

School-based Curriculum Adaptation at Primary Level

Subject : English (Primary)

	Central requirements & strategies	School-based adaptation (DOs)	Remarks (DON'Ts)
Balanced coverage	<p>The English Language Syllabus (P1-6) 1997</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ sets the subject target to develop in the learners an ever-improving capability to use English * to think and communicate; * to acquire, develop and apply knowledge; * to respond and give expression to experience; <p>and within these contexts, to develop an ever-increasing understanding of how language is organised, used and learned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ identifies the learning targets for the 3 dimensions in each key stage and specifies learning objectives to help learners progress towards the subject target. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work as a team to select focused learning targets and objectives from the Syllabus as well as learning tasks and activities from learning packages/ textbooks for their learners of a year level and to ensure coordination across the levels of a key stage and across key stages, when applicable; • Review what has been selected as focused learning targets and objectives for a level to ensure a balanced coverage and check if the learning tasks and activities can genuinely help learners progress towards the subject target; • Agree on what must be covered and assessed and what are optional for a year level so that space is built in for necessary remedial, enrichment and creative work. 	<p>Learning packages/textbooks are only a source of learning materials. Teachers should not take any of them as the Syllabus, or treat them as a perfect English curriculum for their learners and use them without discretion. They must not teach the textbooks from cover to cover without considering the needs of the learners as they progress towards the subject targets.</p> <p>The coverage of the learning targets for the 3 dimensions should not be imbalanced. Do not focus too much on the Knowledge Dimension and do not neglect the Experience Dimension.</p>
Reduction of overcrowding	<p>Curriculum tailoring is encouraged.</p> <p>The Syllabus also stresses integrative</p>	<p>Make use of meaningful learning tasks which involve more than one dimension, more than one major language skill, more</p>	<p>Do not make pupils' learning experience fragmented, e.g. within the subject of English, it is not advisable to designate</p>

	<p>use of language.</p>	<p>than one major communicative function and form, language development strategies and development of positive attitudes. These can be integrated and combined in learning tasks. (Annex 1 - Example).</p> <p>Check the selected materials and activities from the learning packages/textbooks to see if certain learning targets and objectives have been over-covered (e.g. KDb) and therefore should be reduced or substituted and whether some are not covered adequately (e.g. KDe & EDb) and therefore need amplification or further practice; check across the year levels to see if the same has to be done.</p> <p>Co-ordinate with teachers of other subjects (e.g. Maths, GS, Music and A&C) or make use of school activities to see if some themes can be explored in an integrative way in order to provide coherent learning experience for learners, to reduce the time required for setting up the context of the learning tasks and to give time for developing creativity and learner independence.</p> <p>For example, in KS1 there are modules like 'Me, My Family and Friends', and 'Connecting with the Natural World' and in KS2, 'Hong Kong and its Neighbours', and 'Natural Elements' where collaboration of the English and the GS teachers can be</p>	<p>lessons as dictation, listening, ETV, etc. on a regular basis.</p> <p>Do not compartmentalise learners' learning experience.</p>
--	-------------------------	---	---

	<p>Schools are encouraged to adopt computer-assisted language learning; the use of information technology can enhance learner independence.</p>	<p>developed such as in introducing concepts, in project work and in visits; creativity-oriented language activities e.g. drama activities can be supported by Music and Art.</p> <p>New initiatives like IT need not be seen and treated as an imposition. IT can be used as an alternative to provide new opportunities for learning or to enhance existing practice e.g. CD-ROMs can provide additional learning support or extension work and to foster learner independence; the use of word processors can encourage writing (including creative writing, and in particular facilitating process writing). Again, the English teachers can collaborate with teachers responsible for co-ordinating the IT programme in their own schools. When learners are learning or practising word processing, they can be asked to write creatively after a sample.</p>	
School timetable	<p>The Guide to Primary Curriculum (1993) suggests allocation of English periods as below :</p> <p>P1 : 5 periods P2 : 6 periods P3 : 7 periods P4-6 : 8 periods</p> <p>Schools which adopt a 38-period timetable and adhere to the recommended allocation made in the</p>	<p>Schools are encouraged to adopt at least, if not more, one double-period session each week for English to facilitate task-based approach and flexible use of class time.</p> <p>Some schools choose to have a time-tabled library period; some encourage the use of the library in the informal curriculum. English teachers can collaborate with the teacher librarian to make use of such opportunities to develop learners' reference</p>	<p>Do not make learners' learning experience fragmented, e.g. within the subject of English, it is not advisable to designate lessons as dictation, listening, ETV, etc. in a rigid manner.</p>

