

Teaching guide: Developing English language skills

This resource provides guidance to vocational or curriculum tutors, who are not English specialists, to help them embed some of the reading, writing and spoken language skills needed for GCSE English Language. It suggests learning activities that support students in developing some of the skills needed.

It focuses on the reading, writing and spoken language assessment objectives that can be most easily applied to any curriculum area and would work best when used as part of a whole organisational approach to embedding English skills across all curriculum areas.

Reading, writing and spoken language

Reading

A01

- Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas.
- Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.

Encourage students to:

- read newspapers and journals
- read hand-outs
- read for pleasure.

Plan learning activities that:

- develop reading comprehension skills
- consider different sets of information.

Writing

Writing for a formal audience

A05

- Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences.
- Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.

Encourage students to:

- plan and structure their writing
- use language creatively and imaginatively
- use language for impact.

Plan learning activities where students are required to:

- write for a variety of purposes such as to describe, narrate, explain, instruct/advise, argue, and persuade
- write in different forms including letters, articles, text for leaflets, speeches
- write structured essays
- complete extended writing tasks
- complete timed writing tasks.

A06

- Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

You can support your students with this by:

- always encouraging students to write in full sentences
- encouraging students to structure their writing using paragraphs
- encouraging students to use precise vocabulary when communicating in writing
- encouraging them to complete extended writing tasks
- encouraging students to read through and check their work

- marking all student work for spelling, grammar and punctuation and giving feedback.

Spoken language

A07

- Demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting.

A08

- Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback on presentations.

A09

- Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations.

Use learning activities that require students to:

- present information verbally
- answer questions and respond to feedback
- debate information
- carry out interview style activities
- build confidence through peer teaching - working in small groups and presenting information to each other.