frequently have to correct a student's pronunciation, this can interrupt the flow of comprehension. But when students are listening to you, they can think about the meaning of the text at the same time.
- Hearing texts read aloud is a great way to immerse students in the grammar of English. Students will absorb the structures of the language and familiarise themselves with the conventions of English sentence construction. For example: syntactic word order, the use of the definite and indefinite articles and the patterns of plurals – with 's' and irregular plurals – 'child'/'children'.

### Examples of suitable texts for reading aloud

Illustrated books are an excellent resource to read aloud to groups of students. Although these may seem suitable for younger students, there are many stories that have mature themes that are suitable for Lower Secondary students. For example, *The Wolves in the Walls* by Neil Gaiman and *The Highwayman* by Alfred Noyes, illustrated by Charles Keeping. Stories like these encourage discussion and the brief text and accompanying illustrations will support students' vocabulary as they discuss the book. They are also excellent models for students when writing narrative texts as they contain a complete story structure (beginning, middle and end) and distinctive characters who face problems as the narrative unfolds.

### Examples of questions to develop comprehension

Reading aloud to students widens their vocabulary and increases their comprehension of English because they are hearing the words in the context of a meaningful story. The following table provides examples of questions that you can pose to students after reading a text to develop their comprehension of the story.

Question type	Example
Knowledge (accurate recall)	<i>What was the first challenge facing the main character?</i>
Comprehension (understanding of information)	<i>Did the main character's family understand his/her worries?</i>
Application (use of information)	<i>Do you think the main character made a good decision at this point?</i>
Analysis (taking information apart)	<i>Would you have done what the main character did?</i>
Inference (understanding information beyond what is explicit in the text)	<i>What did you learn about the character from the way he/she spoke to the stranger?</i>
Summary (pulling information together)	<i>What key events determined the outcome of the story?</i>
Synthesis (putting information together in a new way)	<i>What might have happened if the letter had arrived in time?</i>
Evaluation (critical judgement)	<i>How well do you think this story has presented the theme of regret?</i>

## READING: SHARED READING

In shared reading, the chosen text is displayed so all students can see it, either using large books or an electronic whiteboard. The teacher models fluent, expressive reading to the students while pointing at the words so that students see a word at the same time as hearing it spoken aloud. The chosen text for shared reading should be an example of quality writing that will engage the interest of all the students. The text level may be above the independent reading ability of some in the class but, with teacher mediation, students will be able to engage with the subject matter and the language.

### The benefits of shared reading

- It corresponds to people's natural way of learning by watching and working alongside experts. Here, the teacher is the expert and explicitly demonstrates reading behaviours that students can learn from, such as: breaking longer words into syllables for reading, obeying the punctuation and using different voices for different speakers.
- It is beneficial even with older students who may have grasped the basics of English grammar, vocabulary and punctuation as it gives the teacher the opportunity to introduce new vocabulary in a meaningful context and to demonstrate to the whole class particular text features. The increase in students' fluency also leads to improved comprehension.
- It is very effective in classes where students are of different abilities. Because the teacher is doing the reading, no student is excluded from the activity, so even less confident language students can participate and more confident readers support weaker readers in their comprehension of the text.

### Teaching approaches for using shared reading

- Familiarise students with the theme of the text by talking about the subject matter or showing a short relevant video. For example, before reading a non-fiction text about saltwater crocodiles, show an online picture of the crocodile or a video of it in its natural habitat.
- Introduce unfamiliar vocabulary to the class before reading the text. Write these words on the board and give students a simple definition of the word linked to the context of the story. Ask the whole class to say the words on the board as you point to them. Then, ask each student to turn to a partner and repeat the word to them. As you read the whole text to the class, ask students to put up their hands when they hear one of the words you prepared earlier. Without interrupting the flow of your reading, you could nod to acknowledge that they have put up their hands at the right place and point at the word on the board.
- After reading the text twice, cover the 'new' vocabulary words in the text (but leave them in the vocabulary list). Read the text again and pause when you come to a covered word. Ask students to supply the correct word from the vocabulary list.
- Ask some literal comprehension questions about the text. Invite students to point out where in the text they got the evidence for their answers.
- Ask inferential questions about the text. This could be about a character based on their dialogue or actions. For example, if the text says, *He stormed out of the room*, ask the students what kind of mood the character was in.

  
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### Tips to help you lead a shared reading session

- Each shared reading session should be short and focused (about 15 minutes).
- Provide students with individual copies of the text after the shared reading to allow them to re-read the text independently.

- The reading should be animated and engaging. You are aiming to bring out the meaning through your voice. For example, use different voices for different characters or, if a character in the text is speaking ironically, convey this in the way you read the words.
- Pre-teach any unfamiliar vocabulary before shared reading or read the text through and then go back and revisit the unfamiliar vocabulary. Either way the emphasis should be on conveying the meaning of the text.

### Examples of teaching opportunities for shared reading

Text features to draw attention to	Teaching opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table of contents</li> <li>• Index</li> <li>• Captions</li> <li>• Section headings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how these features help readers understand the text.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full stops</li> <li>• Commas</li> <li>• Dashes</li> <li>• Inverted commas</li> <li>• Question marks</li> <li>• Exclamation marks</li> <li>• Brackets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about how punctuation supports meaning.</li> <li>• Discuss how to pronounce sentences if the punctuation were different, for example, a full stop or an exclamation mark.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject/verb agreement</li> <li>• Verb tense</li> <li>• Adjectives (+ adjectival phrases and clauses)</li> <li>• Adverbs (+ adverbial phrases and clauses)</li> <li>• Conjunctions (coordinating and subordinating)</li> <li>• Prepositions (+ prepositional phrases)</li> <li>• Pronouns</li> <li>• Paragraphs</li> <li>• Determiners</li> <li>• Linking phrases/clauses between paragraphs</li> <li>• Direct speech</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate to students that the writer achieves cohesion in a text through consistency of verb tense, links between noun and pronoun and use of adverbial phrases to show continuity of time.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authorial voice/point of view</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about first-person and third-person narratives.</li> </ul>



## READING: GUIDED READING

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In guided reading, the teacher targets the needs of a particular group with similar reading ability. The purpose of guided reading is to assist students to engage with a text and to support them in their use of reading strategies.

### Tips to organise a lesson using guided reading

#### 1. Setting up the session

- Place students in groups of five or six with a similar reading ability. They should sit in a circle around a table.
- Select a text at the appropriate reading level for the group. Aim for the text to represent a 'manageable challenge' for the students. This means they have to explicitly use their range of reading strategies and the teacher can prompt and praise accordingly.
- Each student needs a copy of the text. The text should be unfamiliar to the group so that prediction skills can be used effectively and the teacher can gain insights into the strategies used by students as they strive to work out unknown words. The text should be relevant and interesting to the group.

#### 2. During the session

- Before reading, identify the teaching objective and explain the main purpose of the session, for example, reading with good intonation.
- Discuss features of the chosen text type. Make links to the students' existing knowledge and experience. Read the 'blurb' to the students and introduce any unfamiliar technical vocabulary.
- Set a limited number of pages to be read. During reading, all students should read quietly to themselves. Students who finish early may be challenged to find and point at a particular word in the sentences they have just read.
- Assist students who are stuck on a particular word.
- Encourage the use of good strategies for decoding and comprehension.
- Immediately after students have finished reading, revisit any problem vocabulary, discuss the text and ask questions to check comprehension.

