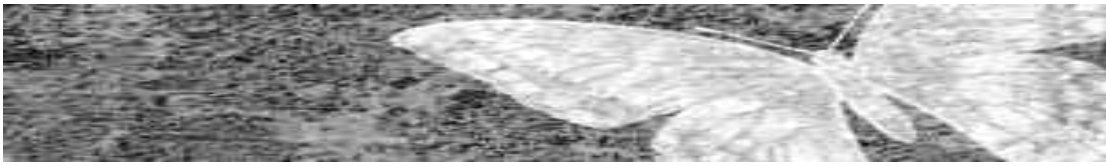



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Establishing an English-rich Environment in English-medium Schools

Students' language development requires support in a variety of ways. For most Hong Kong students, the school is the only place where English is learnt and spoken. Thus creating an English-rich environment within the school and maximizing students' use and exposure to English is crucial. This is especially important for students in English-medium (EMI) schools if they are to learn their subject content through a second language, develop high levels of English proficiency, and fully benefit from an English-medium education.

Part A The importance of a whole-school approach

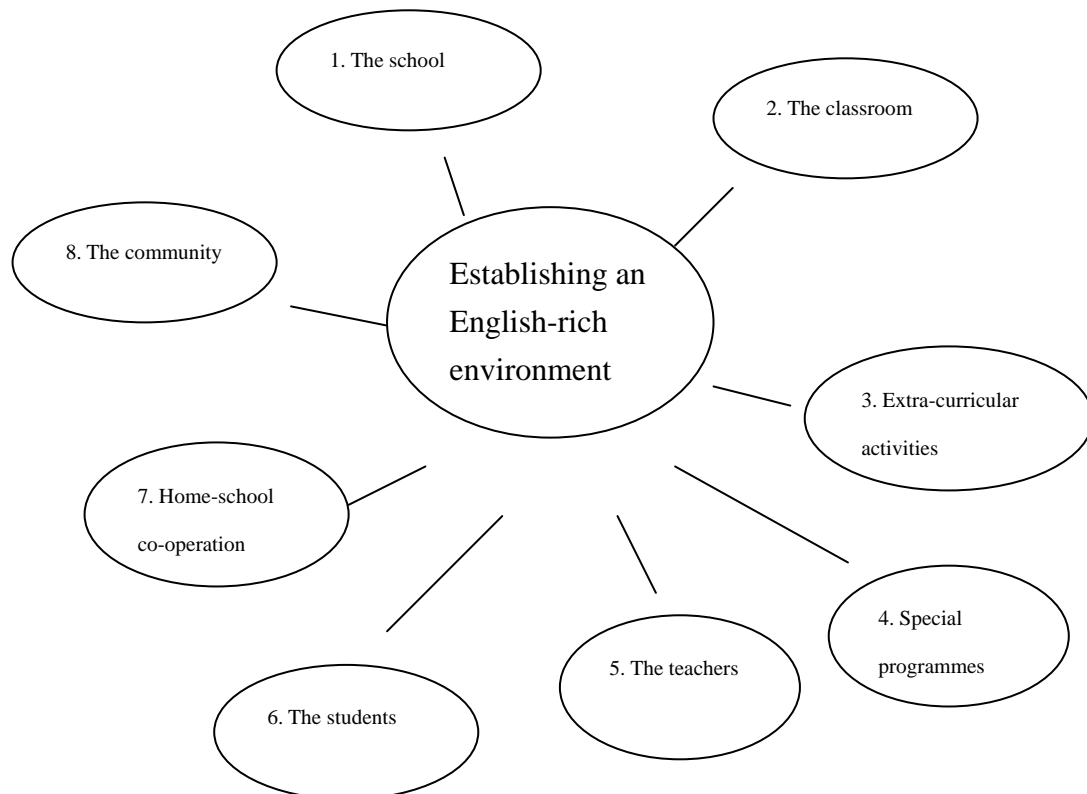
- The school has to **build a common vision** towards high standards of English proficiency and excellent EMI education involving all teachers and students working towards the same goal.
- Emphasize to students and teachers **why it is necessary to create an English-rich environment** in an EMI school.
- **Some elements contributing to success:**
 1. commitment from all concerned
 2. persistence and insistence
 3. deliberate and conscientious effort
 4. common consensus and agreed vision
 5. good leadership
 6. good planning
- It might be helpful to develop some form of **organizational structure**, for example, set up an LAC (language across the curriculum) Committee or EMI Group within the school to co-ordinate the effective use of English and to explore various support strategies for promoting a language-rich environment. Teachers have to recognize that conscious effort must be devoted to this and that changes are expected in an EMI school.
- Note that **culture and tradition is not built in a day**, but it **must** be built if a tradition is to survive. Many elite EMI schools have been around for a long time. They have a long long history – traditions are built by many people working together towards the same goal over a long period of time. Little can be achieved if a tradition is not created,

maintained and sustained.

- A number of ideas, activities and suggestions are listed here. They are a collection of good practices from many schools. Some of these may not be particularly new for your school. Many schools have already been adopting some of the ideas and are doing a great deal for their students. It is important to **build on strengths** of the schools and **share good practices**. Set expectations for students and teachers.
- With regard to the many suggestions given in this book, take only as much as your school, your teachers and students can handle at one time. Set realistic goals. Start with the ideas or activities which are most feasible at a particular stage, and build from there. However, the school must make a conscious effort to build a tradition, and **be committed, persistent and insistent**. Take from the list what suits your school best. Persevere. If the school's attitude is a lax one, it will be very difficult to cultivate a good environment.
- Recognize that things take time to work. Do not expect miracles to happen overnight.
- The ideas or activities here are not just for English-medium schools. They are **applicable to Chinese medium schools** also for building an English-rich environment.

Part B Components involved in establishing an English-rich environment

- The success of an English-rich environment depends on co-ordinated efforts on many fronts. For things to work, many conditions have to be present. The following essential components are like cogs in a wheel which make the whole central wheel turn. We will deal with each aspect in turn.



1. The School

1.1 Establish a clear school language policy

- Agree if possible by consensus among the teachers on what should be the school language policy, e.g. all students should speak English in the classroom and Chinese is only allowed in the playground and corridor. Perhaps all staff should use English when communicating with the students. Should staff meetings be conducted in English? To what extent should school assemblies or extra-curricular activities be conducted entirely in English?
- Make policy explicit to teachers and students
- Prepare S. 1 students psychologically that they have to meet the challenges of learning in a second language

- The experience of many EMI schools is that a strict language policy needs to be established and enforced, otherwise students will easily fall back to Chinese and it would be difficult to maintain an English atmosphere in which students feel comfortable using English. Enforce your policy.

1.2 Promote a Language-across-the-Curriculum (LAC) approach

Because the medium of instruction is the key to understanding the subject content in an EMI school, an LAC approach will help improve students' language proficiency and understanding of academic content.

- *What is an LAC approach?*

An LAC approach is one that integrates language learning and content learning

- *Why is there a need for such an approach?*

Language cannot be effectively learnt without a context while learning in all subjects is dependent upon language. In view of the above, language and content are closely interrelated. In fact, content subjects provide a context for language while effective language development facilitates the learning of content subjects. It is therefore necessary to integrate language and content.

- *What are the benefits of an LAC approach?*

For the school: To ensure that there is an organisational structure in the school which helps to formulate and implement language policy across the curriculum. This enables teachers to contribute and get support in dealing with language in learning issues as well as to work for a common target.

For the teacher: To use the language to teach more effectively and help students learn more effectively

For the students: To minimise the problems of adjusting to the new medium of instruction and to learn the subject content better.

- *What are the respective roles of content subject teachers and English teachers in an LAC approach?*

English teachers introduce and teach the skills, reinforcing them from time to time in English lessons.

Content subject teachers re-teach those skills or introduce related skills/concepts in their lesson, integrating language and content.

Example:

The idea of suffixes has been introduced in English lessons.

The History teacher can introduce the new suffix ‘-ism’ and give examples such as ‘communism’ or ‘colonialism’, or consolidate familiar suffixes, like ‘ion’ in ‘rebellion’.

(See materials “Teaching Ideas for English Teachers” and “Teaching Ideas for Content Subject Teachers” prepared by the CUHK Project Team)

- It is important for English teachers and content subject teachers to each know what the other is doing. For instance, the English teacher can teach students how to do a vocabulary log. The content subject teachers then ask students to keep a vocabulary log for their own subject. The English teacher can collect the vocabulary logs and check from time to time to make sure that students are on the right track.
- As every subject has to contribute to the language development of students, a balance between an emphasis on English and an emphasis on content is recommended.
- Since more time and effort has to be spent on the development of students’ language proficiency, the subject content may have to be reduced, especially at the initial stages..

