

English Language Syllabus for Grade 11

Aim

To enable learners to communicate confidently, fluently and effectively in English.

A) Introduction

In the process of designing this syllabus for the Sri Lankan secondary curriculum where English is taught as a second language, the syllabus revision committee considered the following language acquisition principles in depth.

Underlying Principles

- Language is primarily used for interaction and communication.
- Learning is facilitated in a relaxed and stress-free environment. Building relationship in and among students is very important. A relationship of mutual trust between the teacher and the students is considered necessary to the learning process. Students learn best when they feel secure.
- For language acquisition to take place maximum exposure to the target language and meaningful interaction in the target language is required. Activities that engage learners in meaningful and authentic language use increases motivation and support language learning.
- Language learning should always be linked to using it. To learn it, do it.
- Activities that promote cooperative learning encourage students to work together in groups learning from each other. This promotes initiative and independence among the learners. Students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Learning involves transferring what one knows to new contexts.
- Activating learners' imagination will aid learning.
- Initially teacher should look for progress, not perfection. Learning a language takes place over a long time.
- Reflecting on what they have learnt helps learners to learn about their own learning and about the language. Students should be encouraged to maintain journals/learning logs.
- Feelings of success and a sense of achievement among learners facilitate learning. The more confident the students feel the better they will learn.

B) Competencies Related to the Subject

- 1. Identifies the sound system of the English language**
- 2. Uses mechanics of writing with understanding**
- 3. Engages in active listening and responds appropriately**
- 4. Builds up vocabulary using words appropriately and accurately to convey precise meaning**
- 5. Extracts necessary information from various types of texts.**
- 6. Uses English grammar for the purpose of accurate and effective communication**
- 7. Uses English creatively and innovatively in written communication**
- 8. Communicates clearly, fluently and concisely**

C) Competency Levels Related to the Grade

- 1.6 Articulates English words and phrases confidently
- 2.7 Uses colon appropriately
- 3.7 Takes notes from oral presentations
- 3.8 Listens to more advanced texts and responds to them
- 4.7 Identifies different word classes
- 4.8 Infers figurative and connotative meanings of words and phrases
- 4.9 Updates the vocabulary with the help of external resources
- 5.13 Infers elipted information
- 5.14 Infers implied information.
- 5.15 Thinks beyond a text producing various ideas and suggestions
- 6.10 Constructs meaningful and logical passages integrating suitable grammatical functions
- 6.11 Identifies the functions and the places of different word classes in a sentence
- 6.12 Analyses a complex sentence
- 7.12 Writes for personal purposes
- 7.13 Writes for official/business purposes
- 7.14 Writes compositions using argumentative and expository writing
- 7.15 Develops an accurate and independent style of writing
- 8.17 Distinguishes various language functions
- 8.18 Expresses ideas relevant to various fields using the appropriate jargon

D) English Language Syllabus for Grade 11

Competency 1. Identifies the sound system of the English language

1.6 Articulates English words and phrases confidently

Content and activities

When it comes to this stage, students should exhibit confidence in articulating English words and sounds. Especially they should be able to use correct intonation patterns for different types of sentences. : Imperative, interrogative, negative, affirmative and tag questions. They should be engaged in various activities like debates, news reading, prepared speeches announcements etc. in order to improve their pronunciation skills.

Competency 2. Uses mechanics of writing with understanding

2.7 Uses colon appropriately

Content and activities

At this stage the students are expected to use mechanics of writing with confidence. Apart from practicing what they have learnt from grade six they are expected to acquire the proper use of colon in the process of exemplifying, explaining, clarifying. A wide variety of authentic reading and writing activities can be introduced to them at this stage.

Competency 3. Engages in active listening and responds appropriately

3.7 Takes notes from oral presentations

3.8 Listens to more advanced texts and responds to them

Content and activities

Advanced listening activities, which reflect authentic situations should be used to achieve the competency levels given here.

Eg. Various types of speeches, Presentations, news items, announcements, lectures, descriptions of processes etc.

Competency 4. Builds up vocabulary using words appropriately and accurately to convey precise meaning.

- 4.7 Identifies different word classes
- 4.8 Infers figurative and connotative meanings of words and phrases
- 4.9 Updates the vocabulary with the help of external resources

Content and activities

Vocabulary level should encompass 4500 words at this stage (1200 words should be in their productive vocabulary). Students should be given opportunity to enrich their vocabulary through wide reading. Various types of supplementary reading materials could be used to improve this competency level.

