

Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors (Tryout Version)
for
English Language
at the end of Key Stage 1

Listening¹

BC Descriptors	Examples
	<i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Discriminating between common words with a small range of vowel and consonant sounds [#] (KS)	
Recognizing repeated expressions in short and simple literary / imaginative spoken texts (ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The old man asked the dog, ‘<u>Come and help me, please!</u>’</i> <i>The old man asked the cat, ‘<u>Come and help me, please!</u>’</i> <i>The old man asked the bird, ‘<u>Come and help me, please!</u>’</i>
Using a small range of strategies to understand the meaning [◆] of short and simple texts ^{* 1} on familiar topics which are delivered slowly and clearly in familiar accents (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using personal experiences and knowledge of the world • identifying key words • understanding the connection between ideas by identifying a small range of cohesive devices (and / but / or / too / use of pronouns) • understanding basic differences in intonation (questions, statements, commands)

- ¹ Learners are encouraged to exhibit behaviour of a good listener (e.g. facing the speaker, maintaining eye contact, paying attention, nodding or shaking head in response to the speaker, waiting for the right pause to respond). As learners progress, they are encouraged to identify and understand the speakers’ use of strategies for effective oral communication (e.g. self-correcting, rephrasing, agreeing and disagreeing, making suggestions, using non-verbal cues, using repetition, attempting to sustain conversations/discussions or to interest/engage audience).
- [#] Teachers could assess pupils’ ability to discriminate words with different vowel and consonant sounds after introducing and teaching these sounds in context. They can select sounds from the following groups to focus on:
1. Short vowels (e.g. apple, egg, ink, ox, umbrella)
 2. Long vowels (e.g. ay, eat, ory, ose, ew)
 3. Other vowels (e.g. girl, oy, good, ball, doctor)
 4. Consonants (e.g. boy, sleep, chair, sing, class, ask)
- [◆] Meaning includes ideas, information, opinions, feelings and preferences. As learners progress, meaning also includes intentions and attitudes.
- ^{* 1} To assist learners in their development as proficient users of the language, it is important that they are exposed systematically to a good variety of text types, including those that can be viewed in the media and on the Internet. Please refer to p.17 of the *English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6)*, (CDC, 2004) for the suggested range of text types for Key Stage 1.

Reading

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Reading aloud unfamiliar words with a small range of vowel and consonant sounds ^{#□} in short and simple texts (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempting to sound out unfamiliar words using phonic skills • identifying small words (<i>Johnson, postman</i>) • chunking words into syllables
Showing a basic understanding of short, simple and familiar texts by reading aloud the texts clearly and comprehensibly (KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizing at sight some basic vocabulary items • understanding simple punctuation by using appropriate pausing
Recognizing repeated expressions in short and simple literary / imaginative texts (ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The old man asked the dog, ‘<u>Come and help me, please!</u>’</i> • <i>The old man asked the cat, ‘<u>Come and help me, please!</u>’</i> • <i>The old man asked the bird, ‘<u>Come and help me, please!</u>’</i>
Using a small range of reading strategies to understand the meaning [◆] of short and simple texts ^{*□} with the help of cues [∞] (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognizing key words in a sentence • predicting the content using the book covers, picture cues, prior knowledge and personal experience • predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words by using picture cues and contextual clues • recognizing formulaic or common expressions • recognizing repetitive language patterns • understanding the functions of basic punctuation (full-stop / question mark / comma / apostrophe / exclamation mark / quotation marks) • understanding the connection between ideas by identifying a small range of cohesive devices (and / but / or / too / use of pronouns)
Applying a small range of simple reference skills (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locating vocabulary in the word cards or word charts • obtaining information about the reading materials from the book covers and tables of contents • making word cards or word books under different topics for reference • using picture dictionaries or word books to check meaning and spelling

#📖 Teachers could assess pupils' ability to discriminate words with different vowel and consonant sounds after introducing and teaching these sounds in context. They can select sounds from the following groups to focus on:

1. Short vowels (e.g. apple, egg, ink, ox, umbrella)
2. Long vowels (e.g. day, eat, cry, nose, new)
3. Other vowels (e.g. girl, toy, good, ball, doctor)
4. Consonants (with a single letter) (e.g. boy, kite, red, food, sleep)
5. Consonant digraphs (e.g. chair, shout, that, sing, lagh)
6. Consonant blends (e.g. class, green, speak, ask, left)

However, as young learners may find learning consonant digraphs and blends difficult, teachers should introduce these sounds at a later stage in Primary 2 and 3 after the learners have gained a good grasp of the vowel and consonant (with a single letter) sounds.