1.3 Provide students with maximum exposure and use of English through **various communication channels** within the school. For example,

- 1.3.1 notices and announcements – Should all notices and announcements be entirely in English? If not (for some schools), can there be a gradual move to all English notices and announcements? Can the school allow bilingual announcements in which the English version is presented by the students? Can students be allowed to give notices and announcements creatively in their own way and through working together? Train students to be good announcers and oral presenters.
- 1.3.2 morning/ school assemblies – Each class takes turns to give an English presentation during morning assemblies? Sharing of information to be conducted in English, especially in relation to the promotion of academic activities.
- 1.3.3 display boards, circulars posted around the school to be in English – Students should be exposed to good reading or writing passages, attractive photos or pictures with English captions, new vocabulary, big notices, interesting slogans etc.
- 1.3.4 masses and prayer services
- 1.3.5 posters, school newspapers, newsletters, magazines, activity leaflets - develop publications targetted at students
- 1.3.6 school activities such as Speech Day, Sports Day, Swimming Gala
- 1.3.7 minutes of meetings
- 1.3.8 student radio - during lunchtime, after school or at other times
- 1.3.9 English Ambassador Scheme – students interview teachers, other students, community leaders or parents and be given some form of recognition or award for it
- 1.3.10 Student Association elections
- 1.3.11 Big brother/ Big sister schemes where older students help younger ones in different ways, e.g. reading to them, helping with selection of books, speaking and interacting with them, interviewing them, helping with homework
- 1.3.12 English Award Scheme – students have to carry out certain reading, writing, listening, speaking or service tasks in English and be awarded for completing them.
- 1.3.13 Allocate time in the day for quiet reading

- 1.4 **Incorporate cross-curricular themes and projects** that would allow maximum use of the English language for students in different areas and using different skills.

The following examples are taken from ‘Teaching ideas for content subject teachers in English-medium schools’:

a. Small-scale cross-curricular projects:

Subjects	Suggested Projects
English + Maths	Conduct a survey, e.g. to find out the favourite snacks of S1 students and present the findings in form of statistical presentation and oral presentation.
English + History	Construct a family tree of a clan in the New Territories and present the information in written and spoken form.
English + Geography	Describe the land use in the district where the school is located and suggest alternate uses of the land.
English + I.S.	Introduce the living things and non-living things on the earth to an alien from another planet.
English + Home Economics	Design a brand new recipe and prepare the dish in the Home Economics lesson.
English + Computer	Study skills: use of MS ‘Word’/spell-check / grammar check/ thesaurus
English + Geography + Art	Launch a ‘Saving endangered species’ campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - find out the endangered species in HK - write a letter to an environmentally friendly organisation to arouse attention - write an article in the school magazine and

	<p>suggest ways of how students can help save endangered species</p> <p>- design a T-shirt</p>
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b. Large-scale cross-curricular projects:

i. Constructing a railway line

Preliminary framework:

The government department concerned proposes to put a railway line through a village. The students would play the role of consultants, examining the feasibility of this proposal.

Suggestions on how each subject can contribute to this project:

Subject	What students have to do
History	Students have to make up the history of the village, based on research into history of N.T.
Geography	Students have to prepare a map of the layout of the village and examine the problem of land use.
I.S.	Students have to examine whether such proposal will cause pollution or other effects on endangered species.
Maths	Students have to prepare a statistical presentation.
Computer	Students have to process the information by computation.
English	Students have to write letters, conduct interviews and do oral presentations.

ii. TV simulation

Students prepare and produce a TV programme which includes several parts, e.g. news and weather, an interview, a cooking demonstration, a handicraft workshop, an advertisement.

c. A cross-curricular project that was carried out in SKH Lam Kau Mow Secondary School:

- Theme: Greek myths – each F.1 class has to produce a drama based on a Greek myth

- Subjects involved:

i. English – English teachers help students revise their scripts and rehearse the drama

ii. D & T – teachers advise students how to make the props

iii. Home Economics (Needlework) – teachers teach students to make the costume

iv. History – narrate / introduce the Greek myths to students

d. The cross-curricular project initiated by Belilios Public School

1.5 Allow teachers time for planning, co-ordination and execution of cross-curricular work

1.6 Interact with students in English as much as possible, in both formal and informal contexts. The principal, NET(s) or other teacher(s) can arrange organized English conversation time during recess or lunch periods or after school.

1.7 Involve as many students as possible in various English-speaking activities, e.g. Speech Festival, open competitions etc.

1.8 Set up an English Corner/ English Week/ English Month/ English Day/ English Activity Room etc. in the school

1.9 Set up scholarships of various kinds, e.g. for the most improved student in each class, for the best English student in class at the end of the school term or school year, for assistance to go abroad, for taking part in the School Speech Festival

1.10 Sharing of good practices – with other schools, district education networks etc.

2. The Classroom

2.1 Provide enrichment in a variety of ways

- comprehensible input for students – ensure high quality and quantity of comprehensible input for students
- task-based learning – involve students in different kinds of tasks to ensure maximum communication and use of English
- creativity – allow students to express themselves and create opportunities for such expression
- activities for meaningful practice, e.g. literature, role-play, games. Use of information gap activities.
- project work
- publish students' work

2.2 Do not always stick to the textbooks and worksheets. Try something new. Prepare supplementary and authentic materials such as from SCMP's Young Post, the internet, TV programmes, advertisements etc. Make use of topical events to motivate student interest, e.g. the World Cup, 9-11 incident.

2.3 Help students by identifying key words, phrases, terms, vocabulary, language structures etc. needed for learning the content matter. Involve students in discovery approaches to these, e.g. have students consult dictionaries, look up glossary lists, use visual media and body language.

2.4 Provide visual aids as much as possible in the classroom, especially at the initial stages of secondary education.

2.5 Provide students with independent learning materials, for example set up a self-access learning centre where students can improve English by themselves – listening to tapes, using the computer, reading in English etc.

2.6 Teach students how to respond in English. Often students know the Chinese response when teachers pose questions but not the English. Teach students how to sustain an English conversation instead of replying in short, single-word responses.

2.7 Teach cross-curricular “classroom language”.

2.8 Engage students in oral presentation work. Improve their delivery skills.

- 2.9 There may be some washback effect on, for example, having oral exams to make sure students speak more.
- 2.10 Some schools have students sit for Trinity exams – set a goal for students to aim for.
- 2.11 Treatment of assignments and/or errors – positive or negative attitude? Encouraging or penalising? What kinds of assignments would best foster greater use of English, whether in reading, writing, speaking or listening?
- 2.12 Encourage students to make good use of the Multimedia Learning Centre for English promotion activities

3 Extra-curricular activities

3.1 Student interest groups of all kinds such as

- 3.1.1 drama groups – e.g. inter-class/ inter-school drama competitions
- 3.1.2 choral speaking groups
- 3.1.3 singing groups
- 3.1.4 debating groups

3.2 Various English Club activities such as

- 3.2.1 story-telling
- 3.2.2 singing contest/ English karaoke contest
- 3.2.3 after-school oral practice
- 3.2.4 lunch-time song dedication
- 3.2.5 lunch-time reading/ watching MTV, cartoons, videos, movies
- 3.2.6 English quiz/ reading quiz
- 3.2.7 lyrics writing competition
- 3.2.8 variety performance competition
- 3.2.9 board games/ computer games/ scrabble competition/ pronunciation games
- 3.2.10 oral corner
- 3.2.11 concert/ English production
- 3.2.12 project competition
- 3.2.13 forums
- 3.2.14 spelling bee/ tongue twister competition
- 3.2.15 English puppet show
- 3.2.16 interview teachers, other students, parents, other personnel
- 3.2.17 design posters for clubs
- 3.2.18 slogan writing
- 3.2.19 book cover and bookmark competition
- 3.2.20 one riddle a day involvement activities

3.3 Special events such as

- 3.3.1 English summer camps
- 3.3.2 school visits, e.g. to RTHK, museums, other schools, farms, education fairs, The British Council etc.
- 3.3.3 English Activities Scheme
- 3.3.4 joint school speaking camps
- 3.3.5 charity bazaars
- 3.3.6 variety shows
- 3.3.7 overseas immersion programmes

4 Special programmes – to meet needs of different groups

- 4.1 bridging classes – student adaptation necessary especially at S.1 level because students come mostly from CMI primary schools.
- 4.2 remedial classes for weaker students
- 4.3 enhancement classes for brighter and/or average students
- 4.4 special classes for newly-arrived children
- 4.5 activity classes
- 4.6 extensive reading scheme

5 The teachers – roles and duties

- 5.1 Understand that helping students to use English for learning is the job of *every* teacher. Subject content teachers may not be expected to play the full role of being an English teacher, but they do need to develop a greater awareness of students' language needs and problems, and share in the responsibility of improving students' English.
- 5.2 Teachers should be reminded to use English inside and outside the classroom. Insist on maintaining English use in the classrooms.
- 5.3 Converse with students outside the classroom using English to develop their social English skills and to let them know English does not occur only in formal academic contexts. Use English at a level comprehensible to students.
- 5.4 Use simple classroom language., especially in early EMI days.
- 5.5 Adjust your teacher talk. Use simple words and frequent words, repeat things often, have clear articulation and pronunciation.
- 5.6 Expose students to different text types, genres etc. and explain to students the specific language requirements of their subject, e.g. science lab reports are written in a certain format, historical incidents are recounted in certain ways, mathematical problems are expressed using certain language.
- 5.7 Make good use of the Native English Teacher (NET) – is s/he just an oral teacher, or a regular staff member who teaches grammar as well? What role can s/he play for choral speaking, Speech Festivals, drama and song productions etc.?
- 5.8 Integrate the NET teacher into the teaching community so that students can see that teachers interact in English with each other, and would feel that talking in English with native speakers is a comfortable and natural form of communication. Help students feel less inhibited talking to native speakers.
- 5.9 For an EMI school, teachers need to be aware that ALL teachers are language teachers to a certain extent, irrespective of their content subject. All have a responsibility to help improve students' English.
- 5.10 Seek out chances for professional development. Attend courses and seminars. Observe classes in different subjects to get a better understanding of the language required of other subjects.