	Guide have 5 periods for allocation at their discretion.	skills, study skills, extensive reading habit or IT-supported learning.	
Homework	<p><i>Guidelines on Setting Assignments in English - Towards a Homework Policy</i> issued in 1994 by the English Section, AID</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * does not propose a fixed amount or frequency for homework; * encourages schools to develop a homework policy involving coordination at two levels : within the English panel and across other subject panels; * states clearly that homework should not be confined to written assignments only; other types of work such as reading, listening and collecting information can also be set to give pupils a variety of meaningful and enjoyable activities for language practice and use. 	<p>Schools should develop an overall policy regarding the type, frequency and amount of homework. This can be done through the collaboration of different subject panels and is best controlled by a homework time-table for each class.</p> <p>Within the subject of English, it is important that there is a variety of types of homework as suggested in the Guidelines. Homework should not be confined to written assignments in workbooks only. For example, project work can involve using English to interview people (including teachers of the same or a pre-arranged school) and in presenting findings.</p> <p>Teachers should note that in the case of TOC learning materials, normally only pupil's books and task/project books are put on the Recommended Booklists; other materials such as pre-task language practice, skills books, etc. are supplementary learning resources only and <u>are not a must</u>. Schools must use their discretion and care when considering whether or not to use them as well as how to use them.</p> <p>If teachers are assigning exercises from supplementary learning resources, they</p>	<p>It has been observed that some schools do not have a homework policy as recommended in the Guidelines to co-ordinate the assignments given to a class.</p> <p>Do not prescribe too many supplementary exercises which are mechanical drills rather than asking learners to put English into use. This is not necessary and often counter-productive.</p> <p>Do not encourage rote-learning. Do not ask learners to memorize large chunks of texts or long lists of words as homework to prepare for dictation.</p>

		<p>should check carefully whether the assigned work is really relevant and helps learners reinforce what they are learning in class. It has been observed that there are cases that the language practice of a unit in the supplementary learning resources do not actually go with the same unit in the pupil's book.</p> <p>When giving assignments, teachers must be aware of the authentic use of English and note whether the language being practised is natural or not. They must take into consideration the difference between the spoken form and the written form so as to avoid giving inappropriate written assignments (even if they are found in supplementary learning resources and look relevant to what is being learnt in class) e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• functions like greetings (e.g. Good morning.) or classroom instructions (e.g. Stand up.) are often performed in the speaking mode; learners should not be asked to drill their written forms (or even to dictate them);• the spoken form of telling date differs greatly from its written form (e.g. spoken - the thirty-first of March, nineteen ninety-nine; written - 31st March 1999 or 31-3-1999); learners should not be asked to write or dictate the spoken form in full words as it will	
--	--	---	--

		<p>only induce wrong concept about its form and use;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assignments for lower primary learners and the upper ones should differ, e.g. while it is too demanding to ask P2 pupils to spell the name of common insects found in Hong Kong, they can be expected to recognise them in spoken or written texts; it may be appropriate to expect an upper primary learner to be able to spell some of them in meaningful contexts e.g. in writing about a personal experience. 	
Provision of standard facilities & equipment	<p>A wireless induction loop system for each school.</p> <p>In every new school, there will be a special multi-media language room to be used for the learning of C/E/P.</p>	<p>Facilities and equipment should be used to support effective teaching and learning of English instead of being the focus of a lesson.</p> <p>Teachers should be aware of the different roles they have to play when using the facilities e.g. when learners are asked to work at the multi-media computers, teachers will be the facilitator and monitor in the learning process.</p>	IT should not be a replacement of the teacher or peer-interaction in any lesson.