- ◆ Meaning includes ideas, information, opinions, feelings and preferences. As learners progress, meaning also includes intentions and attitudes.
- *📖 To assist learners in their development as proficient users of the language, it is important that they are exposed systematically to a good variety of text types, including those that can be viewed in the media and on the Internet. Please refer to p.17 of the *English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6)*, (CDC, 2004) for the suggested range of text types for Key Stage 1.
- ∞ Examples of cues are realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.

Writing[Ⓔ]

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Using some of the common punctuation marks and capitalization in short and simple texts accurately (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full-stop • question mark
Writing and/or responding to short and simple texts with relevant information and ideas (including personal experiences and imaginative ideas) with the help of cues [Ⓕ] (IS, KS, ES) [Ⓖ]	<p>IS, KS, ES –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing about one’s own likes / dislikes / family / friends <p>IS –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing and/or replying to invitation cards / greeting cards / notes / short and simple letters (including the use of appropriate format and formulaic expressions) <p>KS –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making signs • completing tables • writing simple sentences based on given information <p>ES –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing short and simple poems and rhymes • providing or re-writing the ending of short and simple stories • writing short and simple diaries
Writing short and simple texts using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices fairly appropriately with the help of cues [Ⓕ] despite some spelling and grammatical mistakes (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I like grapes and cherries.</i> • <i>Jane is tall but Sue is short.</i> • <i>This is Mary. She is my friend. She likes singing.</i>


[Ⓔ] Writing refers to both the process and product. The BC descriptors can be used for assessing writing as a product. They can also be used to help learners review and revise their own work with attention to the content, language and other areas identified by the teacher/learners.

[Ⓕ] Examples of cues are realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.

[Ⓖ] When assessing learners’ spoken/written performance in the Interpersonal and Experience Strands, teachers should focus on the expression of ideas rather than the accuracy of the language to enhance learners’ confidence and creativity. As learners progress, both content and language are equally important.

Speaking

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Pronouncing simple and familiar words comprehensibly (KS)	
Imitating stress, rhythm and intonation (KS, ES)	
Providing short answers to short and simple questions (IS, KS, ES) ^φ	IS – Teacher: <i>How old are you?</i> Pupil: <i>(I'm) six.</i> KS – Teacher: <i>What's this?</i> Pupil: <i>(It's) a pencil.</i> ES – Teacher (asking pupils to talk about the story): <i>... Now, the dogs come to the river. What do they do?</i> Pupil: <i>They jump into the river.</i>
Using formulaic expressions to establish and maintain routines and relationships in school contexts with the help of cues [∞] (IS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exchanging greetings and farewells (<i>Hi. / Hello. / Good morning. / See you. / Bye.</i>) • making simple requests (<i>Please ... / May I ... ?</i>) • expressing and responding to thanks (<i>Thank you. / You're welcome.</i>) • expressing and responding to apologies (<i>I'm sorry. / That's all right.</i>) • accepting or declining offers and invitations (<i>Yes, please. / No, thank you.</i>) • expressing lack of comprehension (<i>Sorry, I don't know.</i>) • asking for repetition or rephrasing (<i>Pardon?</i>)

 Learners are encouraged to exhibit behaviour of a good speaker, e.g. facing the listener, maintaining eye contact, speaking at a volume appropriate to the situation, enhancing own delivery of spoken texts with appropriate gestures and facial expressions.

^φ When assessing learners' spoken/written performance in the Interpersonal and Experience Strands, teachers should focus on the expression of ideas rather than the accuracy of the language to enhance learners' confidence and creativity. As learners progress, both content and language are equally important.

[∞] Examples of cues are realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.

Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors (Tryout Version)
for
English Language
at the end of Key Stage 2

Listening[‡]

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Discriminating between words with a range of vowel and consonant sounds ^{# ‡} (KS)	
Understanding the use of a small range of language features in simple literary / imaginative spoken texts (ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rhyme • rhythm • alliteration (<i>The <u>b</u>aby <u>b</u>oy looks at the <u>b</u>ig <u>b</u>alloon.</i>) • onomatopoeia (<i>The little duck <u>quacks</u>.</i>) • simile (<i>May is <u>like</u> a little angel. / The boy runs <u>as fast as</u> a leopard.</i>) • personification (<i>The Wind said to the Cloud, 'Don't cry! I'll help you.'</i>)
Using a range of strategies to understand the meaning [♦] of simple texts ^{* ‡} on familiar topics which are delivered clearly in familiar accents (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listening for gist / main ideas • extracting specific information • predicting the likely development of the text • identifying the sequence of events • understanding the connection between ideas by identifying a range of cohesive devices (first / then / finally / when / because / so / although / and / but / or / too / use of pronouns) • discriminate between intonation for a small range of purposes (approval, disapproval, doubts, warnings, questions, statements, commands) • using personal experiences and knowledge of the world • identifying key words