#### 3. After the session

Plan after-reading tasks, which allow the students to respond to the text and that extend their understanding.

- Innovate on the text: students choose a paragraph or two from the text and write a similar version, changing some features, such as the adjectives or adverbs, the name of the character or direct speech into reported speech.
- Students create a story map (with words and pictures) to support a retelling that they give to the rest of the class.
- Give students a copy of part of the text with verbs omitted. Ask them to work with a partner and work out what the missing words are.

## Examples of prompts for developing comprehension

The following table contains examples of prompts that can be used during guided reading with your students to develop their comprehension of the texts.

Prompts for fiction texts	
Characters	<i>Which words describe their appearance?</i> <i>What do we learn about them from what they do?</i> <i>Does their speech tell us what they are thinking or are likely to do?</i> <i>What do other characters think (say) about them?</i>
Plot and structure	<i>Where is the story set?</i> <i>Is there a narrator?</i> <i>Is the story mostly in the past or present tense?</i> <i>What is the problem facing the main character(s)?</i> <i>Are there clues early on about what will happen later?</i> <i>Is the ending a surprise?</i> <i>Is there a moral or a message?</i>
Style and language	<i>Find examples of formal and informal English.</i> <i>Find a short sentence. Why has the writer chosen it?</i> <i>Find a long sentence. Why has the writer chosen it?</i> <i>Are there any particular descriptions that help us imagine the scene?</i> <i>What is the impact of some of the writer's vocabulary choices?</i> <i>Has the writer used a range of stylistic and rhetorical devices? For example: repetition, alliteration, onomatopoeia, metaphors or similes.</i>
Prompts for non-fiction texts	
Genre	<i>What type of text is this?</i> <i>How can you tell?</i> <i>Point at some language features that indicate this text type. For example: use of imperative verbs, use of impersonal pronouns, use of time conjunctions or persuasive language.</i>
Text structure	<i>What non-fiction text features has the writer used? For example: subheadings, captions, labels, diagrams, charts or photographs.</i> <i>Explain how these features support the text.</i>
Paragraphs	<i>What is the topic sentence in each paragraph?</i> <i>How are other sentences linked to the topic sentence?</i>

## Something for you to try

- As students are organised in groups of ability for guided reading, this is an ideal teaching opportunity to both support students who are finding it difficult to draw inferences from a text and to extend those students who are becoming more competent. Try asking open-ended questions to target students' inferential comprehension of the text, which require them to think and then search the text for evidence. For example:
  - Why do you think the writer...?*
  - How does this part of the text make you feel?*
  - Have you changed your mind about anything in the text? Why?*
  - Can you tell me more about...?*
  - Do you agree with... when they said...? Why? Why not?*

## READING: INDEPENDENT READING STRATEGIES

Successful independent reading requires students to learn to use various reading strategies, including:

- working out unfamiliar words by breaking the word down into its sounds and syllables
- using context to work out the meaning of words
- using knowledge of grammar.

Students will need to be specifically taught how to use each strategy and then guided to use a combination of them as they read and write.

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### Teaching approaches for helping students develop independent reading strategies

#### 1. Working out the meaning of unfamiliar words

- When a student comes to a word they do not know it is important that they have independent strategies for working out what the word is. Tell students to ask themselves: *What word would make sense in the context?* In order to decide the answer, they may need to re-read the sentence up to the unfamiliar word or read beyond the unfamiliar word to the end of the sentence. The context of the sentence and the meaning of the neighbouring words might well suggest to the student what the problem word is.
- Instruct student to ask themselves: *Does the word that I think it is look like the printed word?* For example, the student might guess that the word 'many' fits in the following sentence: *The... trees of the forest blocked out the sunlight.* But the unknown word begins with the letter 'd' so this cannot be correct. Next, the student should blend the sounds in the word: d/e/n/se. Now, the student is able to make a competent guess that the word 'dense' is similar in meaning to 'many'.
- After reading, students should log all words they were not sure about in a table with three columns:

New word	What I think it means	What the dictionary says

#### 2. Using phonics to pronounce unfamiliar words

Many words in English are not pronounced the way they look but there is some consistency in pronunciation at the syllable level. For example, students reading the word 'opera' might want to pronounce the first two sounds (o/p) the same as in the word 'open'. To help students determine how to pronounce unfamiliar words, ask them to break the word into syllables, for example: com/pre/hen/sion. If the syllable ends with a vowel, the vowel is often 'long', that is, it sounds like its alphabetic name. If the syllable ends with a consonant, the vowel is usually 'short', that is, it sounds like the 'a' in 'bag' or the 'e' in 'bed'. The first syllable in 'comprehension' ends with a consonant, so the vowel is short. The second syllable ends with a vowel so the vowel is long. The third and fourth syllables end with consonants, so the vowel is short. Compare this with pronouncing the word 'coordinate' where the first syllable ends with a vowel and so is long.

#### 3. Using feedback to foster good comprehension strategies

The responses teachers give to students are central to widening the range of independent reading strategies used by students as well as increasing their confidence to use those strategies. In Lower Secondary classes, students need to have a repertoire of things to try before either giving up or asking the teacher. Their confidence in strategies that work will be invaluable when students are in test situations where they have to be self-reliant.

Here are some examples of teacher feedback that foster students' independent learning.

- *Well done, you thought about that sentence and worked out which word would fit.*
- *Excellent! You realised that what you read did not make sense, so you went back and self-corrected.*

- Good, you blended the sounds at the beginning of the word and then used the context to think of what the word must be.
- Good work! You paused at the full stop.
- Nice reading! You read that dialogue with expression.
- Great! You are trying to make your reading flow smoothly and sound like talking.

#### 4. Using comprehension to improve grammar

Although students will need focused teaching on specific features of English grammar, much understanding of grammar and how the English language works can come from students reading and talking about the texts they have read. This gives them language in action rather than isolated snippets of language, which they may not apply to reading and writing tasks.

### Something for you to try

Here is an activity you can try with students that uses comprehension to improve grammar.

- Take a sentence from a guided reading text, for example: *The stranger kept hanging about just outside the inn door, peering round the corner like a cat waiting for a mouse.*<sup>1</sup>
- Check that all students understand the vocabulary (*hanging about*, *inn*, *peering*). Talk about whether they think the stranger is friendly or not. What are the clues?
- Invite students to read the sentence with you fluently and expressively.
- Identify some of the word classes, for example, nouns: 'stranger', 'door', 'corner', 'cat', 'mouse'.
- Give pairs of students the sentence with some words missing and ask them to fill in the gap words with synonyms that are semantically and grammatically correct. For example: *The stranger kept \_\_\_\_ just outside the inn door, \_\_\_\_ around the corner like a \_\_\_\_ waiting for a \_\_\_\_*. Students do not have to provide a one-to-one match for the synonyms. For example, for the first gap they can use a one-word synonym for 'hanging about', such as 'dawdling' 'lingering' or 'loitering'. For the second gap they could use a suitable verb or verbal phrase to suggest someone looking around a corner to spy on someone else, such as 'peeping' or 'sneaking a look'. Finally, ask students to think of a suitable simile to convey the idea of a hunter after its prey. Discuss the students' suggestions. Talk about the dramatic effect of the reader not knowing at this point who the stranger is but the author giving us clues about how sinister he is.

This activity helps students see that the cohesion of a text is created through the interplay of vocabulary and grammar. Because the activity starts with a meaningful context – reading a complete story – and students will go on to read the rest of the story in subsequent guided reading sessions, it gives them a greater understanding of the links between comprehension and grammar.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Stevenson, R. L (1883) *Treasure Island*, London, England: Cassell and Co.