6. The students – roles and duties

- 6.1. Understand that learning a second or foreign language is not an easy task. Time and effort has to be devoted to it.
- 6.2 Follow the language policy set by the school.
- 6.3 Take advantage of every possibility to use English
- 6.4 Do not feel that using English is embarrassing - the only way to improve your English is to use it
- 6.5 Look up the dictionary for new words that you might encounter in your different subject areas - preparation is important
- 6.6 Keep a vocabulary log - note English words you encounter and look up their meanings and try to understand the context in which it is used
- 6.7 Take an active part in extra-curricular activities that will help you in your English
- 6.8 Whenever you have time, read in English, listen to English radio or watch English TV, interact with others in English, write in English
- 6.9 When using the internet, search for information in English and pay attention to the language of the materials
- 6.10 The more you use the language, the more comfortable you will feel with the language

7. Home-school co-operation

- 7.1 Let parents and children know the importance of support in an English-speaking environment and that if parents take an active role, students will benefit
- 7.2 Surround students with English print materials in the home, e.g. parents can buy English newspapers, books, magazines or tapes for children, or take them to the library to be exposed to English materials.
- 7.3 Engage in English activities together with the children, e.g. read aloud together and make tape recordings, watch English TV shows or cartoons and discuss about them, read together with children. Try also as far as possible to give students private time or a quiet area for reading English.
- 7.4 Try occasionally to sacrifice watching Chinese TV and let students have the opportunity of watching English TV, movies, cartoons etc.
- 7.5 Develop extensive reading schemes in which parents have a part to play, e.g. play tapes for them, making sure that students do some activities in English.

8. The community

- 8.1. Arrange external activities that would help students' English. Give recognition or awards when students have done well, e.g.
 - Speech Festival
 - Drama Festival
 - Debating competitions
 - Essay competitions
 - Radio programmes
 - Publishing in SCMP Young Post or other suitable channels

Part C Suggested activities for the whole school

1. Setting up an English Corner

To ensure the English Corner in the school provides an environment conducive to learning English, the school should take the following into consideration:

Think about:

1. The physical environment, in terms of
 - The room
 - The seating arrangements
 - Student numbers
2. The environment – in terms of
 - Motivational factors
 - Affect – positive and negative feelings
 - The creation of opportunities for meaningful interaction
 - The relationship between teacher and pupils
3. The materials available – in terms of
 - Interest
 - Variety
 - Types
 - Topics
4. The activities that can be performed there
5. The agenda, in terms of
 - Who provides leadership
 - What the aims are
 - What and how activities are carried out
 - How it is evaluated

**Note:*

The school can also ask students to discuss how an English Corner provides an environment conducive to learning English with reference to the points listed above.

I. Aims of establishing an English corner

To provide students with meaningful English language-related activities such as extra curricular activities which enhance students' interest in language learning as well as help to develop their language proficiency

II. The use of an English Corner

Some of the following ideas are taken from "Net-working – Examples of good professional practice within the NET scheme" available from

<http://www.emb.gov.hk/ednewhp/teacher/net/english/download/net-working.pdf>:

1. As a drama rehearsal place
2. As a verse-speaking practice place
3. As an English games activity centre e.g. Scrabble, Monopoly
4. As an English club meeting place
5. As an English video screening centre
6. As an English discussion / conversation group meeting place
7. As a self-access centre

III. Recommendations on developing an English Corner

Some of the following ideas are adapted or modified from "Net-working – Examples of good professional practice within the NET scheme" available from

<http://www.emb.gov.hk/ednewhp/teacher/net/english/download/net-working.pdf>:

- A. School policy
 1. The school should have an established policy regarding the development and the implementation of the English corner.
 2. All staff members and students should be well informed of the use and the importance of the English corner in the school.
 3. Teacher(s) in charge should be given a reduced teaching load.
 4. It should be well planned.
- B. Physical arrangements and general practice
 1. A separate room with sufficient space for 40 or more students, preferably with air-conditioning should be made available.
 2. Appropriate audio-visual aids and learning resources should be installed in the English corner e.g. a VCD player, a television set, a computer / computers, dictionaries, VCDs, CDs, CALL software packages, cassette recorders and video cameras.
 3. The English Corner should not be another classroom or a storage place. It should be a place where students feel comfortable and stress-free. It is recommended that the

furnishings in the English Corner room should include a sofa, small round tables, colourful chairs and carpets etc.

4. Sufficient technical support should be made available.
5. Sufficient training should be conducted to senior form student helpers before they help organise or conduct activities for the junior form students.
6. A teacher or student helper should be on duty at the information desk during the opening hours.
7. A schedule should be drawn up for staff in charge and student helpers. The schedule should be made known to students.
8. Proposed opening hours: lunch break, after school until 5 p.m.
9. Special programmes such as discussion groups and film appreciation can be organised on Friday after school. Other services can be provided on a daily basis and should remain unaffected during examination periods.
10. Only English should be spoken in the English Corner.
11. The rules and regulations of the English corner should be posted on the walls and all staff members and students should be made aware of them.

IV. Proposed activities or services provided by the English Corner

The following ideas are modified from the course work of the Bachelor of Education, LED 2002, the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

1. Speaking centre

Individual or groups of students make appointments with the teacher at the information desk. The teacher then helps the students to set goals with regard to their spoken language and formulate a plan with them. Students work according to the plan, report on their progress, success and difficulties to the teacher by making appointments.

2. Lending VCDs and CDs to teachers and students

Teachers are encouraged to borrow the VCDs and CDs for use in their lessons. Also, students are encouraged to enjoy listening to CDs or viewing VCDs in the English corner or to borrow them and take home. If possible, DVDs with English subtitles can be provided.

3. Workshops of different themes and duration

- e.g. at the macro level: presentation skills, debating skills, discussion skills
at the micro level: phonics, intonation, stress patterns
- Some non-English related workshops or talks conducted in English can be provided. Some interesting topics such as table manners, fashion and making models etc. can be chosen.

- Students need to sign up and pay a deposit of \$10 for each workshop they intend to join. Deposits are refunded when they show up or if their attendance is over 80%.
- Students are awarded with certificates after they have completed the workshop successfully.

4. Discussion groups

Students can walk in and join the discussion groups led by teachers or student helpers. The discussion groups may start by reading a newspaper article, listening to a radio programme or watching a television programme. Everybody is then encouraged to respond to the issue raised. To foster students' interest, they can be encouraged to prepare the materials for discussion.

5. Film appreciation

Teachers and / or students in charge lead a short discussion before or after viewing a popular English movie or a part of a movie. They may give students full autonomy to discuss about the movie or they may ask questions related to the movie to help students focus their attention, express their comments, feelings or any insights from the movie. Worksheets can be designed so that students can be encouraged to pay attention to a certain issue and they can jot notes while they are viewing the movie.

6. Song appreciation

- Either the teachers prepare the songs or they ask students to bring their favourite English songs to the English Corner.
- Teachers can prepare the lyrics of the songs and prepare activities such as leaving some blanks for students to fill in while listening. Students may be asked to fill in specific grammatical items such as prepositions, verbs, phrasal verbs and articles. This enables students to learn grammar in a lively way.
- If a song is prepared by a student, he or she will be invited to share his or her feelings or ideas about the song and explain why he or she likes it. A guidance sheet like the one below may help students express themselves:

Song appreciation I

Please share the following with your schoolmates:

1. What is the name of the singer?
2. What is this song about?
3. What do you like most about this song?
4. What does this song remind you of?
5. Why is this song special to you?

- After listening to a song, students are invited to share their feelings or ideas about it. A guidance sheet like the one below may help students express themselves:

Song appreciation II

Please share the following with your schoolmates:

1. Do you like the song?
2. If yes, why do you like it?
3. If no, why don't you like it?
4. What does this song remind you of?
5. Will you recommend this song to your friends?

6. Cooking

Students are invited to bring recipes of making simple dishes such as salads, for example, the ingredients needed and show the how the dish is prepared. This activity can be done either on an individual basis or in pairs. Students need to memorise the recipe, introduce the ingredients and present the steps to the audience orally while they are preparing the dish. Afterwards, they can actually share the dish made with the audience.

**Additional activity:* Students are asked to choose the dish they like best after they have tasted all the dishes they have prepared.