- ‡ Learners are encouraged to exhibit behaviour of a good listener (e.g. facing the speaker, maintaining eye contact, paying attention, nodding or shaking head in response to the speaker, waiting for the right pause to respond). As learners progress, they are encouraged to identify and understand the speakers' use of strategies for effective oral communication (e.g. self-correcting, rephrasing, agreeing and disagreeing, making suggestions, using non-verbal cues, using repetition, attempting to sustain conversations/discussions or to interest/engage audience).
- # ‡ Teachers could assess pupils' ability to discriminate words with different vowel and consonant sounds after introducing and teaching these sounds in context. They can select sounds from the following groups to focus on:
 1. Short vowels (e.g. apple, egg, ink, ox, umbrella)
 2. Long vowels (e.g. aay, eat, i cry, onose, unew)
 3. Other vowels (e.g. girl, otoy, oood, oball, odoctor)
 4. Consonants (e.g. boy, sleep, chair, sing, class, ask)
- ♦ Meaning includes ideas, information, opinions, feelings and preferences. As learners progress, meaning also includes intentions and attitudes.
- * ‡ To assist learners in their development as proficient users of the language, it is important that they are exposed systematically to a good variety of text types, including those that can be viewed in the media and on the Internet. Please refer to p.17 of the *English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6)*, (CDC, 2004) for the suggested range of text types for Key Stages 1 and 2.

Reading

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Reading aloud unfamiliar words with a range of vowel and consonant sounds ^{#□} in simple texts (KS)	
Showing a basic understanding of simple and familiar texts by reading aloud the texts with comprehensible pronunciation and generally appropriate pace, stress, rhythm and intonation (KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading in meaningful chunks • understanding simple punctuation by using appropriate intonation and pausing • recognizing at sight some basic vocabulary items
Using a range of reading strategies to understand the meaning [◆] of simple texts ^{*□} with the help of cues [∞] (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scanning for specific information • skimming for gist • sequencing events • identifying main ideas • identifying details that support a main idea • making inferences • working out the meaning of unknown words by recognizing prefixes and suffixes • predicting the likely development of the text • understanding the connection between ideas by identifying a range of cohesive devices (because / so / when / first / next / finally / and / but / or / too / use of pronouns) • recognizing key words in a sentence • predicting the content using the book covers, picture cues, prior knowledge and personal experience • predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words by using picture cues and contextual clues • recognizing formulaic or common expressions • recognizing repetitive language patterns • understanding the functions of basic punctuation (full-stop / question mark / comma / apostrophe / exclamation mark / quotation marks)
Applying simple reference skills with the help of cues [∞] (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • locating words in English dictionaries • locating information in simple price lists, charts and directories • obtaining information about the reading materials from the blurbs, glossaries, book covers, tables of contents • locating vocabulary in the word cards or word charts • making word cards or word books under different topics for reference • using picture dictionaries or word books to check meaning and spelling
Understanding the use of a small range of language features in simple literary / imaginative texts (ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rhyme • rhythm • alliteration (<i>The <u>b</u>aby <u>b</u>oy looks at the <u>b</u>ig <u>b</u>alloon.)</i> • onomatopoeia (<i>The little duck <u>quacks</u>.)</i> • simile (<i>May is <u>like</u> a little angel. / The boy runs <u>as fast as</u> a leopard.)</i> • personification (<i>The Wind said to the Cloud, 'Don't cry! I'll help you.'</i>)

- #📖 Teachers could assess pupils' ability to discriminate words with different vowel and consonant sounds after introducing and teaching these sounds in context. They can select sounds from the following groups to focus on:
1. Short vowels (e.g. apple, egg, ink, ox, umbrella)
 2. Long vowels (e.g. aay, eat, i cry, o nose, u new)
 3. Other vowels (e.g. i girl, o toy, oo good, all, o doctor)
 4. Consonants (with a single letter) (e.g. boy, kite, red, food, sleep)
 5. Consonant digraphs (e.g. chair, shout, that, sing, laugh)
 6. Consonant blends (e.g. class, green, speak, ask, left)

However, as young learners may find learning consonant digraphs and blends difficult, teachers should introduce these sounds at a later stage in Primary 2 and 3 after the learners have gained a good grasp of the vowel and consonant (with a single letter) sounds.

- ◆ Meaning includes ideas, information, opinions, feelings and preferences. As learners progress, meaning also includes intentions and attitudes.
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- ∞ Examples of cues are realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.