## WRITING: SHARED WRITING

Shared writing is the joint construction of a text by teacher and students. The process of writing is made explicit through the teacher demonstrating how the writing task is achieved. The teacher talks about decisions a writer makes, for example, what words to use and how to spell them, meaning the skills of composition are taught *at the point of writing*.

### The benefits of shared writing

- The purpose of shared writing is to anticipate any difficulties students might have with a task. It teaches the skills of writing first as opposed to waiting until students have completed a writing task and correcting any errors retrospectively through marking.
- Students acquire a good model of what each genre of writing should be like.
- When students eventually write independently they are familiar with the content of the writing, so they can concentrate on getting the other elements of writing correct, such as grammar, cohesion, vocabulary and spelling.

### Examples of shared-writing techniques

- Teacher 'think alouds': the teacher shares the thoughts and decisions a writer must make as they construct a text. This text then becomes a model on which students can base their own writing.
- Supported composition: the teacher directs the students to work with a partner, for example, to write the next sentence in the piece of writing. This can be done first on mini-whiteboards that students can hold up for the teacher to review. After any necessary corrections, students can copy the sentence into their books.

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### Something for you to try

Provided below is an outline of a shared-writing teaching sequence that can be used with your students.

1. Explain the purpose, form and audience of the writing. For example, tell the class they are going to be writing a text on why plastic bottles should be banned (purpose) as a persuasive text (form) to prepare content for a class debate (audience).
2. Work with students to create a plan with key words under each heading in the following table.

Structure	Grammatical features	Key words/phrases
<b>Opening statement</b>	Simple present tense, for example, <i>is/are</i>	plastic bottles, oceans, sea life, dolphins pollution, destruction of habitat
	Focus on generic participants, for example, <i>turtles</i> (not a specific turtle)	
<b>The arguments</b>	Use of conjunctions to structure the argument and to link ideas within the argument	because, therefore, consequently, however
	Use of bullet points to list arguments	The following reasons: •
	Use of statistics	
	Use of rhetorical questions	What are the consequences of continuing to use plastic bottles?
<b>Summary</b>	Reiterate opening statement	In conclusion... So, it seems obvious that...

3. Use this plan to create your shared-writing script.

Think aloud	Teacher scribes/pupils write
<i>We need to set out our argument clearly and forcefully.</i>	Plastic bottles are killing wildlife and we are to blame.
<i>What is the first point to make in our argument?</i>	Plastic pollution affects at least 700 marine species.
<i>How can I link that argument to my next point?</i>	Consequently, ...
<i>What shall I put in the bullet points?</i>	[Students volunteer suggestions]
<i>How can I round off my writing to convince my audience of the logic of my argument?</i>	[Pairs of students have a go at writing a convincing closing statement]

4. After writing sentences based on contributions from students, ask them to re-read what you have written before starting to write the next sentence. Check students' pronunciation and intonation.
5. When scribing for the class, talk about the grammar and punctuation of the writing. For example:
- *This is a subordinate clause, so I am separating it with commas.*
  - *That is a rhetorical question, so I must use a question mark.*
  - *This is a new step in the argument, so I will start a new paragraph.*
6. If you are using vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the students, write the word on the board and give a 'friendly explanation'. Draw attention to the spelling of the word. Tell students to study the word, then wipe the board clean and challenge students to spell the words on their mini-whiteboards. Students should agree the spelling with their partner and write the word on their individual whiteboards. They should hold up their whiteboards for you to assess how each pair has done.
7. Frequently re-read what you have already written to keep the flow of continuity and sense clear in your students' minds.
8. When you have finished your shared-writing/supported composition, ask students to write the text independently. Allow them to refer to your plan to assist them but do not encourage copying from your script.



## WRITING: SCAFFOLDING WRITING

Writing requires a combination of six interrelated elements: composition, text structure, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling. By providing scaffolds, teachers can support one, two or even three of the elements and allow students to complete the task effectively by concentrating on the others. This helps students move from dependent to independent learning.

### Examples of types of scaffolds

There are three key types of scaffolds.

- Composition scaffolds – provide help with ideas of what to write about.
- Structure scaffolds – give structure and an organisational framework to the writing.
- Language scaffolds – help to pre-teach vocabulary that can be used in the writing.

The following table provides several examples of each type of scaffold.

Composition	Structure	Language
Books – fiction & non-fiction	Graphic structure (skeletons)	Vocabulary cards
Video	Writing frame	Writing frame
Props	Story map	Sentence patterns
Sequence of pictures	Sequencing sentences	Cloze passages
Paired writing	Completed examples	Vocabulary notebooks

### Teaching approaches for scaffolding writing

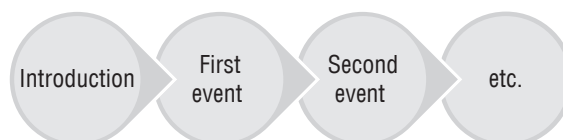
#### 1. Using a scaffold to support composition

- Watch a short clip from a children's film. As a class, list the main sequence of events from the clip, then ask students to write the events in their notebook based on the class list.
- Show students an object, for example, a key. Ask the class: *Who might own the key? What might the key open? What could be inside?* Write students' suggestions on the board, then ask them to write a short text about finding the key.

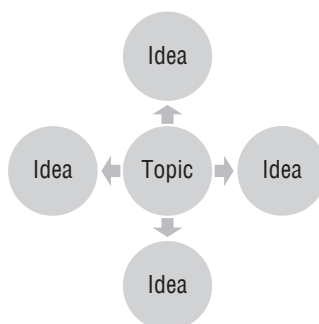
#### 2. Using a scaffold to support structure

Each non-fiction writing genre has its own structure. Ensure students know the correct structure before they begin to write, using visual aids such as those outlined here if possible.

- Recount text: this starts with an introduction which explains 'Who', 'What', 'When' and 'Where', and then events are told in time sequence:



- Report: this describes things as they are and resembles a spider diagram in structure with categories which link to the topic:



- Writing frames: these give students support when writing non-fiction texts. They structure the ideas for the task and give students sentence starters to help them sustain the appropriate genre and register. The example below is a writing frame for a non-chronological report.

Vultures are \_\_\_\_\_. They are \_\_\_\_\_.

Vultures are found in \_\_\_\_\_.

Some species of vulture \_\_\_\_\_.

They generally \_\_\_\_\_.

Some people think \_\_\_\_\_.

One fact not a lot of people know about vultures is \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. Using games and activities for scaffolding language

- Bingo: after explaining new vocabulary linked to a topic for writing, put students into pairs and give each pair a grid containing a random selection of nine words (out of the total of 12 topic words).

hobby	favourite	artistic
time-consuming	enthusiastic	weekend
camera	practise	competitions

Give a definition for one of the words and ask students to tick off the word on their card which fits the definition. The first pair to have ticked off all nine words is the winner.

- Scatter map: write 10–12 words related to the writing tasks in a random order on the board. Ask students to work with a partner and to think of a sentence which links at least two of the words. For example, the topic 'My birthday party' might have the following words:

birthday	party	relative	
celebration	guests	presents	delicious food
music	dancing	speeches	

Pairs of students might write: *On my last birthday we had a huge party. The guests enjoyed the delicious food and the lively dancing.* They should write their sentence on a mini-whiteboard and hold it up for you to see.

