GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH IN YEARS 1-6

2021/2022

Introduction

The guidelines for the teaching, learning and assessment of English in the primary years remain the same as last year's. The purpose of this document is to provide clear guidelines to teachers, as they continue to face pupils with different learning experiences and opportunities brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is important that at the beginning of the scholastic year, teachers spend some time assessing learners' abilities and readiness in order to identify and address any learning gaps before moving on to new content or skills. This also means that teachers need to prioritise content and skills according to the identified needs of the learners. In order to facilitate things, for this scholastic year (2021-2022) teachers are asked to follow the same recommendations as last year's (2020-2021).

We take this opportunity to remind teachers that language structures (grammar), vocabulary, spelling and punctuation should be taught implicitly and therefore, there is no need to dedicate whole lessons to their teaching, especially grammar. Class time should be spent on giving learners more exposure to the language through authentic listening and reading texts, which are meaningful and relevant to them. It is highly recommended that short tasks are assigned throughout lessons for pupils to be active learners and interact with texts. This would help scaffold learning, especially with regards to the productive skills (speaking and writing), in which students might require more support.

Early Years – Year 1 and Year 2

During Early Years, teachers have to lay the foundations to help learners become literate as well as competent and proficient language users, helping them progress and lead autonomous lives as lifelong learners and citizens.

Apart from the age of the learner, according to Murphy (2014) the most powerful predictor of success in language learning is context. Particularly during Early Years, the classroom should help expose learners to authentic texts with age-appropriate language which is relevant and meaningful to them. At this early stage of their education, learners need to focus on 'learning to read' so as they grow older, they 'read to learn'. One cannot stress the importance of literacy skills enough; without them learners will lag behind throughout their educational journey. In this case, this might be more relevant to teachers teaching Year 2. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this scholastic year, Year 2 teachers might need to revisit certain basic literacy concepts to ensure that they are mastered before moving on to new content and skills. This, of course, should be done through a thematic approach, examples of which can be found on our website (https://www.englishprimarymalta.com/) or on Teleskola.mt. Shared-reading and guided-reading should be given priority as well as participation in chants, rhymes, songs and stories.

Language is made up of skills which require practice and to help learners gain the confidence to try, tasks need to be scaffolded and heavily supported at this stage within an authentic and meaningful context. Speaking and Writing tasks should also have a purpose and an audience so learners see the 'reason' why they need to speak and write (for instance, writing a grocery list, writing a to-do list, writing an invitation, filling in a simple form with their personal details, chatting with a friend on the phone to see how he/she is, asking someone for help and so on).

Syllabus

All the learning outcomes in the Year 1 syllabus need to be covered. For this reason, teachers are advised to refer closely to the Year 1 syllabus as they plan for this scholastic year. It is also advised to spend some time observing the learners' level of English readiness as they interact amongst themselves in everyday classroom situations.

Teachers in Year 2 are encouraged to start with material pegged at Year 1 level, following implicit observations by the teacher as he/she assesses learners' level and readiness. These observations will enable the teacher to develop adequate material to help them address the learning gaps while embracing learners' strengths, attitudes and learning dispositions. Teachers can refer to the table below which highlights the skills and competences that learners' should have mastered by the end of Year 1 as well as the skills and competences that need to be mastered by the end of Year 2. At the beginning, it is important to keep in mind that some of the learning outcomes in Year 1 might have already been achieved during the first quarter of the year.

Year 1	Year 2
ORACY	
Stories Poems Rhymes Chants Songs Topics	
Listen to and view **attentively** with increasing concentration and enjoyment.	Listen to and view **attentively** with increasing concentration and enjoyment.
Begin to show understanding of stories, chants, songs and rhymes.	**Demonstrate understanding** by responding non-verbally and verbally.

Participate in chants, rhymes, songs and stories.	**Participate** in storytelling.
	Recite simple rhymes, songs, chants and poems alongside others.
Language Interactive Conversations	
Begin to show understanding of **social / classroom commands** and instructions by responding non-verbally and verbally.	Show understanding of **classroom language.**
With support, begin to practise the conventions of social discourse.	With support, begin to **use appropriate language with a purpose.**
	Begin to use the **correct intonation** to distinguish statements from questions.
	Begin to practise the **conventions of social discourse.**
READING	
Concepts and Conventions of Print	
Demonstrate knowledge that **print carries message.**	Demonstrate knowledge that **written language conveys meaning.**

Distinguish between spoken and printed words.	Begin to **develop phonemic and phonic awareness.**
Start to **recognise most letters** of the alphabet.	**Recognise all letters** of the alphabet.
Start to develop **sound-symbol correspondence.** (A letter has a name, a sound and a shape.)	Demonstrate ability to **match spoken word to printed word.**
Demonstrate understanding of **directionality**	
Reading Strategies	
Begin to show knowledge of **book conventions.**	Identify **subject-matter** of a text through titles and illustrations.
Begin to use knowledge of initial letter and relate sound and picture cues to **predict** words in text.	Begin to **read with understanding, accuracy and fluency.**
	Begin to demonstrate understanding of text through **intonation.**
	With support, begin to use different **strategies for word identification.**
Reading	
With teacher support begin to participate in **reading very simple books with illustrations.**	Participate in **shared-reading** experiences.
Recognise own name in print.	Begin to **read different genres** (fiction and non-fiction / linear and non-linear) for an audience.