7. Storytelling

The teacher in charge writes down a topic on the blackboard and invites students to brainstorm some words related to it. He or she can ask students to brainstorm for words of a particular part of speech, e.g. verbs, adjectives and nouns. Students then work in groups and create a story about the topic using the words on the blackboard.

Afterwards, each group presents its story to the others.

**Additional activity:* Students are asked to vote for the most interesting story after they have listened to all the stories.

8. Drama

Ask students to read a short play. Then discuss the plot and the characters with them. Afterwards, assign roles to each student and allow them time to practise their own part. The teacher and student helpers may need to help practise the pronunciation of words. When the students are ready, get them to act it out. Students can be given chance to do the performance during assembly, Christmas celebration, post-exam activity days or English Festival.

9. Using the computer

- Students are encouraged to learn English through CALL programmes or assessing the internet.

- Suggested web sites for language learning:

- ◆ <http://www.hkedcity.net/english>
- ◆ <http://www.britcoun.org>
- ◆ <http://www.reading.org>
- ◆ <http://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/english>
- ◆ <http://www.englishclub.com/>
- ◆ <http://www.englishtown.com/>
- ◆ <http://a4esl.org/>
- ◆ <http://www.syndicate.com/crossword.html>
- ◆ http://www.einstein.et.tudelft.nl/~mvdlaan/texts/ww_games.html
- ◆ <http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/student.html>
- ◆ <http://www.britishcouncil.org.hk/english/eltsites.asp>
- ◆ <http://english-4us.com>
- ◆ <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
- ◆ <http://vlc.polyu.edu.hk/>

2. Organising an English Festival

I. Aims of organising an English Festival

1. To expose students to the target language
2. To enhance students' interest and confidence in using and learning English

II. Recommendations on organising an English Festival

1. A whole-school approach is required. For example, morning assembly is conducted in English and all announcements made in English; all teachers are encouraged to use English outside the classroom and students are involved in the preparation of the Festival.

2. Good and thorough preparation is necessary. The details of individual activities should be attended to.

**Points to note:*

- i. Involve students in the preparation of the Festival. For example, senior form students are designated to design and set up game stalls.
- ii. Some activities may be offered on a 'first come first served' basis or offered to particular forms of students e.g. visiting international schools. In this case, it is necessary to work out the number of students eligible for these activities and / or how students can apply for joining these activities.
- iii. It may be necessary to set a specific format and time limit to certain activities e.g. the CALL demonstration is conducted in groups every 30 minutes.
- iv. Make sure that staff members and student helpers are well-informed of their duties and are provided with a duty roster which details the dates as well as the time-slots that they should be on duty and whom they should contact if an emergency arises.

3. Set realistic success indicators

It is unrealistic to set success indicators such as 'the language proficiency of students is raised after the Festival'. In fact, it is important to set realistic success indicators for individual activities and / or the Festival as a whole because unrealistic success indicators may lead to frustration – for both the teachers and students.

4. Conduct evaluation

It is essential to evaluate and to make recommendations for organising programmes in the future. To facilitate the evaluation, it is worth collecting feedback from students and staff members by various means, for example, conducting face-to face interviews and observing whether students appear to be enjoying individual activities.

5. Proposed duration of the Festival
Four days (preferably before the Easter holiday)

The following ideas are modified from the course work of the Bachelor of Education , LED 2002, the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

III. Proposed Activities

1. English Ambassadors

- To ensure that there is an English speaking environment, a monitoring mechanism would be helpful. The goal is not to punish students or discourage them from enjoying the Festival, but is to keep up the spirit and encourage every student to be involved.
- Each class nominates two or more English Ambassadors. Their responsibility is to maintain positive spirits and a good atmosphere related and to ensure nobody speaking Cantonese. They act as coordinators for the organising unit and the class. They also have to encourage their classmates to participate in the activities held during the Festival.
- A special badge can be designed for the English Ambassadors.

2. Song dedication

- A list of songs is posted in each classroom.
- Students have to complete the 'Song dedication sheet' if they want to dedicate a song to their friends. The DJs will read out their messages and play the songs.
- The organising unit can prepare the lyrics of the songs, leaving some blanks for students to fill in while listening. Students who are interested can take the lyrics from the DJ's desk and fill in specific grammatical items such as prepositions, verbs, phrasal verbs and articles.

3. Broadcasts

Students are invited to share - through the central announcing system - their ideas on topics of interest to them, news, or things happening in the school campus.

4. Film shows

- There is a film show each day after school.
- There can also be a discussion group to share and comment on the film, on its content or on the effect of learning English through watching movies.
- To promote this activity, students can be provided with a brief introduction to the films before the Festival.

5. Karaoke
 - A variety of English songs should be provided. For example, classic oldies such as ‘Today’ and popular songs such as ‘My heart will go on’. Students can be encouraged to submit their own songs.
 - A list of songs can be posted in each classroom.

6. Board display

Board displays of different focuses such as today’s activities, topics of the day’s broadcast, introduction to films, songs for karaoke, songs for dedication, lyrics, students’ work, tongue twisters, riddles and funny customs are put around the campus to create the atmosphere of an English Festival.

7. Board and card games

English board and card games are placed in the English Corner or the covered playground. Student helpers on duty help explain the rules of the games.

8. Opening ceremony

The principal or a guest speaker gives a speech to the Festival and officially announces the opening of the Festival.

9. Closing ceremony

To bring the Festival to a successful climax, all classes are suspended on the last day so that all students and teachers can be involved in the Festival. Students are free to go around the campus and enjoy all the activities provided. The following activities are proposed:

 - i. Visiting international schools
 - Teachers accompany students on the visit. Students are encouraged to find out how a language-rich environment might help them learn a second or a foreign language and to reflect on their own learning.
 - Provide students with the opportunity to communicate with students in the international schools. Ask them to find out the differences between studying in an international school and a local school.

 - ii. CALL (computer assisted language learning) demonstration

Students are introduced to language learning through CALL programmes or accessing the internet in the English Corner, the MMLC (multi-media room), the computer room or the language laboratory. They are also encouraged to use the facilities as independent learning tools after the Festival.

iii. Reading corner

- In the school library, set up a cosy reading corner with comfortable sofas, chairs, cushions and carpets.
- A list of books or magazines recommended by teachers and the librarian is placed on the walls.
- If possible, this reading corner should be kept as a permanent feature in the library after the Festival.

iv. Counselling corner

Students are welcome to discuss with teachers about their difficulties in learning English. They can come individually or in groups. Teachers can work out independent learning plans with students to encourage self-access learning.

v. Game stalls

Game stalls are set up in the playground. The rules of the games are written in English. Student helpers on duty help explain the rules when there are queries.

vi. Talent show

- This should be held in the school hall before the end of the school day. The performers show how they can use English creatively on the stage. Programmes such as choral verse-speaking, solo verse-speaking, drama and singing are recommended.
- The last programme in the Talent show is a speech by the principal or a guest speaker. The speaker should commend the efforts of staff members and student helpers as well as the participation of students, and encourage students to use English inside and outside the classroom after the Festival.

IV. Other activities

Before and / or during the Festival, teachers can consider conducting other activities like slogan writing competition, essay writing competition, tongue twister competition and solving the riddles competition.

V. Suggested action plan with time-line

Time	Action	
Early January	1. Recruit members for the English Festival Organising Committee	Decide on the number of members needed and the responsibility of each member
Mid January	2. Decide the time and venue of the activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check the school schedule ● Decide on the duration of the Festival as well as the dates and venues the Festival is to be held
Mid January	3. Decide the activities to be conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enquire as to students' preferences ● Check the availability with the school
Late January	4. Arrange the activities into a time table	Check the possibility of all proposed events
Early February	5. Prepare a plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work out a detailed plan for the Festival ● Work out the success indicators for individual activities or for the whole programme
Mid February	6. Contact international schools	Write letters to international schools, requesting for a visit
Mid February	7. Promote the Festival	Promotion through various channels e.g. morning assembly, posters
Mid February	8. Recruit English Ambassadors	Invite nominations of English Ambassadors from each class
Mid February	9. Recruit individual or groups of students to perform in the Talent Show	Invite students to perform in the Talent Show
Mid February	10. Prepare for games and display boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work out the details of game stalls ● Prepare display boards ● Prepare the equipment for various activities

Mid February	11. Recruit student helpers	Decide whether student helpers are nominated by teachers or allow students to take the initiative
Late February	12. Further promote the Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Put up the timetable and description of various activities ● Make detailed announcements in the morning assembly
Early March – Mid April	13. Arrange rehearsals for the Talent Show	Arrange practice sessions and rehearsals with students, preferably in the hall
Early April	14. Check all necessary equipment and accessories	Make sure that all the equipment is well-prepared, e.g. the karaoke set, accessories such as ‘song dedication sheet’ and the English Ambassador badges
Mid April	15. Launch the Festival	Check if the activities are carried out as smoothly as possible
Late April	16. Evaluate the Festival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate the Festival against the success indicators ● Make recommendations for organising similar programmes in the future