## WRITING: GRAMMAR FOR WRITING

Grammar has its own terminology and students need to become familiar with grammatical terms such as 'nouns', 'adjectives', 'verbs', etc. For students to use grammar effectively, learning needs to go beyond simple rote learning. The iLowerSecondary curriculum sets out a clear progression in students' understanding of grammar, from using determiners, adjectives and nouns to create simple sentences through to writing compound and complex sentences using a range of conjunctions and adverbial phrases.

### The benefits of teaching grammar for writing

- The purpose of teaching grammar is to help students' writing become more lucid and precise. Errors in grammar are a barrier to communication. When writing, we have to be explicit in a way that may not be necessary when speaking. It is possible to say, 'that one, there' and for a listener to understand your meaning as you point at an object. In writing, we have to be explicit as we cannot see our audience and we have to anticipate any details they will require in order to understand what we have written.
- Grammar teaching will be more effective if it takes place in meaningful contexts and written texts provide engaging contexts for students. Isolated grammar exercises in which students cannot see the purpose of the task makes grammar very dull and harder for students to acquire.
- Good writing uses the sentence construction, vocabulary and language of books, not of speech, so it makes sense to teach grammar linked to reading. Authors provide us with the best models of good writing. Grammar teaching should unpick these examples of quality writing for students to emulate.

### Teaching approaches for grammar for writing

#### 1. Using texts as models

- Select sentences from a text that contain grammatical features to practise, for example, conditional verbs or non-finite clauses. Write on the board the opening words from these sentences, then ask students to recall how the author concluded the sentences. Write the endings on the board, then orally rehearse the full sentences with the class. In pairs, ask students to say each sentence to their partner and listen to each pair for correct pronunciation and expression. Wipe the board clean and ask students to recall and write the whole sentences.
- After sharing a text with the class, identify examples of the particular grammatical feature you would like students to focus on, such as powerful verbs or the use of adverbs. Write the sentences on the board and underline the grammatical feature, using the correct terminology to make the teaching explicit. Demonstrate how to create a cloze model of the example, then ask students to work in pairs to create their own version. Give students mini-whiteboards for them to write their answers on and ask them to hold them up for you to assess how well they have completed the task.

#### 2. Investigating sentence patterns in language

- Students need to have the opportunity to hear English read to them fluently and frequently in order for them to acquire the patterns of sentences in the English language. Many features of English grammar may have no parallel in the students' home language, for example, the default word order of a simple English sentence (subject/verb/object) or the difference in word order between statements and questions. Only by hearing how these elements of language work together will students tune in to the grammar of English.

### 3. Playing word games

- Use a noughts and crosses grid to practise particular grammatical features, for example, using superlative adjectives. Divide the class into two teams. Draw the nine-box grid on the board and put a different noun from a particular topic in each box, for example, film stars, birds, athletes, etc. Teams take it in turns to choose a box and say a sentence about the noun linked to a superlative adjective. For example: *The largest bird in the world is the ostrich*. If the sentence is grammatically correct the team can put an 'O' or 'X' in the box. After playing the game, challenge students to recall and write as many of the nine sentences as they can.
- Help students to practise expanding simple sentences to complex sentences using a range of conjunctions. For example, write on the board: *The student was excited*. Then write some subordinating conjunctions: 'because', 'although', 'while', 'until', 'after'. First, you should model how to use the conjunction to expand the sentence, for example: *The student was excited because he achieved top marks in the test*; *The student was excited, although he didn't tell anyone*. This can become a game by asking students to work in pairs and to make as many different sentences as they can in one minute, using different conjunctions.
- Write a sentence on the board that includes an adverb. For example: *She carefully carried the plate to the table*. Ask students to work in pairs. They should create as many sentences as they can, positioning the adverb in different places in the sentence. For example: *Carefully, she carried the plate to the table*; *She carried the plate carefully to the table*; *She carried the plate to the table carefully*. Talk about separating the adverb with a comma if it comes first in the sentence. Talk about any slight changes in meaning that arise when the adverb is next to different words.

### 4. Applying punctuation

- Punctuation and grammar should be taught alongside each other and teachers should be explicit about the links. The iLowerSecondary curriculum sets out the sequence for teaching each aspect of punctuation, but students will need revision in all the skills year on year. When reading aloud to the class, particularly in shared reading when students can see the text, ensure that you communicate the punctuation through pausing and using different voices for different speakers.



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## WRITING: ENGLISH SPELLING

Learning to spell words in the English language is a challenge for most students. Unlike some languages, which have a close correlation between the number of letters and sounds in the alphabet, English has 26 letters in its alphabet and 44 distinct speech sounds. This results in some unlikely combinations of letters to spell words.

English spelling also reflects English grammar. For example, the ending 'ed' signifies a past-tense verb ending and the present or past progressive tense is created by doubling a consonant after a short vowel and a single consonant, such as: 'run' / 'running'.

### Enabling students to learn spelling

Spelling should be taught systematically, starting with the easiest patterns and building up to more complex words. Lower Secondary students should already be familiar with the most commonly used words, including 'am', 'at', 'if', 'in', 'it' and 'on', so concentrate on stretching students to spell more complex words that are still among the most common in the English language.

The following table contains a list of common words that will support students in their reading and enable them to write accurately in English. Words which have a close letter/sound correspondence should be taught phonically (P). That is, they should be segmented into their separate phonemes and then the sounds should be blended smoothly to pronounce the word. Irregular words should be taught using visualising techniques (V). That is, students should study the words and memorise the sequence of letters. They should practise writing the words from memory, without copying. Words that have a link to grammar, such as a past tense 'ed' ending, or a progressive verb ending 'ing' should be taught as part of grammar (G).

140 key words for spelling at iLowerSecondary level													
1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
again	P	children	P	afraid	P	family	P	build	V	holiday	P	different	P
every	P	eat	P	began	P	morning	P	busy	V	important	P	disappear	P
high	P	slowly	P	everything	P	under	P	laughed	V	bridge	P	impossible	P
home	P	wait	P	those	P	until	P	many	V	break	V	interesting	P
night	P	about	V	yesterday	P	another	V	meant	V	already	V	although	V
quick	P	friend	V	year	P	heard	V	minutes	V	answer	V	clothes	V
which	P	gone	V	after	V	huge	V	once	V	brought	V	enough	V
wish	P	house	V	around	V	later	V	someone	V	strange	V	favourite	V
always	V	knew	V	because	V	nothing	V	something	V	together	V	listening	V
any	V	know	V	believe	V	only	V	sometimes	V	tomorrow	V	losing	V
asked	V	last	V	before	V	opened	G	sure	V	usual	V	question	V
coming	V	lived	V	catch	V	people	V	through	V	yourself	V	search	V
fast	V	near	V	caught	V	really	V	used	V	anybody	G	surprised	V
found	V	never	V	does	V	school	V	world	V	anything	G	though	V
our	V	over	V	everyone	V	shouted	V	young	V	beginning	G	argument	G
talk	V	took	V	first	V	somebody	V	carried	G	happened	G	decided	G
were	V	tried	V	great	V	thought	V	hoping	G	hurried	G	exciting	G
who	V	walk	V	other	V	beautiful	G	started	G	smiling	G	quietly	G
why	V	where	V	their	V	stopped	G	using	G	suddenly	G	remember	P
getting	G	would	V	won't	V	turned	G	writing	G	watched	G	whispered	G

## Teaching approaches for spelling

### 1. Teach words in groups

After teaching the class a key word, link it with other words that follow a similar pattern. For example, after teaching the word 'year', link it with: 'dear', 'fear', 'gear', 'hear', 'near' and 'rear'.