Textbook policies	<p>A leaflet <i>Using English Textbooks</i> issued by the English Unit, CDI in 1995 suggests flexible use of the English textbooks.</p>	<p>Teachers should apply their professional judgement and use the English learning packages/textbooks according to the needs of their learners.</p> <p>Teachers should note that in the case of TOC learning materials, normally only pupil's books and task/project books are put on the Recommended Booklists; other materials such as pre-task language practice, skills books, etc. are supplementary learning resources only. Schools must use their discretion and care when considering whether or not to use them as well as how to use them.</p>	<p>Teachers should not cover the contents of learning packages/textbooks from cover to cover and with little adaptation or difference in depth and extent.</p>
Teaching/ learning strategies	<p>The Syllabus suggests to teachers that they should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take learners' needs and interest into consideration in the design of scheme of work and learning activities; • give equal emphasis to the learning of English as a formal system and a means for effective communication; provide purposeful and contextualised activities to help learners internalize the grammatical system; • adopt the integrated approach with 	<p>Teachers should adopt learning tasks which will give learners opportunities to acquire and apply knowledge and skills across the dimensions and language skills in an integrative way. Fluency and accuracy are of equal importance at the stage of language learning.</p> <p>Adjust the content of learning by adapting the materials found in learning packages/textbook to suit the needs of learners. For example, quite often many ways of telling time are provided in the books. It is not necessary to teach every one of the forms at one go. Conceptually difficult ones such as 'quarter past' and 'quarter to' can be cut or left for a later year.</p>	<p>Teachers should not just focus on the written form at KS1.</p> <p>Do not confuse or over-challenge learners by introducing different forms for the same function at one time.</p>

	<p>meaningful tasks to provide contexts, to motivate learners and to help them progress towards the learning objectives and targets; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce and sustain self-access learning as well as IT-supported learning; • help learners develop a reading habit from an early age; • develop in learners an awareness of phonics and vocabulary building skills. 	<p>Select and adopt some games, songs, rhymes and action rhymes, role-plays etc. to provide enjoyable learning experiences. These learning activities can serve as disguised language practice because of the natural repetition in the text types.</p> <p>Use authentic materials that the learners will come across in their daily life e.g. labels, posters, wrapping papers, advertisements, assorted cards, etc. and free facilities on the Internet e.g. electronic cards. Relate English learning to learners' experience and use it to extend their knowledge and experience as well.</p> <p>Assign teaching time or informal curriculum time for shared reading of big books. Help learners develop an awareness of sound/letter relationships and vocabulary building strategies through the texts or illustrations they come across so that when they learn a word, they are not learning an isolated entity each time.</p> <p>Give short and focused practice of vocabulary, phrases or sentences in context. Dictation is only one of the means and it is not necessary to do it with whole words at the beginning stage e.g. when the focus is on sound-letter relationship, learners can be asked to fill in some letters representing the target sounds as they hear the minimal pairs</p>	<p>Do not just use the teacher-fronted mode of teaching.</p> <p>Do not stop learners' peer-interaction because of the 'noise' generated.</p> <p>Do not rely on learning packages/ textbooks as the only resource to support learning.</p> <p>Dictation should not be given too much attention. Not every word found in the learning packages/textbooks must be learnt by heart by the learners.</p>
--	--	--	---

		<p>in context. Or at a later stage, they write down the rhyming words in short texts.</p> <p>It is also useful to teach learners what to look for when they check their own work, may it be dictation or free writing.</p>	
<p>Assessment methods</p>	<p>The Syllabus gives examples of assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serving different purposes e.g. formative and summative assessments • in different modes e.g. teacher-assessed through observation, marking or conferencing; self- or peer-evaluation 	<p>Teachers should agree on what to assess (e.g. by making reference to the focused learning targets and objectives as well as focused skills descriptors) and how to assess learners' performance.</p> <p>To avoid over-dependence on pen-and-paper tests, they should use more informal assessment e.g. observation, conferencing and portfolio, etc. to gather information on the learning process and progress. Such information will enable teachers to give timely feedback to better support the learners.</p> <p>Use meaningful and contextualised tasks instead of discrete items in summative assessment papers.</p>	<p>Do not over assess by giving quizzes and tests at the end of each unit or after each learning target and objective has been covered or by using conventional pen-and-paper tests on top of target-oriented assessment.</p> <p>Do not use just pen-and-paper assessment tasks. Learner performance in many targets of the Interpersonal Dimension and Experience Dimension can be assessed through the interactive mode or observation.</p> <p>Do not forget to give appropriate feedback and follow-up assistance or extension.</p>
<p>Enhancement of new initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ language proficiency ◇ creativity ◇ learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive Reading Grant for schools; • Extensive Writing Scheme in the pipeline; • Creativity can be fostered through the Experience Dimension and 	<p>Develop reading habit through effective use of reading materials e.g. purchase interesting story books for young learners or different text types with the Extensive Reading Grant, and allocate time for shared reading and follow-up activities.</p>	