Text types

- Short stories
- Poems
- Children's Fiction
- Newspaper articles.
- Biographies/Auto biographies.
- Travel brochures
- Instructional manuals.
- Journals
- Magazines

Competency 5. Extracts necessary information from various types of texts.

- 5.13 Infers elipted information
- 5.14 Infers implied information.
- 5.15 Thinks beyond a text producing various ideas and suggestions.

Content and activities

In reading, students should be trained to go beyond what appears in a text and to infer the implied meanings too. Reading should be made an enjoyable experience and they should be made to feel how reading benefits their academic life.

Competency 6. Uses English grammar for the purpose of accurate and effective communication

- 6.10 Constructs meaningful and logical passages integrating suitable grammatical functions
- 6.11 Identifies the functions and the places of different word classes in a sentence
- 6.12 Analyses a complex sentence

Content and activities

At this level the students are expected to master the grammar items they have learnt so far. They should, at this stage, get the skill to expand sentences through the processes of both coordination and subordination. They should be able to identify the tense of a sentence at this level. The following grammatical components should also be practised.

- Passive Voice
- Conditionals
- Reported speech.
- Cleft sentences; It was Ravi who took the book

Competency 7. Uses English creatively and innovatively in written Communication

- 7.12 Writes for personal purposes
- 7.13 Writes for official/business purposes
- 7.14 Writes compositions using argumentative and expository writing
- 7.15 Develops an accurate and independent style of writing

Content and activities

A wide variety of authentic writing activities should be introduced and practiced at this stage. By now they should have mastered the skills of process writing and should be able to write logically and coherently. These writing tasks should be challenging to them and they should reflect the needs of the community.

Competency 8. Communicates clearly, fluently and concisely

8.17 Distinguishes various language functions

8.18 Expresses ideas relevant to various fields using appropriate jargon

Content and activities

They should be able to engage in a lot of communicative tasks both speaking and writing. Language functions such as giving directions, giving advice, making promises, warning etc. should be practised in order to improve their communicative abilities. Authentic and challenging activities like holding students' meetings, organizing school level and inter school debate competitions, organizing school media clubs could be possible suggestions to improve the competency levels here.

E) School Policies and Programmes

E.1 Time table:

- There are 154 periods to complete this syllabus. Number of periods has to be divided according to the number of units in the Pupil's Text.
- Within these 154 periods, time should be allocated for continuous assessments and to attend to the activities in the workbook.

E.2 Qualifications expected of the English teachers:

- To teach English Language as a second language all the English teachers must be English trained teachers. Especially they should have a thorough knowledge of teaching methods.
- Moreover, the English Language Teachers should equip themselves with necessary qualifications such as Diploma in Teaching English as a Second language (Dip TESL, PGDE (in English medium), PGD in TESL, B.A, B.ED, M.ED)
- English teachers should participate in the workshops, which are conducted by the provincial departments and Zonal Education authorities (ISA's RESC's and the Teacher Educators) in order to enrich with their knowledge.
- In some special situations, the National Institute of Education conducts workshops to enhance the teachers' knowledge on new trends and then the teachers are welcome to participate in those workshops.

E.3 Guidelines to facilitate the instructional leadership:

- Initiate the necessary steps to create an English-speaking environment within the school where students are motivated to use English.
- Take necessary action to train some English News readers within the school premises. News including special activities of the day has to be announced in English in the morning everyday
- The guidance, support and the supervision of the Principal is essential for the English Language Teachers to accomplish the following activities in terms of improving English language skills of the students;
 - School English Day
 - Computer assisted English Language Teaching
 - Inter school English competitions
 - English Literature Associations
 - Establish some ground rules to lend and read one English book per week
 - Availability of children's news papers in the library
 - School exhibitions
 - Maintaining a language lab
 - Presenting some activities to the media
 - Conducting surveys and projects in English

E.4 Co-curricular activities:

Learning English should be a very enjoyable activity and it should not be limited only for the classroom teaching and learning process. If the students are engaged in more meaningful co-curricular activities, which help them to uplift their English language skills, it may bring about an immense advancement in English language learning. Further they will develop their learn to learn ability while they are given opportunities to participate in the following activities;

- Maintaining a wall paper in English language
- Maintaining a notice board in English language
- English speaking society
- Watching English Dramas, novels using CDs and Videos
- One of the items to be presented in the morning assembly (Grade wise)
- Inter school debates
- English drama competitions
- Quiz programmes

F) Recommended Method of Teaching English as a Second Language

An Eclectic Approach to English language teaching based on the following underlying principles drawn from various methods and approaches used to teach English is recommended.