### 2. Link the teaching of spelling with the teaching of grammar

Reliable rules for spelling do not really apply to the English language but there are generalisations that can be made (often with many exceptions!). Teaching spelling in conjunction with grammar (morphology), so students associate the look of the word with its meaning, can help them to remember both skills.

### 3. Teach the most consistent of English spelling generalisations

For example, when adding vowel suffixes:

- drop the 'e' before adding 'ing': 'love' / 'loving'
- double the consonant of words with one syllable, a short vowel and a single consonant: 'shop' / 'shopping'
- change 'y' into 'i' before adding 'es'.

## Something for you to try

- Play games where students are challenged to build new words from a root word. For example, write the word 'port' on the board. Talk about the meaning of the root word (that is, 'to carry'). Ask students to work in pairs and to share a mini-whiteboard. Give them three minutes to create as many words as they can by adding prefixes and suffixes to the root word.

un	im re ex de air trans sup	<b>port</b>	ed ing s ant er able	ly
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The first time you play, give students the bank of prefixes and suffixes. On subsequent occasions, see if they can recall the prefixes and suffixes to make the words. Other useful root words to use are: 'sign', 'cover', 'help', 'play' and 'care'.

- Link the teaching of spelling with grammar and vocabulary. Create wall charts of words showing the different word classes.

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb
create	creation	creative	creatively
obey	obedience	obedient	obediently

- Teach students a useful sequence for practising the spellings they are learning using the following grid:

Look	Say	Copy	Study	Cover	Say	Write	Check

Give each student a list of words to learn. They should **look** at the first word on their list and **say** the word. Then they should **copy** it accurately and **study** it closely either by sounding out the phonemes in a phonically regular word, for example, 'from', 'them', 'went', or by rote-learning the sequence of letters while saying the letter names. Next, students **cover** the word and **say** it aloud. Then they should **write** the word (without copying) and finally **check** that they have spelled it correctly.



# iLowerSecondary assessment

Through the iLowerSecondary curriculum, and your teaching strategies and learning activities, your students will further develop the ability to do well in tests. They will be able to:

- make connections between ideas
- transfer their learning from one context to another
- use the same skill in different contexts.

The iLowerSecondary curriculum is designed to develop learning skills and requires your students to become adaptable students. It encourages students to acquire a 'growth mindset', which helps students to see ability as something they can develop themselves. Students are also encouraged to grow in resilience and perseverance, which helps them in test and examination conditions as they are much less likely to be daunted or give up when a question looks difficult on first reading. They will be well prepared to break down questions into logical parts and to 'have a go' at producing an answer.

## FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

As teachers, we make assessments every day about what students know, understand and can do in every class we teach. When we use this information to identify the next steps in learning for students and to modify teaching and learning activities, this is formative assessment or 'assessment *for* learning'.

This involves a new kind of dialogue between teachers and students. We know from our own experience that learning is driven by what both teachers *and* students do in the classroom.

Formative assessment (or assessment for learning) asks three key questions:

### **1. Where is the student going?**

Formative assessment involves creating, clarifying and clearly communicating learning targets and the success criteria which indicate these targets have been achieved. Through this process, teachers and students develop a common understanding about the end goal of the learning. Using clear success criteria means that the teacher, the student and even a peer can assess the student work.

### **2. Where is the student now?**

The formative assessment process seeks evidence about what students currently know and can do in relation to the learning target. Teachers gather this evidence through a variety of strategies, including questioning, observations of class discussion and review of ongoing work. The teacher reviews how students are engaging with and participating in the lesson and can adjust their teaching to effectively develop student understanding.

### **3. How will the student get to where they are going?**

Using the information gathered about the student's current achievements and the learning target, teachers and students can make adjustments that support student achievement. Teachers adjust their ongoing teaching and learning activities and students adjust their learning behaviours and actions. The formative assessment process closes the gap between students' current learning and desired outcomes.

## The benefits of formative assessment

The benefits of implementing formative assessment approaches in the classroom include:

- clear, 'actionable' feedback helps students to improve future work and achievement
- in 'formative assessment' classrooms, students become better all-round students and may do better in examinations

- where formative assessment is used consistently, students take more responsibility for their own learning and have good learning conversations with teachers.

### Examples of formative assessment strategies



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This *iLowerSecondary Teacher's Guide* is full of ideas that will support you in creating a classroom rich with opportunities for formative assessment. For specific examples, see the pages on **Assessment in English**.

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Summative assessment identifies what has been learned at a particular point in time for comparison against a standard. This type of assessment can also be described as 'assessment of learning'. This is important at Lower Secondary stage to prepare students for external qualifications. It also supports students in their understanding about external standards for real-life situations (for example, tasks in later life that resemble examinations, such as job interviews and selection tasks).

Summative assessment can include:

- tests or tasks that measure what a student can do in relation to a particular task at a particular time, for example, iLowerSecondary progress tests
- formal recognition of a student's progress by the teacher
- the recording of current achievement for the student, the parents and the next teacher(s), for example, through end-of-year iLowerSecondary tests
- national exams or international exams which are externally marked.

### The benefits of summative assessment

- It measures what is known at a given point, enabling the teacher to 'take stock' of students' current achievement.
- It provides students with a clear measure against expectations/standards so that they can identify their improvement priorities.
- It can give students the motivation to improve performance against a standard.

### The iLowerSecondary summative assessment programme

The iLowerSecondary programme consists of progress tests and end-of-year tests which are linked to the iLowerSecondary curriculum objectives. The iLowerSecondary curriculum has been written to ensure students are prepared for external tests at the end of Lower Secondary, and have a solid foundation to begin their International GCSE learning from Year 10.

This means you can feel confident as you cover the curriculum objectives that you are preparing students for these tests.

#### 1. iLowerSecondary progress tests

iLowerSecondary progress tests are useful ongoing tests that allow both students and teachers to measure progress against the assessment criteria.

This helps the teacher to:

- see where individual students might need extra support
- assess what aspects of the curriculum might need further or deeper coverage for the whole class.

This helps students to:

- gain confidence in areas where they do well
- identify areas where they need to do more work to secure their understanding
- tackle questions in a different way to achieve success.

Each year of mathematics and English contains five half-termly tests. Science progress tests are structured around the topics. All tests directly address the relevant curriculum objectives for that year group. The order of the tests is based around the iLowerSecondary example schemes of work, however, you may choose instead to take any test at a different point in the school year for which it is designed, depending on what order you have taught the curriculum objectives in.

The tests themselves contain a range of questions designed to give students the chance to demonstrate their learning in different ways. Timings for these tests will vary between year groups and advice can be found in the marking guidance that is provided with that year's tests.

Question types may include:

- multiple-choice questions
- short, one-word answers
- short-sentence answers
- finding the right answer from the text
- longer answers involving providing reasons for answers.

## **2. iLowerSecondary end-of-year tests**

The iLowerSecondary end-of-year tests are longer than the progress tests and will take longer to complete. They cover a range of curriculum objectives from across that year's teaching. Guidance on timings and advice can be found in that year's marking guidance.

Like in the progress tests, there will be a range of question types. This is to prepare students for the broad range of question types they may experience in externally marked examinations.