Writing[↵]

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Writing and/or responding to simple texts with relevant information and ideas (including personal experiences, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks) with the help of cues [∞] (IS, KS, ES)	IS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing and replying to simple letters and e-mail KS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing simple instructions, rules and regulations • writing a short paragraph relevant to the topic based on given information ES – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing simple poems and rhymes • re-writing simple stories or plays or part of these • writing simple diaries
Writing simple texts using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns, cohesive devices and verb forms fairly appropriately with the help of cues [∞] despite some spelling and grammatical mistakes (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have a lovely dog. When I come home, it barks and plays with me.</i> • <i>I saw a poor cat near my house yesterday. It was very weak so I gave it some milk.</i>
Using common punctuation marks in simple texts with some degree of accuracy (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quotation marks • comma • apostrophe • exclamation mark • full-stop • question mark
Constructing short and simple texts on familiar topics with little guidance to communicate one's own ideas and experiences intelligibly (IS, KS, ES)	IS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing short and simple letters and e-mail KS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describing simple pictures ES – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing short and simple diaries • describing one's own drawings

[↵] Writing refers to both the process and product. The BC descriptors can be used for assessing writing as a product. They can also be used to help learners review and revise their own work with attention to the content, language and other areas identified by the teacher/learners.

[∞] Examples of cues are realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.

Speaking*

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Providing and/or exchanging (asking and answering) simple information and ideas (including personal experiences, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks), and attempting to provide some elaboration with the help of cues [∞] (IS, KS, ES)	IS, KS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting interviews, surveys • making enquiries IS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustaining simple conversational exchanges KS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving simple instructions • giving simple oral presentations based on information collected ES – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in show-and-tell / story re-telling / simple story-telling / drama activities • describing one’s related experiences and/or feelings towards the characters and/or events in the story
Using a small range of vocabulary, sentence patterns and cohesive devices to convey simple information and ideas fairly appropriately with the help of cues [∞] despite some grammatical mistakes (IS, KS, ES)	IS, KS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil: <i>Which festival do you like best?</i> Interviewee: <i>Chinese New Year.</i> Pupil: <i>Why?</i> Interviewee: <i>I get a lot of lucky money.</i> • Pupil A: <i>When do we have to hand in our project?</i> Teacher: <i>Next Friday.</i> IS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: <i>What did you do last Sunday?</i> Pupil: <i>I went shopping with my mother.</i> Teacher: <i>Did you buy anything?</i> Pupil: <i>Yes, I bought a birthday present for my father.</i> KS – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil: <i>First, cut the apples, pears and carrots into cubes. Next, mix them with salad dressing in a bowl. Then, put the bowl of salad into the fridge for 2 hours. Finally, eat the salad with your friends.</i> • Pupil: <i>Our group is working on Bald Eagle. Here is our presentation. Bald Eagle doesn’t eat rice. It likes to eat rats, mice and chicks...</i> ES – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil: <i>Although Chris is selfish, I think his friends should help him.</i>

Speaking[•]

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Using formulaic expressions to establish and maintain relationships / interaction with the help of cues [∞] (IS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making and responding to good wishes (<i>Merry Christmas. / Same to you.</i>) • making and responding to short and simple telephone conversations (<i>Hello. May I speak to ... ? / Speaking. / Hello, this is Mary. / Sorry, you've got the wrong number. / Please hold on.</i>) • asking for services and simple information (<i>Please help me. / Would you please ... ?</i>) • making and responding to suggestions (<i>Let's ... / That's a good idea. / No, I don't agree.</i>) • making and responding to invitations (<i>Will you come to my party? / I'm sorry. I can't come. / Yes, I'd like/love to.</i>) • exchanging greetings and farewells (<i>Hi. / Hello. / Good morning. / See you. / Bye.</i>) • making simple requests (<i>Please ... / May I ... ?</i>) • expressing and responding to thanks (<i>Thank you. / You're welcome.</i>) • expressing and responding to apologies (<i>I'm sorry. / That's all right.</i>) • accepting or declining offers and invitations (<i>Yes, please. / No, thank you.</i>) • expressing lack of comprehension (<i>Sorry, I don't know.</i>) • asking for repetition or rephrasing (<i>Pardon?</i>)
Pronouncing familiar words comprehensibly (KS)	
Using stress, rhythm and intonation generally appropriately in rehearsed dialogues/speeches despite instances of hesitation (IS, KS, ES)	

[•] Learners are encouraged to exhibit behaviour of a good speaker, e.g. facing the listener, maintaining eye contact, speaking at a volume appropriate to the situation, enhancing own delivery of spoken texts with appropriate gestures and facial expressions.

[∞] Examples of cues are realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.