VI. A suggested timetable of the English Festival

	The 1st Day (Monday)	The 2nd Day (Tuesday)	The 3rd Day (Wednesday)	The 4th Day (Thursday)
Morning assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opening ceremony ● Promoting today's activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promoting today's activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promoting today's activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promoting today's activities ● Visiting international schools
Recess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadcasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadcasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadcasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Broadcasts
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Song dedication ● Board display ● Karaoke ● Board and card games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Song dedication ● Board display ● Karaoke ● Board and card games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Song dedication ● Board display ● Karaoke ● Board and card games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Song dedication ● Board and card games ● CALL Demonstration ● Film shows ● Karaoke
After school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Film show ● Karaoke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Film show ● Karaoke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Film show ● Karaoke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading corner ● Counselling session ● Game stalls ● Talent show ● Closing ceremony

3. Drama Activities

I. Aims of introducing drama activities in school

1. To enable students to develop language skills
2. To enable students to develop and polish their own ideas in English
3. To enable students to learn to cooperate with others
4. To enhance students' artistic awareness

II. Recommendations on organising drama activities

1. Provide students with warm up exercises to enhance students' confidence and concentration. Ideas for these exercises can be found in the following books:
 - i. Dougill, J. 1987. *Drama Activities for Language Learning*. Basingstoke: Macmillan
 - ii. Hayes, S.K. 1984. *Drama as a Second Language: a Practical Handbook for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: National Extension College Trust.
 - iii. Maley, A. and Duff A. 1982. *Drama Techniques in Language Learning: a Resource Book of Communication Activities for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
2. Allow flexibility though it is important to keep control over time. Spending too much time on an activity may lead to a slackening of pace and a loss of interest.
3. Give clear instructions to students.
4. Inform students of the time to be spent on individual activities.
5. Inform students of the rationale of individual activities before doing. This initiates a positive attitude towards drama activities as students know that they are going to do something useful and interesting.
6. Instill correct attitude in students regarding the use of English:
 - not to laugh at students with poor English
 - not to think that students with good English are showy or arrogant
7. Choose materials which match the students' language level and close to social and imaginative experience. This helps to boost students' confidence and interest.
8. Give guidance and support to students while allowing room for exploration.
9. Be ready and well prepared for the possible problems and difficulties that may emerge in cooperative work. Try to work out the solutions together with students.

III. Drama activities

Drama activities are not only confined to the performance on the stage. There are many diversities in terms of forms. Below are some suggestions of various forms of drama activities which can be introduced to the whole school:

1. Classroom activities

i. Suggested drama activities to be introduced in English lessons:

- acting out dialogues
- role play
- completing play scripts
- commenting on the performance of a pair of students in a role play activity
- commenting on the performance of the actors in a drama
- discussing the theme of a drama
- rewriting the ending of a drama

ii. Suggested drama activities to be introduced in content subject lessons:

- role play e.g. the stories of historical events
- ask students to work out the solution of a moral dilemma involved in a role play

iii. Suggestion for cross-curricular practice:

- Example: a cross-curricular project carried out in SKH Lam Kau Mow Secondary School:
 - Theme: Greek myths
 - Format: each F.1 class has to produce a drama based on a Greek myth
 - Subjects involved:
 - English – English teachers help students revise their scripts and rehearse the drama
 - D & T – teachers advise students how to make the props
 - Home Economics (Needlework) – teachers teach students to make costume
 - History – narrate / introduce the Greek myths to students
- The following books give a detailed account of using drama as a cross-curricular practice:
 - Foster, H. M. 2002. *Crossing over: Teaching Meaning-centred Secondary Language Arts*. Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates
 - Edmiston, B. & Wilhelm, J. D. 1998. *Imagining to Learn: Inquiry, Ethics, and Integration through Drama*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

iv. Other drama activities to be introduced in classrooms:

Creation and invention, word-play, problem-solving activities and the use of literary texts and improvisation are drama activities for language learning. The following book is recommended for the details and samples of these activities:

- Maley, A. and Duff A. 1982. *Drama Techniques in Language Learning: a Resource Book of Communication Activities for Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

2. English Drama Club

- this is a club of extra-curricular activity
- students are introduced to the basic knowledge about drama e.g. stage equipment, speech and movement on the stage etc.
- old members may act as advisers and help train the new club members
- may organise lunch-time and / or after-school performance sessions in which club members can perform on stage
- may offer workshops and / or talks related to drama activities to fellow schoolmates

3. Drama competitions

- the school may participate in inter-school drama competitions and / or organise inter-class drama competitions in school
- teachers should give advice and guidelines in advance

4. Debate

I. What benefits can be gained from practising debating?

- Look at the procedures you might follow for preparing a debate.

Process:

1. Understanding the topic: what is the issue?
2. Brainstorming
3. Allocating work in a team
4. Research
5. Preparing the arguments: establishing the case your team will argue; finding examples; allocating the different parts of the case
6. Predicting the opponents' line
7. Preparing rebuttals
8. Polishing the speeches/ preparing notes
9. Rehearsing the speeches

- Clearly there are very useful skills to be practised here and the potential benefits for English proficiency are large.
- In junior forms it may seem that the demands are too great, however lower-form students:
 - can be introduced to activities to familiarise them with the skills
 - can be involved in the audience if senior-school debates are organised
 - can take part in debates where the format has been designed to suit them

II. Integrating debating into a grammar lesson

The foundation of debating is the identification of the case FOR or AGAINST an issue. This can be introduced to junior forms very simply, and can even be integrated into a normal grammar lesson. For example:

The teacher is focusing on past tenses, comparing past and present life. In order to practice this, s/he asks students to think of examples of how life in the present is better than in the past. Students come up with ideas such as “We use washing machines nowadays, but in the past they washed clothes in the river.” These ideas are grouped together into categories,

such as “Daily life” “Transport”, “Education”, “Health” etc.

Students are then encouraged to make judgements about these observations: e.g. “We use washing machines nowadays, but in the past they washed clothes in the river. Therefore, life in the past was hard.” Opposing judgements are encouraged, e.g. “Nowadays, people are lazy.”

The theme is then rewritten as a motion for debate: “We believe that life in the present is better than life in the past.” Students are then put into groups of five, two students are FOR the motion, the other two AGAINST, and the fifth is the adjudicator. The teacher provides a speaking frame for the debate, which will be conducted in groups. Adjudicators are given a form for assessing each team’s performance and choosing the winner.

Speaking frame:

I agree/ disagree with the motion that...

There are three reasons why I agree/ disagree. They are

Therefore it is clear that

Optional frame with rebuttal:

I agree/ disagree with the motion that...

There are several reasons why I agree/ disagree. They are

The other team says that....

But I don’t think this is important/ true because.....

Therefore it is clear that

III. Useful resources for teachers

Teachers may bring students to the Multi Media Language Centre and visit the following website: <http://www.hkedcity.net/english>. Students can watch the inter-school contest as there are video clips showing the debates. This allows students to watch how an actual debate is structured.

IV. Introducing debating: skill-building activities

The following activities can be used to help introduce public-speaking and debating skills:

1. Just a Minute: The aim is to talk on a topic for one minute “without hesitation, repetition, or deviation”, but you can be more lenient in ESL.
2. Verbal Ping-Pong: Choose a topic, e.g. “Television is good for us”: split class into two halves – For and against. Each side takes turns to make a point. They score one mark if they make a successful, i.e. appropriate, point, and two marks if their point is judged to be a particularly good response to the other side.
3. Accepting an Oscar: The pupils write out speeches to practice delivering. The aim is for them to use eye-contact, gestures and vocal techniques.
4. Teacher versus class: Choose a topic that will motivate them to argue against you- e.g. ‘Pupils should come back to school for extra lessons every Sunday’
5. Parents and children: Similar to above. Think of some topics that parents and children often disagree about. Class can be arranged into groups representing parents and children.
6. Persuasion: make up some advertisements, or use some from a magazine and give them to groups of pupils. They have to persuade the rest of the class to buy their product.

7. Election: This can be real candidates for class monitor, for example, can be proposed by classmates, who give arguments why their candidate is the best.

School council elections can also be an opportunity for English speech making. “Mock” elections can be held too- e.g. “The Education Department has decided that for an experimental period of one year, the post of Principal shall be held by a student....”

5. Solo and Choral Verse-speaking

The Hong Kong Speech Festival is very well-known and the number of entries rises every year. This seems to be an opportunity for promoting English speech activities in the school, and encouraging students to enjoy language arts activities. However, if this exercise is confined to the training of a small number of students, particularly if these are already the best students, it is not clear how this activity can contribute to the creation of an English-rich environment. Thus, EMI schools can consider organising their own solo- or choral- verse speaking festival.

