

Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors (Tryout Version)

for

English Language

at the end of Key Stage 3

Listening[‡]

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Understanding the use of a range of language features in simple literary / imaginative spoken texts (ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repetition • tone • simile • personification • rhyme • rhythm • alliteration • onomatopoeia
Using an increasing range of strategies to understand the meaning [♦] of simple texts ^{*‡} on familiar and less familiar topics which are delivered clearly and in generally familiar accents (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distinguishing main ideas from supporting details • identifying the sequence of events, causes and effects • making connections between ideas with the help of discourse markers • deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions • discriminating between intonation for a range of purposes (displeasure, pleas, surprises, approval, disapproval, queries, questions, statements, commands, warnings) • using personal experiences and knowledge of the world • listening for gist/main ideas • extracting specific information • predicting the likely development of the topic • understanding the connection between ideas by identifying a range of cohesive devices

- [‡] Learners are encouraged to exhibit behaviour of a good listener (e.g. facing the speaker, maintaining appropriate eye contact, paying attention, nodding or shaking head in response to the speaker, waiting for the right pause to reply). 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 audiences)
- ♦ In Key Stages 1 and 2, 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.151, Appendix 3 of the *English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide (S4-6)* (CDC & HKEAA, 2007) for the suggested range of text types for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Speaking

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Pronouncing familiar and less familiar words generally clearly and accurately (KS)	
Using a range of delivery techniques (including stress, rhythm and intonation) to convey meaning♦ generally appropriately with the help of cues [∞] (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tone • volume • pace • pauses • facial expressions • eye contact • gestures • posture • stress • rhythm • intonation
Expressing information and ideas (including personal experiences, feelings, opinions, imaginative ideas and evaluative remarks) with some elaboration (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describing events in sequence • describing causes and effects • giving explanations • describing favourite characters and giving reasons for their choice • participating in discussion of the theme/plots of imaginative texts • giving oral presentations • taking part in verse speaking / choral speaking • conducting interviews, surveys • making enquiries • sustaining conversational exchanges • giving instructions • participating in show-and-tell / story-telling / role-plays / drama activities
Using a range of vocabulary and language patterns with some degree of appropriacy and accuracy to convey meaning♦ (IS, KS, ES)	

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Using formulaic expressions and a range of strategies for oral communications to establish and maintain relationships/interaction in familiar situations (IS, KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rephrasing • seeking further information • elaborating one's point • making suggestions • using appropriate degrees of formality • repetitions • seeking and giving clarification • agreeing and disagreeing • self-correcting
Using organizing techniques generally appropriately to convey meaning♦ (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introducing the topic • sequencing and developing ideas • using discourse markers • summarizing • giving conclusions

- Speaking refers to both the process and the product. The descriptors listed can be used for assessing speaking as a product and for helping learners improve their fluency, accuracy and communication skills in the speaking process. Some speaking activities (e.g. preparing, practising and rehearsing for oral presentations/dramas/debates) more readily lend themselves to changes/re-adjustment and feedback for improvement than others (e.g. impromptu conversations/discussions/question and answer sessions).

The prerequisite of ensuring that text is appropriate to context, purpose and audience is implicit in and applies across all the descriptors under Speaking (except for the one concerning pronunciation).


- ♦ In Key Stages 1 and 2, meaning includes ideas, information, opinions, feelings and preferences. As learners progress, meaning also includes intentions and attitudes.
- ∞ Examples of cues include realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.

Reading

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Using an increasing range of reading strategies to understand the meaning [♦] of texts* [☞] with some degree of complexity (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using knowledge of the world • identifying the main theme/focus • identifying general and specific information • using linguistic and contextual clues • using knowledge of features of different text-types • working out the meaning of unknown words and expressions • understanding different views and attitudes • distinguishing fact from opinion • skimming and scanning • sequencing events • identifying main ideas • identifying details that support a main idea • making inferences • predicting the likely development of the text • understanding the connection between ideas by identifying a range of cohesive devices • recognizing key words in a sentence • predicting content using the book cover, picture cues, prior knowledge and personal experience • recognizing formulaic or common expressions • recognizing repetitive language patterns • understanding the functions of basic punctuation
Extracting and organizing information and ideas from texts* [☞] with some degree of complexity (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyzing and integrating relevant points from one or more than one text • note taking • summarizing • paraphrasing • mind maps • diagrams • spidergrams • sketches

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Understanding the use of a range of language features and other techniques to present themes, characters, experiences and feelings in simple literary / imaginative texts (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • metaphor • exaggeration • repetition • tone • contrast • setting • atmosphere • simile • personification • rhyme • rhythm • alliteration • onomatopoeia
Applying a range of reference skills for various purposes with the help of cues ^a (KS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using a dictionary to find out about pronunciation, meaning and shades of meaning, usage and grammar • locating information in simple price lists, charts and directories • obtaining information about the reading materials from blurbs, glossaries, book covers and tables of contents • locating vocabulary in the word cards or word charts • finding books of interest with reference to the school-based coding system • making word cards or word books under different topics for reference • using picture dictionaries or word books to check meaning and spelling

- ♦ In Key Stages 1 and 2, 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.151, Appendix 3 of the *English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide (S4-6)* (CDC & HKEAA, 2007) for the suggested range of text types for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Writing[∞]

BC Descriptors	Examples <i>(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)</i>
Writing a variety of texts for different purposes with relevant and generally adequate content (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal letters • instructions • directions • reports • rules and regulations • explanations • descriptions • plays • stories • leaflets • posters • itinerary • invitation cards • greeting cards • notes • e-mail • poems • rhymes • diaries • informal letters
Writing a variety of texts using punctuation marks, and a range of vocabulary and language patterns with some degree of appropriacy and accuracy to convey meaning [♦] (IS, KS, ES)	
Writing a variety of texts with adequate overall planning and organization (including the use of cohesive devices and paragraphs, and sequencing of ideas) (KS)	
Writing a variety of texts using tone, style and register generally appropriately with the help of cues [∞] (IS, KS, ES)	
Writing a variety of texts using the salient features of a range of genres generally appropriately with the help of cues [∞] (IS, KS, ES)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • descriptive • expository • narrative • literary

- ✎ Writing refers to both the process and product. The learning outcomes 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.
The prerequisite of ensuring that text is appropriate to context, purpose and audience is implicit in and applies across all the descriptors under Writing.
- ∞ Examples of cues include realia, pictures, key words, repeated demonstrations, prompts, guiding questions and frameworks. Teachers may need to provide more cues to guide learners to express their ideas in early stages of learning. As learners progress, teachers are expected to provide cues which are less direct.
- ♦ In Key Stages 1 and 2, meaning includes ideas, information, opinions, feelings and preferences. As learners progress, meaning also includes intentions and attitudes.

Remarks:

Key Stage (KS) 1 : Primary 1-3 Key Stage (KS) 2 : Primary 4-6 Key Stage (KS) 3 : Secondary 1-3

Key Stage (KS) 4 : Secondary 4-5

IS (Interpersonal Dimension / Strand) KS (Knowledge Dimension / Strand) ES (Experience Dimension / Strand)