## **Preparing students for summative assessment**

### **1. General tips to prepare students**

- Go through an example test so that students know what the actual test papers will look like. You might choose to look at a past year's papers, or a combination of progress tests.
- Practise test conditions in the classroom (silence, rules for asking questions if needed, etc.).
- Teach students techniques for time management when carrying out tests, for example, moving on if an answer is difficult and coming back to it at the end.
- Explain the importance of attempting all questions in the test; there are no penalties for incorrect answers, so they have nothing to lose.
- Model answers for the class and encourage students to share in this process by getting them to model answers to the whole class too.

- Students should be writing in **black** ink for externally marked assessments, not blue ink or pencil. It is advisable to encourage them to plot graphs or join boxes lightly in pencil first. Then check it and go over their final answer in black ink.
- Explain the importance of reading questions carefully.
- Reassure students not to worry when they don't know an answer but to 'have a go'.
- Explain that if they change their mind they can cross out their first answer and write the answer they want to be marked clearly.
- Discourage students from writing alternative answers. These cannot gain a mark because the student has had *two* attempts at the answer.
- Explain to students that the space provided for an answer on the test paper gives a clue as to what type of answer is needed. For example, if the space provided is a short line or a box, only a few words are needed. For a space consisting of two or three lines, students should write a longer answer.
- Remind students to read over their answers.

## **2. Revision techniques**

While your regular iLowerSecondary teaching and learning activities will give students the breadth and depth necessary to do well in exams, it is also important for students to understand the purpose and value of revision. Good revision techniques include:

- asking students to prepare revision quizzes for each other
- asking students to 'design a game' for their classmates based on a revision topic and then playing them together
- students giving presentations to the class on revision topics that work for them
- modelling good summary note-taking practice. For example, asking students to explain an idea within a word limit of 100 words or to explain an idea in the time it takes for a lift to go up ten floors (an 'elevator pitch')
- providing students with summary notes.

## **3. Setting practice tests**

The iLowerSecondary progress tests can be used as practice for students throughout the year. These are linked to the iLowerSecondary curriculum objectives and can provide a diagnostic tool for the areas your students will need extra revision in.

When setting practice tests, remember that these should be as close as possible to the 'real' test and keep the following points in mind.

- If possible, use the same room, desk arrangement and seating plan as for the real test.
- Give students all the equipment they can expect to have for the real test. For example, for mathematics this might consist of a ruler graduated in centimetres and millimetres, pen, HB pencil, eraser and tracing paper.
- Do not allow students to have anything other than the specified equipment for the real test, and the face-down question paper, on their desk.
- Set up a clock on the wall that all students can see.

- Give students the same instructions as you will give at the beginning of the real test. For example, tell them:
  - how long they have to do the test, and the end time on the clock
  - to keep the test paper face down until they are told that they may turn it over
  - to put their name and any other required details in the spaces for these on the test paper
  - that they must keep their eyes forward and on their work
  - there is to be no talking or trying to communicate with other students
  - if they have a question, raise their hand, and a teacher will come to them
  - to read each question carefully before they start to answer it
  - to try to answer every question
  - to check answers if they have time at the end.

Begin with practice tests that are shorter than the real test. This will allow students to build up to the length of time they will be required to sit and concentrate for in the real test. For example, if in the real test, students will have one hour and 20 minutes to answer approximately 48 questions, then make the first practice test 20 minutes to answer 12 questions; then 40 minutes to answer 24 questions, and so on.

Encourage students to circle the question numbers for any questions they answered, but were not certain they got correct. This will give you, as their teacher, an insight into where they may be lacking confidence in their understanding, and require some additional support.

#### 4. Reviewing test results

It is important to use summative test results in a formative way. In other words, it is useful to review test results with students to improve their learning and to identify next steps. There are various things to keep in mind.

- When you mark students' practice tests, do not only comment on the correctness of an answer, but also take the opportunity to discuss their reasoning with them.
- Having completed the marking of a student's paper, write a comment at the end that provides feedback on any written working (if applicable), as well as total marks. List any concepts where you feel the student would benefit from extra practice.
- Sometimes, allow students to mark each other's practice test papers. Give students an easy-to-use mark sheet to complete. As well as the question numbers, the concept(s) covered, and the total marks available for each question, it should give students who are marking the opportunity to provide feedback on working, and indicate if further practice on particular concepts is required. For example:

Question number	This tests understanding of	Total marks available	Marks received	Written working shown (if applicable)		Extra practice required?	
				Yes	No	Yes	No

- Having completed the marking, work through each answer to test questions with the whole class, offering explanations and discussing reasoning as you go. Advise students to make a note of any question numbers where they still feel unsure (even if they got it correct). Encourage students to discuss the question with other students, or you, as their teacher.

- Give students time at the end for going through a test to decide on the concepts they need additional practice with. Use this decision to inform the work students do as part of their revision programme.
- Make testing a positive experience! When reviewing test results, try to offer two pieces of praise for every criticism. A returned test paper full of red marks will not encourage students to continue practising.

### **5. Useful assessment vocabulary**

It will help students if you share common assessment vocabulary and outline what responses are most suitable for each. For example:

- **describe** – capture something in as much detail as you can in your own words
- **explain** – show that you can give reasons for something and set out in clear steps how it works
- **analyse** – explain **why** something might be the way it is
- **compare** – set out the similarities and differences of two ideas or objects
- **solve** – find the answer to a problem (often in mathematics)
- **know** – use your existing knowledge about something to explain what it is.

Ensure students read all questions carefully so they are confident they understand *what* a question is actually asking them to do.



# Assessment in English

## WAYS OF ASSESSING IN ENGLISH (FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

Reading and writing effectively in English are complex skills to acquire and require a range of different types of assessment to assist each student to achieve their potential.

A narrow, proscriptive approach to exam preparation that consists solely of practising test papers will restrict teaching and learning opportunities and may adversely affect students' performance in the tests. By incorporating techniques associated with formative and diagnostic assessment when preparing for summative assessment, students will receive the best test preparation.

These formative assessments could include the following.

- Giving oral and written feedback when responding to students' work.

For example: feedback should be predominantly positive with some specific points about where improvements could be made. This is sometimes called the feedback 'sandwich': compliment–correct–compliment. Research shows that feedback is most effective when it offers suggestions on how students could overcome their misconceptions.<sup>2</sup> For example, in an oral feedback to a student, the teacher might say: *You made some good points in your essay but in some places you repeated yourself. Can you see where? Can you think of two more new examples? Those are good examples, well done.*

- Observing students while they are working.

For example: when students are working with a partner and using a mini-whiteboard to write an agreed answer, tune in to the conversation and note students who can respond to their partner's suggestions, negotiate how to write a shared understanding and ask each other questions to consolidate learning. Ask pairs to reflect on how well they supported each other's learning and give positive feedback on these skills.

- Using open-ended questions during guided reading.

All of these forms of assessment inform teaching and so maximise learning opportunities.

## PREPARING STUDENTS FOR A WRITTEN ENGLISH TEST (SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

End of iLowerSecondary phase summative tests in English generally assess the following content areas:

- reading comprehension
- grammar and punctuation
- writing (including understanding of purpose, form and audience of the writing task, and accurate use of grammar, punctuation and spelling).

## READING COMPREHENSION

These sections usually consist of two or three short passages, including a fiction and a non-fiction text. Generally, there are more marks allocated to the assessment of the fiction text. Students will be assessed on their comprehension of the text and their understanding of the writer's use of language. Typically, a higher proportion of the total marks are awarded to the testing of reading skills.