I. School festival

This can be a one-off festival, or it may be in preparation for the actual competition. There are a number of advantages to having a school festival: it can

- allow the students to prepare well beforehand
- provide an opportunity for the whole school to participate, rather than only a select few
- allow plenty of time for teachers to apply for the “own choice” sections of the festival, using texts that they and the students have enjoyed working with
- provide an opportunity for students to appreciate language arts
- create an atmosphere of enjoyment of performance rather than competition

II. Solo verse-speaking

Training for solo-verse speaking has the advantage of giving teachers the opportunity to work one-to-one with some students on pronunciation skills. Given the packed nature of the syllabus, this is a rare opportunity, and it would be a pity to confine it only to the “star” students who have the least need of the training. Training could be directed at some of the weaker students as well as those who might do well at the official speech festival. In order to motivate the students, the judging criteria for the school festival could be altered to reflect effort and enthusiasm.

III. Choral verse-speaking

Choral verse-speaking can involve the whole class and so is ideal for a whole-school activity as each class can organise a performance using a poem of their choice. Class teachers will need to help students choose suitable material, interpret and score the poem.

To get more help on organising and training a choral team, the ED’s material “Good

Practices in Verse-Speaking” contains a lot of good ideas.

IV. Some basic considerations in verse-speaking training

1. Rhythm

Try to discern the rhythm of stressed and unstressed syllables in the verse: the poem may have a very regular rhythm or “beat”, or it may be irregular in places.

2. Variations

If the poem has a very regular beat, it may be good to introduce some variations so that the beat does not become too predictable and irritating. Make sure the stress falls only on parts of words which should be stressed, and on the parts of sentences which are to be “foregrounded”.

3. Sense units

A common problem in reading aloud poetry is reading line-by-line. A poem should be read in such a way that it reflects the sense units contained in it, i.e. not that differently from prose. Just because there is a visible line-break on the page does not mean there should be a pause when reading. Think of the sense of what is being read.

4. Intonation

Once you have worked out the sense units, the intonation will be easier to decide on. It will depend on the interpretation you have of the poem, and different people may read with different intonation.

5. Pausing

A poem is a short, skilful, concentrated piece of writing. The listeners need time to hear and appreciate the poet’s skill, therefore well-crafted expressions should be read aloud with care and attention. Well-chosen pauses can add greatly to the overall effect. If a particularly colourful or meaningful phrase is about to be spoken, a significant pause before it can create a good effect.

6. Pronunciation

Predictable difficulties include: “th” sounds, consonant clusters, final consonants.

Teachers might avoid choosing a poem that will be no more than a tongue-twister for students.

Some poems depend for their impact on the sound effects created by the choice of words. Onomatopoeic words, such as “crunch, crackle, swish, splash” etc, lose their point if their consonants are not pronounced. Teachers should encourage the students to appreciate the sound effects, and impress on them that these are not an optional extra, but are part of the meaning of the poem.

7. Facial expressions

Having appropriate facial expression certainly adds a lot to the delivery of a poem, but these should not be strained. They should be a natural response to the meaning of what is being said, and not over-exaggerated.

8. Gestures

Similarly, gestures should not look like sign-language for the hard-of-hearing! Those gestures which match the sense naturally, and without exaggeration, can add a lot to the delivery, but over-dramatic movements are very often a distraction.

Students should be encouraged to use the full range of voice tones they have at their disposal. They can modulate their tones, speed up or slow down, speak loudly or quietly. This already gives them a range of effects without needing to use any movements.

9. Choral Effects

In addition to the above considerations, in choral verse-speaking, the team consists of different types of voices which can be used to create different sound effects. The class can read together, in groups, or individually. Students with different voice quality can be grouped together to read different sections of the piece, while musical effects such as crescendo can be created by gradually increasing the number of voices, or the volume.

10. Scoring

The challenge for a beginning team is to co-ordinate their reading. Teachers should decide on the stress and intonation patterns to be followed in the reading and decide on a system of notation so that all students can follow the same “score”.

11. Regulations

If entering a formal competition, teachers should check the regulations regarding minimum and maximum numbers of participants in a choral group, what props, if any, are allowed, and if there is a time limit.

6. Extensive Reading Scheme

I. Things to be considered

i. Place in the year's work

- ⇒ Is this going to go towards a percentage of the grade for the year? If so, how much?
- ⇒ Will this reduce the number of compositions that students have to do? If so, by how many?

ii. Marking

For a quick and easy way of marking these tasks, the following is one suggestion. This gives each person a grade out of 10, which over the year would give them a total mark out of 100.

CONTENT	quality & accuracy	/5
PRESENTATION	appropriateness & quality	/5

iii. Incorporating this work into class time

There is an 'extensive reading period' each cycle. This is used in a variety of ways, for example:

- To teach students how to do some of the tasks. Some tasks will be unfamiliar to them so will require some teaching.
- Individual reading and/or working on tasks.
- To share good work. It is great for the students to be able to share this. It is also encouraging to others and gives them ideas.
- For some classes, the 'sharing' time could be extended into discussing the books they've read, sharing their work and making recommendations to each other.

iv. Folder/Portfolio

By the end of the year, students should have a folder which contains all their tasks as well as a record of all the books they've read that year. Instruction sheets should probably inform students what kind of folder they need to buy.

v. Due dates

When the timetable for the year has been finalised, they can be decided upon and given to students with the instructions so that they know when everything is due.

Example:

Task completed					
Due Date	8 March	27 March	10 April	2 May	23 May
Grade /10					
Teacher's signature					

vi. Further work to be done

Decide on tasks for each level

⇒ Finalise instruction sheet for each level

⇒ Decide on due dates

⇒ Prepare examples of some tasks

II. Suggested Reading Tasks

1. Cast List

Make a list of the main characters in the book you've read. Are any of your classmates like these people? Decide who should act each of the main characters. Explain why you want them to be your actors. For example, describe what they are like.

**The word 'actor' refers to both women and men.*

2. Reading Journal

Keep a journal as you read the book. At the end of each chapter, complete these tasks:

a) Summarise what happened in the chapter.

b) Describe the best thing that happened in the chapter.

c) Finish your diary by saying if you think it was a good book to read. Why?

**You must do this task while you are reading.*

3. Book Cover

Design a new book cover (front and back) for the book you've read. Think about the theme(s), characters and setting. Then choose a picture, colours and design to go with them. Write a new blurb to go on the back of your cover. It should be short but must

explain a little bit about the story. It should make people want to read the book. Be careful not to say too much about the story.

Your book cover must include all the correct details and information, such as title, author's name, publisher, price and/or bar-code, plus any other relevant details, such as the illustrator's name.

4. Setting

Where does the book take place?

Find and/or draw pictures of the most important places in the book. This could be a bedroom, a city street, a castle, another planet, a school...

Describe how your pictures are different from Hong Kong.

**Do not do this task if your book is set in H.K.*

5. A New Ending

How would you like the story to end? Write a new ending for the book.

6. Continuation

What happened after the end of the story? What happened to the characters? Pretend you are the author and keep writing the book.

7. Letter of Recommendation

Write to a friend recommending this book. Tell them about the story, the characters, etc. and explain why you think it is such a good book.

**Only choose this task if you have read a book that you really enjoyed and would honestly like to recommend.*

8. Book to Film

Choose a book which has been made into a film. Read the book and watch the film.

Describe the differences between the two. For example, compare setting, ending and what the characters are like.

9. Advertising Poster

Design and make a poster advertising the book. You need to have the title, author's name, price, where the book can be bought and a picture. Make sure that it is interesting and

attractive so that people would want to buy the book.

10. Crazy Poems

Write two crazy poems.

- a) One must use the title of the book. This poem must be made up of sentences that are about the story.
- b) The other poem is to use the main character's name. This poem must be about this person (or animal). What kind of person is she/he? What does he/she look like? What does she/he love, hate...?

**Look at the examples to see how to write a crazy poem.*

11. Character Diary - 'In Role'

Pretend you are the main character. Write a diary about your life, family, relationships, feelings, hopes, things that happen in the book.....

12. Interview with the author

Pretend you are going to interview the author about the book. Write 5 questions that you would like to ask him/her.

Then pretend you are the author. Write your answers to these questions.

**Don't use questions that only need a yes or no answer.*

13. Interview with the main character

Pretend you are going to interview the main character about his/her life or things that happen in the book. Write 5 questions that you would like to ask him/her.

Then pretend you are the main character and write your answers to these questions.

**Don't use questions that only need a yes or no answer.*

14. Collage

On a piece of A3 paper, using words and pictures, make a collage about your book.

It could be about the setting, characters, events or theme(s).

**A collage is a picture that is made up of lots of other pictures, pieces of coloured paper, words or objects such as string, coins, bottle tops...*

15. Letter to the Young Post

Pretend you are one of the characters from the book. Write a letter to the SCMP Young Post about something that interests you.

16. Comic Strip

Draw a comic strip for an important event in the book. Think about what the characters look like, their facial expressions, body language and what they are saying.

17. Dramatisation

Choose an exciting and interesting scene from the book. Write a play of this scene. Present it like a real play with a list of characters, stage directions and setting it out like a real play.

18. Adjectives

Choose three different adjectives from the following list and explain how each one describes something or someone in your book.

frightening lovely fabulous
exciting gorgeous fascinating
gruesome inspirational complicated
challenging informative marvellous
humorous impressive hilarious

**Make sure you choose words that do describe your book! If you find another interesting adjective that describes part of your book, you may use that instead of one from the list.*

19. Letter to the Author

Write a letter to the author. Include the following information:

- a) Your favourite part of the story
- b) Your opinion of the main character(s)
- c) Your opinion of the ending
- d) Suggestions to improve the story

20. The Past

What do you learn about the past from this book? How did people live then?