<p>how to learn</p> <p>◇ pleasurable learning</p> <p>◇ information technology</p> <p>◇ pastoral curriculum/ personal & social education</p>	<p>task-based approach;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-access learning and Language Development Strategies to nurture learning-how-to-learn; • CALL - suggestions and workshops for English teachers; • Multi-media language room in new schools • Personal & social education provided through team work in learning e.g. project and tasks; Interpersonal Dimension; and ECA e.g. choral speaking, drama. 	<p>Nurture creativity in the learners by exploring tasks involving the Experience Dimension and allowing time and space for project work and dramatic activities. Projects can also provide good contexts for learners to develop self-access learning and language development strategies, leading to their learning-how-to-learn.</p> <p>Provide integrated learning experience to learners through collaboration of teachers from different subjects (e.g. PE, General Studies) in project work of different topics such as environmental protection and those related to civic education, drama production, IT-supported publishing work, English Activity Day, visits etc.</p>	
---	--	---	--

Exemplar Learning Task (KS2): Qualities of a good friend

Module : Relationships

Unit : Friends

Teachers' Notes

<p><u>Subject Target</u></p> <p>To develop an ever-improving capability to use English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · to think and communicate; · to acquire, develop and apply knowledge; · to respond and give expression to experience; <p>and within these contexts, to develop and apply an ever-increasing understanding of how language is organized, used and learned.</p>				
<p><u>Key Stage Targets</u></p> <p>To develop an ever-improving capability to use English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to converse about feelings, interests, preferences, ideas, experiences and plans (IDb) - to give expression to one's experience through activities such as providing simple oral and written accounts of events and one's reactions to them (EDd) 				
<p><u>Task Description</u></p> <p>Learners are required to think and talk about qualities and characteristics a good friend should have. On a list of characteristics given to them, learners number 5 of them in order of importance. Each learner then writes a poem to his/her good friend in class based on the chosen items on the list.</p> <p>(4 fundamental intertwining ways of learning and using knowledge identified in this task: <i>communicating, inquiring, conceptualizing and reasoning</i>)</p>				
<p>Learning Objectives</p>				
Text-types	Vocabulary	Language Items & Communicative Functions	Language Skills	Attitudes
-poem	- words describing character and personality	- Use adjectives to describe people, e.g. She is <u>friendly</u> . - Use the simple present tense to talk about present states, e.g. He <u>cares</u> for others.	<p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - listen for specific information <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintain an interaction by asking and responding to others' opinions <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - scan a text to locate specific information <p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop written texts by expressing own ideas and feelings - write out a piece of work by presenting writing using appropriate layout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop confidence in using English - develop sensitivity towards language use in the process of communication - appreciate the beauty of the language

Exemplar Learning Task (KS2): Qualities of a good friend

Module : Relationships
Unit : Friends

Teachers' Notes

Materials: 2 activity sheets

- Procedure:**
1. Learners, in pairs, are asked to think and talk about the qualities/characteristics a good friend should have, e.g. A good friend always helps me.
 - * 2. Each pair is given Activity Sheet 1 on which some good and bad characteristics of a friend are listed, e.g. talks with me during the lesson, cares for others. They circle only those that they both want to see in a friend.
 3. Learners share their opinions with other pairs of learners and discuss differences of views.
 4. As individuals, learners number five characteristics of their choice in order of importance on Activity Sheet 1.
 - ** 5. Each learner writes a poem to his/her good friend in class on Activity Sheet 2 by adding the first choice of characteristics to finish the first line, the second choice to finish the second line and so on, e.g. A good friend is honest. A good friend is...
 6. He/She completes the poem by adding a last line which says, 'I'm happy to have a good friend like you!'
 7. He/She puts the poem in an envelope and sends it to his/her good friend.
- * More able learners should be encouraged to add characteristics other than those listed in Activity Sheet 1.
- ** More able learners should be encouraged to enrich or extend their poem with qualities other than those listed in Activity Sheet 1.