Recognise environmental print.	With support demonstrate ability to **answer questions on text** .
Start to recognise a number of **sight words in context.**	

WRITING	

Print Conventions	
Begin to demonstrate **knowledge of print conventions.**	Demonstrate **knowledge of print conventions.**

Writing Skills	
Begin to **write letters and words** correctly.	Demonstrate correct writing of **letters and words.**
	Begin to use various strategies to **spell correctly.**
	With support begin to **proof-read** own work.

Writing	
Convey meaning through **drawing.**	Convey meaning through **drawing.**
With support **draw and write words or phrases** to communicate meaning.	**Draw or write words or phrases or sentences** to communicate meaning.
With support begin to **write sentences** from a given model.	Participate in **shared** teacher / pupil/s **writing.**
	Begin to **write sentences** according to ability.

	With support, **create and write own book/s.**
	Begin to show understanding of **sentence structure.**
	With support, begin to **write answers to questions** on picture, topics, stories and poems.
Vocabulary	
With support begin to use in writing, **theme-related words, sight words** and vocabulary related to the classroom environment.	Demonstrate ability to **use acquired vocabulary in writing.**
Write own name.	

Year 3

Learning Outcomes

Learners will continue to progress along the Learning Outcomes relevant for this year group as set in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 3 (2019-2020). However, and if necessary, teachers can decide to allocate more time to a particular skill where they feel learners might be lagging behind, for instance, writing. Teachers should still use an **integrated-skills approach** in their planning and during lessons, to ensure motivating and meaningful context. Grammar should be taught implicitly and integrated within all the strands.

Scheme of Work

Teachers should modify last year's scheme of work after careful analysis of learners' skills and competences. All thematic areas need to be covered by the end of Year 3 and all skills including literature need to be addressed. As indicated in the table below, it is suggested that for this scholastic year (2021-2022) teachers address the following writing genres:

Year 3 – Writing Genre		
Text type	Genre (Long) (around 50-70 words)	Genre (Short) (around 20-40 words)
Narrative/Descriptive	Story	postcard
	Recount	identity kit (filling in a form)
Informative/Instructive		
		instructions

		invitation
		message to thank / to inform
Total	7 GENRES	

Forecast and Record of Work

These should reflect the changes or alterations made in the Scheme of Work.

Continuous Assessment

Reporting involves communicating information about learner's achievement and progress. Schools and teachers are required to collect evidence of assessment of learning to inform reporting processes. The following table clearly shows which LOs could be ticked for continuous assessment and reporting purposes:

Year 3 – Continuous Assessment and Ticking of LOs for Scholastic Year 2021-2022			
	TERM 1	**TERM 2**	**TERM 3**
Listening	LS 5.2	LS 5.14 (Instructions)	LS 5.10
Speaking	-	LS 5.17 (Presentation)	LS 5.13

Reading	R 5.2	-	R 5.7
Writing	W 5.1	W 5.14 W 5.16 (Instructions)	W 5.9
Literature	LIT 5.2	LIT 5.3	LIT 5.4
Total	4	5	5

Year 4

Learning Outcomes

Learners will continue to progress along the Learning Outcomes relevant for this year group as set in the LOF Supporting Document for Year 4 (2019-2020). However, and if necessary, teachers can decide to allocate more time to a particular skill where they feel learners might be lagging behind, for instance, writing. Teachers should still use an **integrated-skills approach** in their planning and during lessons, to ensure motivating and meaningful context. Grammar should be taught implicitly and integrated within all the strands.

Scheme of Work

Teachers should modify last year's scheme of work after careful analysis of learners' skills and competences.   All thematic areas need to be covered by the end of Year 4 and all skills including literature need to be addressed. As indicated in the table below, it is suggested that for this scholastic year (2021-2022) teachers address the following writing genres:

Year 4 – Writing Genre		
Text type	Genre (Long) (around 70-100 words)	Genre (Short) (around 30-40 words)
Descriptive/Narrative	informal email	captions
	story	
Informative/Instructive	non-chronological report	identity kit (filling in a form)
		directions
		message to inform; to apologise
Persuasive		advert
Total	8 Genres	

Forecast and Record of Work

These should reflect the changes or alterations made in the Scheme of Work.

Continuous Assessment

The following table clearly shows which LOs could be ticked for continuous assessment and reporting purposes:

Year 4 – Continuous Assessment and Ticking of LOs for Scholastic Year 2021-2022			
	TERM 1	**TERM 2**	**TERM 3**
Listening	LS 5.2	LS 5.14 (Directions)	LS 5.1
Speaking	-	LS 5.11 (Presentation)	LS 5.9
Reading	R 5.9	R 5.4	R 5.6
Writing	W 5.8A	W 5.8C	W 5.8D
Literature	LIT 5.6	LIT 5.5	LIT 5.4
Total	4	5	5

Reporting on My School should carry on as usual. The teachers should base their reports on evidence gained from learners' achievement in Learning Tasks.