What were houses, schools, transport, work, families, entertainment... like in the past?

Describe the differences between life in the book and life now.

**Only do this task if your book is set in the past.*

21. The Future

What is difference between the present and the future in the book? How do people live?

Where do they live? What kind of work do they do? What are schools like?

How do people travel? What do people do for entertainment?

Describe the differences between life in the book and life now.

**Only do this task if your book is set in the future.*

22. Discussing the books you've read

Extension for enthusiastic students

If you are a keen reader and want to improve your English, you may do extra tasks. If you do so, you may repeat the ones that you've already done. You may also do this in pairs or groups.

After you've completed each reading task, there will be a period to discuss the books you've read and to recommend them to your classmates. This is a very good way of learning about books you would like to read.

Group Instructions

1. Each person tells the group about the book they have read.
(Follow the instructions in A.)
2. While listening, each person writes down the details of any books they'd like to read in **B**.
3. Each group selects one of the books discussed to tell the class about.
4. Fill in the 'Book Recommendation' form which will be put on the notice-board.
5. A spokesperson from the group tells the class about the book the group recommends.

A. Individual Instructions

Tell the group about the book you've read. You should include:

- Title
- Author
- Where you got the book from
- Plot line (i.e. what happens in the story)

- Setting (i.e. where the story is set)
- Characters (i.e. the people [or animals] in the story)
- Theme (i.e. the main idea(s) of the story)
- Your favourite bit from the book (it could be something that happened, something that someone did...). Explain why it is your favourite bit.
- Show your group your completed task and explain why you chose to do that one.
- Tell your group members your recommendation and score.
 - Would you recommend this book?
 - Definitely not!*
 - Maybe.*
 - Yes.*
 - Absolutely!*
 - What score would you give your book from 1 to 10?
 - 1 = lowest, 10 = highest*

B. Books I'd like to read

Title	Author	Where it can be found	Person who recommended it

Book Recommendation

Title:
Author:
Subject:

Score:
Where it can be found:

III. Suggested Instruction Sheet

Extensive Reading Scheme

Instruction Sheet

During the year you have to complete 10 different reading tasks.

You may choose any of the tasks but you may not repeat any of them.

Make sure you choose tasks that apply to the book you have read.

The length of each completed task should be appropriate for the task and for your level.

****Also put down:***

⇒ What kind of folder to buy


⇒ Due dates

⇒ Value in year's work

7. English Award Scheme

The following scheme is contributed by SKH Lam Woo Memorial Secondary School.

SKH Lam Woo Memorial Secondary School
English Department
English Award Scheme



"Walk one step and you may go a mile"

A. The scheme

All F1-F4 and F6 students are required to take part in the scheme. They have to perform tasks to score marks. Every task they perform should be verified by the English teachers. At the end of the school year i.e. May 31st, the scores would be added up and certificates would be awarded accordingly.

The Award Scheme hopes to incorporate all the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that promote the use of English so as to award students who take the initiative to partake in the activities.

B. Objectives

Our school has been earmarked to use English as the teaching medium.

The constant exposure to the use of English is essential.

There is a great need for students to take the initiative to widen the exposure to English in their everyday life in order to gain competence in this language.

In view of this need, the English Award Scheme is held with the following objectives in

mind:

1. To promote greater interest in learning English
2. To raise awareness of the multifarious opportunities of learning and improving English
3. To cultivate a better English-learning environment
4. To instill the idea the learning requires self-motivation
5. To broaden horizons and promote open-mindedness

C. Tasks:

For every level i.e. F1-F4 and F6, students have to score a minimum of 50 marks under the scheme. Failure to do so would result in punitive measures which involve doing writing exercises or as agreed upon by the teachers of the level.

Award	Marks	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Service
Pass	50-59	*	*	*	*	
Bronze	60-69	*	*	*	*	
Silver	70-79	*	*	*	*	
Gold	80-89	***	***	***	***	
Diamond	90-100 (or above)	***	***	***	***	***

For students who score more than 60 marks totally and have gained scores under all three categories of reading, writing and speaking/listening(at least 1 task has to be performed for each), they are eligible for Bronze, Silver and Gold awards.

For Diamond Awards, there should be marks scored under Services.

To encourage enthusiastic participation and strong motivation, students getting the top 3 scores in junior or senior forms would be awarded SPECIAL and ATTRACTIVE PRIZES. They would be appointed AMBASSADORS and would enjoy the following privileges:

1. priorities to take part in activities organized by the English Department e.g.

visits, film shows, watching plays etc.

2. priorities to perform as masters of ceremonies for the activities organized by the English Department

D. Penalty

Failure to score a pass mark in the scheme would result in a penalty. For each mark less than 50, a short essay of 100 words (junior forms) or a news comment of 200 words (senior forms) would have to be done.

e.g. If the score is 45, 5 essays or news comments would have to be done after the final examination.

I. Services

i. Executive officers of English Award Scheme (EAS)

Workers have to bear the following responsibilities:

- be aware of our objectives and have the initiative to promote our cause
- hold regular meetings to organize and evaluate our activities
- plan, organize and supervise the activities
- ready to work as a team
- ready to use English as the communication medium

*****Workers would be graded according to their performance:**

Excellent -20 marks

Good -15 marks

Satisfactory -10 marks

Fair -0 marks

ii. Executive officers of Computer-assisted language learning (CALL)

Workers have to bear the following responsibilities:

- formulate the web page of the English Department
- update the information on the web page
- provide links to useful language exercises and activities
- promote the web page

*****Workers would be graded according to their performance:**

Excellent -10 marks

Good -8 marks

Satisfactory -5 marks

Fair -0 marks

iii. Mentor Project (MP)

F2-6 students are recruited as mentors for F1 schoolmates to help them with English language learning beginning January. The responsibilities involve:

- regular meetings with the juniors (at least 30 minutes a week)
- academic help whenever the necessity arises

*****At the end of the school year, F1 students would be asked to evaluate the**

helpfulness of the mentors. Marks would be awarded accordingly:

Generous -20 marks

Helpful -10marks

Not helpful -0 marks

iv. Helpers of English Corner

F1-F6 students are recruited to help run the English Corner. The helpers must have strong initiative to converse in English and enjoy communicating with other people. They would be awarded marks according to assessment by teachers:

Excellent -20 m

Good -15 m

Satisfactory -10 m

Fair -0m

II. Reading

i. Newspaper reading (3 m/5m@)

This activity requires students to:

- read a news article (of the length of 300 words or more)
- underline effective and impressive expressions
- provide explanations for 5 words **(3m@)**
- besides doing the above, make 5 sentences with the 5 chosen words
(extra 2m@)

ii. Other reading materials (3m/5m@)

This activity requires students to read written materials other than newspaper. They have to:

- read the material (of the length of 300 words or more)
e.g. articles from magazines, leaflets, advertisement
- underline effective and impressive expressions
- provide explanations for 5 words **(3m@)**
- besides doing the above, make 5 sentences with the 5 chosen words **(extra 2m@)**

iii. ERS story books (6m@)

This activity requires students to read a story book under the ERS scheme

and of the appropriate level. They have to:

- read a book (subject to the approval of teachers beforehand)
- write a book report of 200 words with summary and comment
(on the book report form provided by the English Department) ♣
- (or) give a 3-minute verbal book report to the English teachers or teachers-in-charge at the English Corner.

iv. News Quiz

(5, 8 or 10 m)

At the end of the 1st term, the teams who are in the first 3 positions after the series of news quizzes would gain marks:

1st –10m

2nd –8m

3rd –5m

III. Writing

The tasks should be done on foolscap paper or exercise book.

i. Diary

(3m@)

Students should write a diary in at least 150 words on a day in an exercise book.

- a diary with 10 entries **(30m)**
- a diary with 20 entries **(60m)**
- a diary with 30 entries or more **(90m)**

ii. Letters to English teachers

(5m@)

This should be done on foolscap paper or letter paper of your own choice. The total length of the body of the letter should be no less than 200 words.

iii. Film Review

(5m@)

Students are required to write a film review of 150-200w on a film screened by the EAS using the film review form furnished by the English Department. ♣

iv. Introduction of English Websites

(10m@)

Students write a 200w passage to recommend an English learning Website. The writing should cover the address, main features and reasons for recommending it.

v. Newspaper production

(10/30m)

This is for F6 only. Groups of 6 should produce a 8-page newspaper.

Best production	-30m
Merit Award	-10m

vi. Essay Competition (10m/20m@)

Winners in essay competition organized by the English Department would be awarded 10m.

Participants in inter-school essay competitions would be awarded 10m and an extra 20m if they win in the competitions.