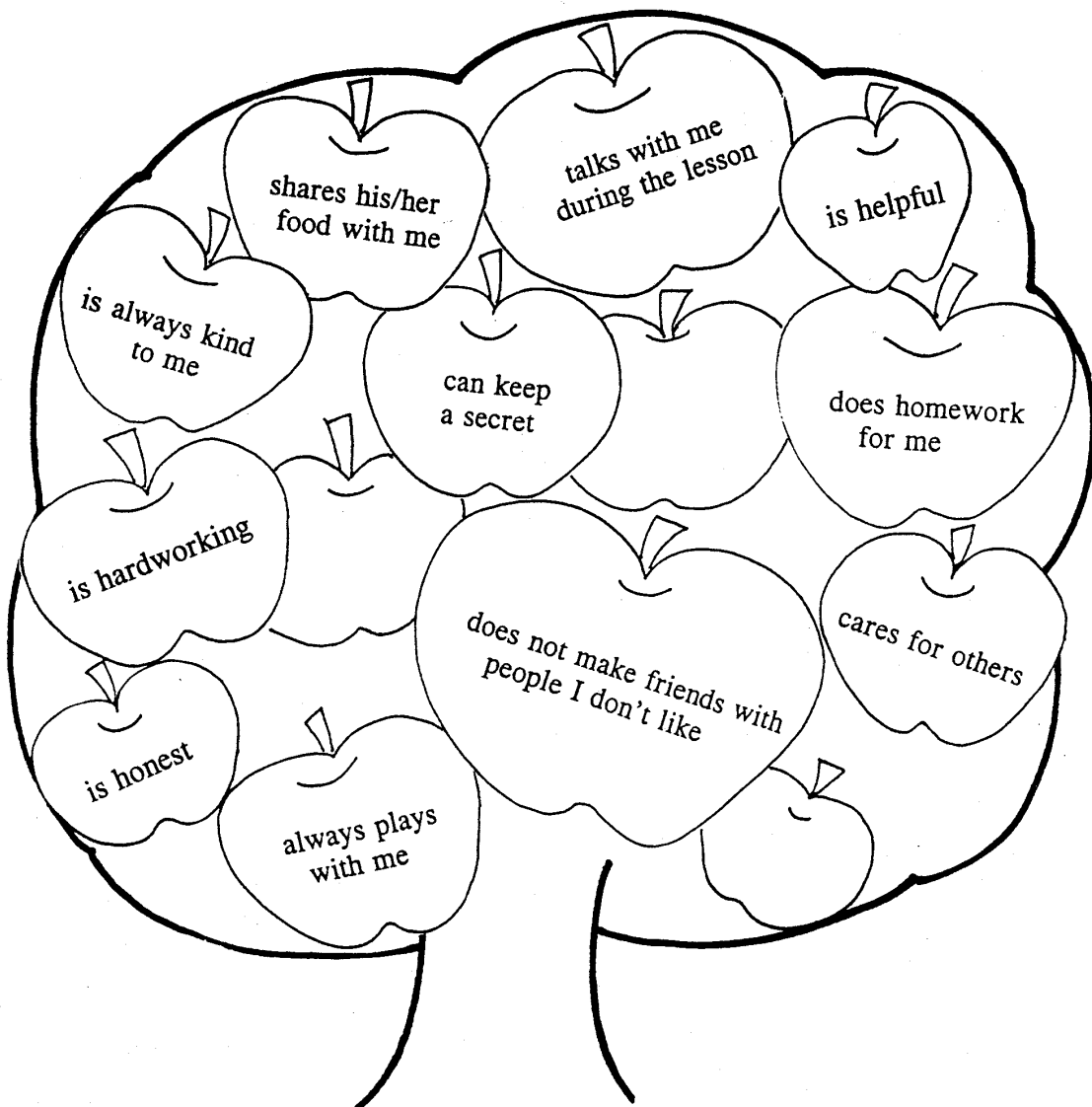
Exemplar Learning Task (KS2): Qualities of a good friend

Module : Relationships

Unit : Friends

Activity Sheet 1

Circle the characteristics that you want to see in your friend. Choose five characteristics which you think are important and number them (1 = the most important, 5 = the least important). Put the number in the stalk, e.g.



Exemplar Learning Task (KS2): Qualities of a good friend

Module : Relationships

Unit : Friends

Activity Sheet 2