** The eclectic teacher aims to achieve “the maximum benefit from all the methods and techniques at his/her disposal, according to the special needs and resources of his/her pupils at any given time.” Girard (1986)

An eclectic teacher should be flexible and adaptable in order to be able to select among a variety of approaches, methods and techniques those elements that are appropriate to the needs of a given group of students at a given time. However, teachers should be warned that ‘eclectic’ is a convenient term but vague. So one should not blindly adopt techniques and teaching procedures from various methods without a clear understanding of the theoretical principles underlying them. Details of the eclectic approach are given below with a view to helping the teachers to use this approach successfully in their classrooms.

F.1 Teaching/Learning Process

- Every lesson should end with the learner feeling confident that he can do something in the target language, which he could not do at the beginning, and whatever he has learnt is communicatively useful.
- Target language should be the language of the classroom. Mother tongue could be used sparingly where necessary to make meaning clear.
- All the four main language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing should be taught systematically. As far as possible activities and tasks done in class should aim at integrating the four skills.
- Special attention should be paid to teaching of vocabulary and grammar.
- Pair work and group work should form an integral part of the classroom procedure. Cooperative and collaborative learning should be encouraged.
- An eclectic approach should be used to teach grammar. The deductive method could be used to teach complex grammar points while inductive method could be used to teach simpler grammatical items.
- The Process approach to reading and writing is recommended.
- All activities and tasks used in the classroom should aim at engaging students in active communication. These activities and tasks should be based on the following principles:
 - a) Information gap principle
 - b) Information transfer principle
 - c) Task dependency principle
 - d) Jig-saw principle
- The main role of the language teacher should be to facilitate learning. The teacher should teach students how to learn so that at the end of their school career learners will be independent users of the target language.

F.2 Classroom Techniques

The following classroom techniques are recommended in the classroom while providing opportunities for the teachers to think of their own techniques to suit the level of the classroom.

- Repetition with understanding.
- Meaningful Drills
- Role-play
- Dialogues
- Language games
- Communicative activities
- Problem-solving activities
- Decision-making activities
- Jig-saw activities
- Sharing information to complete tasks
- Simulation
- Summarizing
- Dictation
- Gap-filling tasks
- Sequencing
- Controlled composition
- Guided composition
- Free composition
- Picture composition
- Discussion
- Mini-presentations
- Impromptu speeches
- Prepared speeches
- Memorization (with understanding)
- Dramatization
- Group singing
- Recitation (Poetry)

G) Assessment and Evaluation

On-going assessment (OA) should be an integral part of the curriculum. OA provides the teacher and the learner continual feedback on the teaching/learning process.

- Tests should be primarily **criterion-referenced** “as they have the benefit of providing teachers and students with the kind of qualitative information meaningful for the future use.” (JALT Testing and Evaluation N-SIG Newsletter Vol. 3 No. 1)

** A **criterion-referenced** assessment aims at finding out how well the learner is able to perform relative to a fixed criterion based on an estimation of what is reasonable to demand from learners at the relevant point in their development during a particular stage of the course.

- The **on-going assessment** should include the following modes of assessment:
 - **Teacher’s assessment** based on at least two classroom tests per term.
 - One **self-assessment** per term where the learners themselves evaluate their own performance, using clear criteria and weighting system agreed upon beforehand. The teacher should check this. This type of assessment in addition to promoting learner independence will also make students aware of their weaknesses and strengths.
 - One **peer-assessment** per term of group work using criteria and weighting system agreed upon beforehand. The teacher too should check this. This again promotes learner autonomy.
 - **Portfolio:** The learner collects a set of assignments, book reviews, and journal writing done throughout the year in a file. The contents of the portfolio are first assessed by the student and then by the teacher.
 - **Summative assessment** at the end of the year.