At higher levels, the text extracts to read will be longer and students may be expected to read a text that takes five minutes to complete. Some students may find this daunting and so familiarising them with texts

<sup>2</sup> J. Hattie, *Visible Learning for Teachers*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2012.

at the same level of difficulty will build their confidence at tackling these longer texts. Students are advised to read the passage in its entirety before re-reading specific sections to find answers to questions.

### 1. Examples of reading comprehension question types

To prepare students for answering reading comprehension questions, it would be useful to provide examples of good answers. The modelling of how to interpret a question and how to find the answer in the text should be demonstrated to students during shared reading and guided reading.

Students should also become familiar with the typical types of questions that are associated with various reading skills so that they know what to expect in the test. These are outlined in the following table.

Skills to be tested	Typical question
Reading evaluation: context	Explain how the writer uses language to show...
Reading evaluation: textual evidence	Give one piece of evidence from the text to show...
Reading evaluation: critical response text	Using evidence from the text to support your answer, give two ways in which the writer shows...
Reading evaluation: purpose and intention	Explore two effects the writer achieves through the description of...
Reading evaluation: comparisons	Explain <b>two</b> different ways the writers... to tell us something about... in their texts. Remember to give examples from <b>both</b> texts to support your ideas.
Reading language: vocabulary – demonstrate understanding of language in context of the text	What does the phrase... suggest about...
Reading for meaning: inference and deduction	Give two examples from the description which suggest that...
Reading for meaning: key points	Give one reason why...

In assessments in Lower Secondary, there is an increase in the number of questions requiring extended answers. These questions may start with a word such as 'explore', 'explain' or 'compare'. There may be more marks awarded to these types of answers and students are expected to explain in detail, supporting their answer with evidence from the text. The details of the answer required will be indicated by the space allowed for writing the answer. Sometimes there might be as much writing space as half a page. This should indicate to students that their answer should be detailed and include a number of justified points. However, they should not assume that they must write on every line as there may be more space provided than they actually need for the answer.

### 2. Tips to prepare students for a reading comprehension test

- Help students not to panic if they do not know anything about the subject of the text; explain that all the answers can be found in the text.
- Encourage students to tackle the question in a methodical manner, for example:
  - first, reading the passage carefully, thinking about the overall meaning
  - next, reading the questions to get an idea of which bits of the passage are most important
  - then reading the passage again using a pencil to underline words/sentences that could be answers to some questions.
- Tell students not to worry if there is a word that they do not understand – in the end they may not need to use it.
- Make sure that students are aware they should stick to the information in the text when answering questions rather than bringing their own knowledge into their answers.

### 3. Watch out for...

Students who make the following common mistakes in reading comprehension tests:

- looking for a word in the text which exactly matches a word in the question (the word in the text might be a synonym, not an exact match)
- giving their own view to answer a question rather than referring to information in the text
- identifying figurative language but not commenting on its effectiveness
- not thinking about the meaning of a word *in the context* of the passage
- not recognising when a phrase is used metaphorically rather than literally, for example, 'keeping a straight face'
- failing to put something 'in their own words' when the question asks them to do so
- answering a 'How' question with a 'What' answer. Some students just describe *what* is happening in the extract when the question is asking them to explain *why* something is happening as it is. Give students model answers to 'How' questions so that they recognise what information the question requires.
- just listing examples of imagery used in the extract, such as similes or metaphors, rather than explaining the effect the imagery has on the reader
- not recognising that an 'evaluation' question requires the student to explain the extent to which they agree with opinions stated in the extract and also how the extract makes the reader feel. Students will only be competent to answer these kinds of questions in test situations if they have had ample opportunity in class to share opinions about text and to discuss how they feel about what they have read.

## GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

The language skills of grammar and punctuation usually form part of the writing test rather than being assessed as part of a stand-alone section. In some tests, the grammar questions are based on the fiction text from the reading section. These skills may be focused on in practice writing leading up to examinations in order to familiarise students with the need to include correct grammatical features in all forms of writing.

### 1. Examples of grammar and punctuation question types

It is important to familiarise students with the typical types of questions that are associated with various grammar and punctuation skills so that they have an idea of what to expect in the test. The following table outlines typical questions which are associated with various grammar and punctuation skills.

Skills to be tested	Typical questions
Accurate use of standard English	Tick the sentence which uses standard English: <i>We was eating a curry and then we done the washing up.</i> <i>We were eating a curry and then we done the washing up.</i> <i>We were eating a curry and then we did the washing up.</i>
Recognise the difference between formal and colloquial use of English	Write this sentence in more formal English: <i>We zoomed across the road and hopped on to the bus.</i>
Identify correct verb tense	Choose the correct word to complete the sentence: <i>She _____ a letter to her teacher.</i> has wrote/had wrote/written/had written
Use of active and passive verbs	Change the following sentence to the passive voice: <i>Class 7 designed the poster.</i>

Skills to be tested	Typical questions
Distinguish between main and subordinate clauses	Underline the subordinate clause in the following sentence: <i>The boat, which had caught on the reef, slowly began to sink.</i>
Identify coordinating and subordinating conjunctions	Add a subordinating conjunction to complete this sentence: <i>The team was successful... they practised hard.</i>
Use the full range of English punctuation, including using commas in lists, to demarcate clauses and after fronted adverbials	Punctuate the following sentence: <i>Before we leave school our class wants to start a vegetable garden the first in our school's history.</i>
Accurately use pronouns throughout a complex sentence	Put the correct pronouns in the following sentence: <i>She tidied... room and put away everything that was...</i>
Subject/verb agreement	Choose the correct verb to complete the sentence: <i>They is/are all members of the same family.</i>

## 2. Tips to prepare students for grammar and punctuation test questions

Shared reading  
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- Avoid just practising isolated grammar exercises. Students need to understand *why* a particular verb form is correct or how the meaning of a sentence is changed if the punctuation is changed. Point out grammatical features during shared reading.
- When working with groups of students, ask them to read a sentence each. Talk about how they knew when to take a turn. Ask them to identify the different ways sentences can end (for example, full stop, exclamation mark, question mark).
- Draw attention to punctuation, such as brackets or dashes, and discuss how they impact on the meaning of a sentence.
- When working with a group of students, ask one student to find an example of a particular grammatical feature. Then ask another student to say something about that grammatical feature, for example: *It is a complex sentence with a subordinating conjunction.*

## WRITING

These sections usually consist of a single writing task. Students will be assessed on their ability to write a text in a particular genre (for example, recount, instructions, explanation, etc.) which makes sense and communicates to an audience. They will be expected to write in accurate sentences which are correctly punctuated and spelled. Generally, this is a shorter section of the test and fewer marks are allocated to this test.