Annual Exams

The exam will build on the Learning Outcomes set for Year 4. Teachers are to refer closely to the document 'Year 4 Examination Guidelines'[1], as well as the Specimen Paper for Year 4[2] and the Year 4 annual exam pastpaper (2021).

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[1] https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/new_syllabi/Documents/Yr03_to_Yr06_English/English_yr04_Annual_Examination_Guidelines_2019_20.pdf
[2] https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/new_syllabi/Documents/Yr03_to_Yr06_English/specimen_english_yr04_2020.pdf

Years 5-6

Syllabus

Both Year 5 and Year 6 learners will follow their respective syllabi. The Learning Outcomes Framework will not be introduced during scholastic year 2021-2022. If necessary, teachers can decide to allocate more time to a particular skill where they feel learners might be lagging behind, for instance, writing. Teachers should still use an **integrated-skills approach** in their planning and during lessons, to ensure motivating and meaningful context. Grammar should be taught implicitly and integrated within all the strands.

Scheme of Work

Teachers should modify last year's scheme of work after careful analysis of learners' skills and competences. Teachers may choose to reduce the amount of time dedicated to one skill in order to have more time available for the skills they feel learners need more support in. As indicated in the table below, it is suggested that for this scholastic year (2021-2022), the Writing Genre are the following:

Year 5 – Writing Genre		
Text type	Genre (Long) (around 100-140 words)	Genre (Short) (around 40-50 words)
Descriptive/Narrative	informal letter (describing a place)	

	informal letter (describing a person)	
	story	
Informative/Instructive	Non-chronological report	instructions
		directions
		message to inform
Persuasive		advert
Total	8 Genres	

In the case of Year 6, teachers are to adhere to the document entitled **End of Primary Benchmark Guidelines** for a complete list of writing genres[3]. The ones in bold below should be given priority:

Short Writing Tasks (around 50-60 words)	Long Writing Tasks (around 140-200 words)
· note / message · **informal email** · invitation · **notice** · **advertisement**	· **informal letter** · **write-up of an event** · **article** · **short story**

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[3] https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Benchmark/General-Information/Pages/default.aspx

· short dialogue · instructions · **directions** · short paragraph about a topic	

The **themes** which teachers teaching Year 6 could give priority to, include the following:

School	Food and drink
Helping at home	Shopping
Free time and entertainment	Sports
Places	Pets and animals

Forecast and Record of Work

These should reflect the changes or alterations made in the Scheme of Work.

Continuous Assessment

Teachers of Year 5 and Year 6 are to refer to the document entitled Continuous Assessment for Year 5 and Year 6 (Updated 2019-2020)[4]. The tables below show how Continuous Assessment should be broken down in both year groups:

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[4] https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/new_syllabi/Documents/Yr03_to_Yr06_English/English_yr05_06_Continuous_Assessment_2019_2020.pdf

Continuous Assessment Year 5														
Language Skills	Oracy						Reading			Writing					
	Listening			Speaking			Reading Comprehension			Short Writing Task			Long Writing Task		
Term	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
No of tasks per term	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total no of tasks per year	3			3			6			3			3		
Marks per task based on Excel Sheet	/10			/25			/20			/12			/25		
Inputting of marks in Excel Sheet	First Continuous Assessment		Second Continuous Assessment		First Continuous Assessment		Second Continuous Assessment		First Continuous Assessment		Second Continuous Assessment		First Continuous Assessment		Second Continuous Assessment
	February		June		February		June		February		June		February		June
No of tasks	2		1		2		1		3		3		2		1

Note: The lower portion of the table aligns as follows across the five skill areas (Listening, Speaking, Reading Comprehension, Short Writing Task, Long Writing Task):

Skill	First Continuous Assessment (February)	Second Continuous Assessment (June)
Listening	2	1
Speaking	2	1
Reading Comprehension	3	3
Short Writing Task	2	1
Long Writing Task	1	2

Continuous Assessment Year 6										
Language Skills	Oracy				Reading		Writing			
	Listening		Speaking		Reading Comprehension		Short Writing Task		Long Writing Task	
Total no of tasks per year	2		2		4		2		2	
Marks per task based on Excel Sheet	/10		/25		/20		/12		/25	
Inputting of marks in Excel Sheet	First Continuous Assessment	Second Continuous Assessment	First Continuous Assessment	Second Continuous Assessment	First Continuous Assessment	Second Continuous Assessment	First Continuous Assessment	Second Continuous Assessment	First Continuous Assessment	Second Continuous Assessment
	February	June	February	June	February	June	February	June	February	June
No of tasks	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1

Conclusion

We acknowledge and appreciate that different schools may have different scenarios and needs. The English Primary Department is here to support you.

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For teaching material and other information, please visit our website https://www.englishprimarymalta.com/

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