### Tips to prepare students for writing test questions

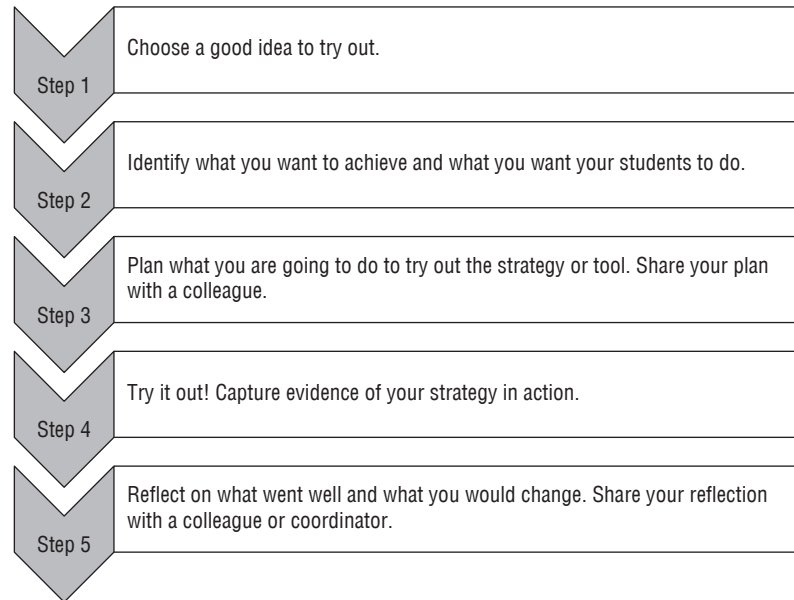
- Demonstrate good examples of writing of the length they will be expected to produce in the test (500–800 words). Unpick each text to explain how it is successful.
  - Point out how each sentence links to the next sentence and builds up to communicate thought clearly.
  - Pay particular attention to difficulties many EAL students experience. For example, how conditional verbs ('could', 'should', 'would') work in English and subject/verb agreement between nouns and verbs.
  - Analyse a paragraph to find the main **P**oint in the topic sentence, the **E**vidence which supports it, the **E**xplanation of the main idea and the **L**ink that refers back to the topic sentence and connects to the following paragraph (sometimes called **PEEL**). Some test questions require a paragraph-length answer and students will need guidance in producing effective paragraphs.

- Share good examples of writing from different genres so that students are familiar with the conventions of each text type.
- After writing a sentence, encourage students to re-read what they have written (to check it says what they meant to say and is grammatically correct) and also to ensure that the next sentence follows logically.
- Encourage students to use vocabulary they are confident they know the meaning of, even if they are less confident about the spelling.
- Tell students to avoid the informal language of texting and slang.
- Tell students to remind themselves throughout the writing to keep the language features of the genre in mind. For example, persuasive, emotive language for advertisements, formal language avoiding personal pronouns and using examples of the passive voice in report writing.

# Appendices

## APPENDIX A: THE *TRY IT OUT* TEMPLATE

As you try out a strategy or tool of your choice, follow these five steps.



### Guidance

#### **Step 1. Choose a good idea to try out**

Choose a strategy or tool that you can try out in a lesson or part of a lesson. For example:

The good idea I shall try is:

*Asking differentiated questions in a class discussion.*

Be as specific as possible. For example, ‘use group work’ is too broad. Aim for one specific approach, such as:

- supporting students to use various types of manipulatives and tools to solve problems based on their needs
- asking differentiated questions in a class discussion
- working with a small group of students to build needed skills for a new topic
- supporting students to complete differentiated homework assignments
- ensuring students select their own product to create when finishing a unit of study (writing an essay, creating a video, designing a poster, creating a presentation, etc.).



## Step 2: Identify what you want to achieve and what you want your students to do

For example:

I have chosen this strategy or tool because:

*I have chosen the strategy of using a KWL chart (a chart that asks students to think about what they already Know about a topic; what they Want to learn about the topic and then to reflect on what they have Learned). I have chosen this so that I will get some guidance on what I will need to review or cover in more depth on the topic of plants.*

I am hoping to achieve:

*I am hoping that my students will come up with some interesting ideas that I did not predict.*

*I am hoping to gain insight into some things that students want to learn about plants so that I can structure my lessons based on their interests.*

I expect my students to:

*I expect that my students will reflect on all that they know about plants and bring up ideas and concepts that will make them feel ownership over their learning.*

## Step 3: Plan what you are going to do to try out the strategy or tool. Share your plan with a colleague

What are you going to do? Be as specific as possible.

Share your plan with a colleague or advisor for their feedback and ideas before you try the plan in your classroom.

For example:

As I try out this strategy or tool, I plan to take the following steps:

*I will review the purpose of a KWL chart.*

*I will then divide students into groups and provide each with a marker and flip chart paper for their KWL chart.*

*I will give students five minutes to write down everything they know about plants and some things they want to know about plants.*

*Then I will teach my first lesson on plants. I will then ask students to reflect on the activities and write down some things they learned about plants. I will have students post their charts throughout the room so that they can add to them throughout this unit on plants.*

**Step 4: Try it out! Capture evidence of your plan in action**

Now implement your plan. You may want to get some help from a colleague to capture evidence of your plan in action. Evidence can include:

- a short video
- a storyboard: photos capturing key moments with some text explaining the moments
- an annotated lesson plan
- samples of student work showing impact of the strategy or tool.

For example:

My evidence:

*I will annotate my lesson plan to show the impact of the KWL chart and where it enhanced learning.*

**Step 5: Reflect on what went well and what you would change. Share your reflection with a colleague**

Reflect on your practice and add a short commentary relating to your evidence.

For example:

What went well?

*I took pictures of each group's KWL flip chart paper. I did not realise just how much my students already knew about plants. Lots of my students were able to share information about what they've learned from having a garden or growing plants at home. It was really interesting to see what my students were interested in.*

How might it have been even better?

*Since I have these snapshots of data, I am going to change a few of my lessons. Some of them aren't really needed since students already know the information and the others can be adjusted a bit to pull in students' interests. I also like that the students were able to reflect on the lesson and explicitly state what they had learned.*

What are my next steps?

*As we continue through the unit, I'm going to allow students to add to their charts every day and I might have them add in any ideas for what they want to know that come up during the lessons. This can be an ongoing journal of some sort.*

## The *Try it out* template

### Step 1

The good idea I shall try is:

### Step 2

I have chosen this strategy or tool because:

I am hoping to achieve:

I expect my students to:

**Step 3**

As I try out this strategy or tool, I plan to take the following steps:

**Step 4**

My evidence:

**Step 5**

What went well?

How might it have been even better?

What are my next steps?

## APPENDIX B: MY iLOWERSECONDARY CHECKLIST

RAG <sup>3</sup>	Statement	Evidence/My next steps	Date
	The learning objectives for the lesson are clear and will be clearly communicated to students.		
	Students are given opportunities to identify success criteria in relation to the lesson's learning objectives.		
	The lesson introduction grabs students' attention and sparks curiosity.		
	Students are given opportunities to connect lesson concepts to their prior learning.		
	Students have several opportunities to reflect on the lesson concepts.		
	Students work with partners or small groups during the lesson.		
	Students are given opportunities to conduct independent, open-ended research		
	Students will do a considerable amount of the talking during the lesson.		
	Students have opportunities to lead group activities.		
	I have planned several open-ended probing questions that begin with 'Why,' 'How,' and 'When'.		
	I plan to provide enough time after asking a question for students to process and consider their answers using various methods (for example, think-pair-share).		
	I have built in opportunities to provide feedback to students on progress through, for example: whole-class and individual questioning, comments on work, one-to-one conversations, whole-class feedback, through the shared learning log.		
	I have planned how I will transition students from whole-class work to individual or group work.		
	I have planned several opportunities for 'checks for understanding'.		
	Students are given opportunities to self-assess their understanding.		
	Students are allowed to use different methods and materials to reach the learning objectives (as appropriate).		
	I have created opportunities for students to present new knowledge in creative and engaging ways to me and each other.		
	Students are given opportunities to ask questions (including asking questions to other students) about the concepts.		
	Students can freely generate ideas and create examples during the lesson.		

<sup>3</sup> RAG: You can colour code your progress, for example: Red (I need to do much more work on this); Amber (my practice is developing); Green (I am confident and secure in this practice).