IV. Speaking/ Listening

i. Debate (3m/10m)

Floor speaker	(3m)
Best debater in a debate	(10m)

ii. Conversation with native speakers (10m@)

Students can converse with a native speaker of English for 5 minutes or more. This actively should be verified by the native speaker by providing information and signature on an oral activity slip obtainable from English teachers. ♣

iii. Conversation with English/ other teachers (5m@)

Students can converse with their English/ other teachers in English for 3 minutes or more. The oral activity slip should be filled in. ♣

iv. Verbal report on films or radio programmes (5m@)

Students give 3-minute verbal reports on films or radio programmes. Reports may be presented to English teachers pt teachers at the English Corner.

v. Film Show (5m@)

Students attend a film or documentary screened by the English Award Scheme.

vi. English Corner (5m@)

Students participate in the activities organized by the English Corner.

Winners in competitions organized by the English Corner would be awarded an extra 5m.

vii. Talks on language arts (bimonthly) (8m@)

Students attend talks on appreciation of films, poems, readers etc or workshop on debating techniques.

viii. Speech Competitions (5m/10m/20m)

Students take part in any competitions score 5/10 marks.

Winners in such competitions score 20 marks.

ix. Plays (15m)

Students watch a play organized by the EAS.

x. Joint-school activities (10m)

Students participate in such activities organized by the English Department.

xi. Form activities (1m-5m)

The degree of a student's involvement in the inner-class activity organized by EAS or the English Department would form the basis of assessment by English teachers in awarding marks.

xi. Speech Festival (5m/10m)

Students participate in the Speech Festival:

Choral Speaking -5m

Others - 10m

xii. Teentime programme (10m)

Students participate in helping to produce a feature in the Teentime programme.

(♣ indicates tasks should be done on special forms obtainable from the English teachers or the library)

SKH Lam Woo Memorial Secondary School

English Award Scheme

Name: _____ No. _____ Form: _____

Score Sheet

I. Services

EAS(5,8,10)										
CALL(5,8,10)										
MP(10,20)										
EC(3,5,8)										

II. Reading

Newspaper(2,3)										
Others(3,4)										
ERS (5)										
Quiz(5,8,10)										

III. Writing

Diary(3)										
Letter(5)										
Film review(5)										
Newspaper(10/30)										
Essay(10/20)										
Poems(5)										
Board(5,8,10)										

IV. Listening/ Speaking

Debate(3/10)										
Native(10)										
Teachers(5)										
Radio(5)										
Film(5)										

EC(5)										
Talks(8)										
Plays(15)										
Joint-school(10)										
Form activity(1-5)										
Speech activity(5,10)										
Teentime(10)										
Radio(5,8,10)										

Total on 31st May: I: _____ II: _____ III: _____ IV: _____

Overall total: _____

Award: _____

English Award Scheme Name: _____
Book Report Form Form: _____ No.: _____

Title: _____

Publisher: _____

Library Index No.: _____

I. Sum up the story of the book in 50-60 words.

II. State whether you would recommend the book to your friends and explain why.

III. What is the theme of the book? What causes the problem that occurs in the book?

IV. Which character in the story impresses you most? Why?

V. Does the book help you to understand life better? In what way?

English Award Scheme

Name: _____

Film Review Form

Form: _____ **No.:** _____

Title: _____

Type: _____

(Comedy?Thriller?Cartoon?Adventure?Documentary? Romance?etc)

I. Sum up the story of the film in 50-60 words.

II. What is the theme of the film? What causes the problem that occurs?

III. Which character attracts you most? Why?

IV. Do you think the film would be a box office hit in HK? Why?

**English Award Scheme
Oral Activity Slip**

Name: _____ **Form:** _____ **No:** _____

Activity

Person you converse with: _____

Nationality: _____

Relationship: _____ (teacher/schoolmate/acquaintance/etc)

Date: _____

Time: _____ **to** _____ **Duration:** _____

Signature
(person you converse with)

Part D Suggested activities for less proficient students

1. Form 1 Lunchtime Programme

Duration: 30 minutes

Format: 20 students per session

Aims:

1. To help students build confidence
2. To help students build grammatical competence
3. To help students with pronunciation
4. To help students get to know each other and foster relationships of trust between them through different types of group activities.

**Note:*

The students are of varying abilities and are not starting at the same point in terms of how much they have learnt at primary school. Therefore the pace of the lessons will be adapted to suit their different needs.

Programme:

i. Session 1

- Introductions of students by their English names,
- Conduct ball game to encourage students to interact with each other and learn each other's names.
- Matching adjective for each name, e.g. "Jolly Johnny"- through teacher help and elicited from students (see P.64)
- Follow up matching exercise to reinforce the awareness of phonic values, e.g. matching "J" with soft g, "f" with "ph" etc.
- Homework: design a name card

ii. Session 2

- Conduct memory ball-game for students to learn the name combinations of other students in the class.
- Introductions: "Hello, I'm Cute Christine. This is Wild Winnie" with appropriate body language
- Extension 1: "Nice to meet you"

2: "Hi. How are you?"

"Fine, thanks. How are you?"

"Fine."

3. "Have you met Clever Kenny?"

- Homework: Cut out some magazine pictures and write dialogue "Meeting people"

iii. Session 3

- Revise names and form questions using adjectives learnt. e.g. "Are you clever? Are you jolly?", plus 3rd person "Is he/she cute?".
- "Find someone who ..." (see P.65)
- Extension:
Add nouns i.e. "Are you a monitor/green warden/class treasurer/member of a club...?"

iv. Session 4

- "In our Class....." (see P.66)
To practise simple present questions with "to be": students mingle and ask questions such as "Are you good at Maths? and "Is he/she rich?" to complete the form about their class. Teacher review, reinforcing present tense statements.

v. Session 5

- Warm-up: asking students about things they have at home.
- "Have you got ...?" (see P.67)
If the answer is yes they fill in the student's name. Names can only be used once and the aim is to fill in all the squares.
- Extension: Students make up their own questions/grid.
- Homework: Write up sentences to report the findings
e.g. Wicked Winnie has got a computer.

vi. Session 6

- Step 1 – drill names of jobs (see P.68)
Step 2 – drill phrases associated with jobs e.g. work outside, wear uniform, handle money, handle food...

Step 3 – game “Fruit Salad”:

Students sitting in circle with one standing in the middle. The person in the middle make a question, e.g. “Do you wear a uniform?” Then all the people who wear uniforms have to change seats. The person left out has to stand in the middle and ask the next question.

- Extension/homework: Find a picture of an unusual job, a famous person or a thing. Paste it into a sketch book under a flap. Write five statements about the picture for the others to guess who or what it is.
- Homework: Write a list of questions that you would like to ask your teacher.

vii. Session 7

- Mini-project:

Students imagine that an alien (for example, a creature from the X-Files) has come to live with them and they have to introduce them to the class. Draw a picture, describe their appearance, habits, likes/dislikes, and what they want to do on earth.

viii. Session 8 & Session 9

- Grammar chants: Students listen and repeat in groups and/or individually.
- Resources: Graham, C. (1993) *Grammarchants - More Jazz Chants*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press

ix. Session 10 & Session 11

- Pronunciation games
- Resources: Hancock M. (1995) *Pronunciation Games* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press

x. Session 12

- Students are given a short poem to perform and record on tape. They will have the chance to rehearse and improve their pronunciation before recording.
- Resources: Education Department (2002) *The Learning and Teaching of Poetry (Secondary 1- 3) A Resource Package*

Adjectives

a active angry
b brave beautiful bad
c / k clever calm kind careful cute crazy
casual cool careless
ch cheerful cheeky
d dangerous dreamy devilish dependable
e excellent elegant
eager evil
earnest
f fabulous funny fierce fantastic frightening fearless
g great gorgeous good graceful
g/j generous gentle joking jolly joyful
h happy helpful handsome
i icy ideal idle
inquisitive important imaginative impulsive
l lively lovely
m merry mad mighty magical marvelous
n nice naughty nasty
o open *honest *honourable *awesome
p pretty powerful patient playful proud
qu quick quiet
r responsible reliable rich
s super strong sweet sincere silly smart silent
sh sharp shy shocking
t trendy terrible trusting tall
u useful unique
urgent
unusual
v victorious vivacious
w wonderful wicked wise wild
x excellent exemplary
y yummy
z zesty

Find Someone who...

1. Find someone who is good at Maths
2. Find someone who is living on the 20th floor
3. Find someone who is good at sports
4. Find someone who is a fast reader
5. Find someone who is able to speak Mandarin
6. Find someone who is living in a village
7. Find someone who is excellent at English
8. Find someone who is a fast swimmer
9. Find someone who is living in Yuen Long
10. Find someone who is a member of the Computer Club
11. Find someone who is a member of the Science club
12. Find someone who is an only child (This means he/she has no brothers or sisters)
13. Find someone who is living very near the school
14. Find someone who is good at spelling
15. Find someone who is a good singer
16. Find someone who is a fast writer
17. Find someone who is a good musician
18. Find someone who is having problems with English
19. Find someone who is older than you
20. Find someone who is good at drawing

In our class

1. In our class _____ is good at Maths.
2. In our class _____ is living on the 20th floor.
3. In our class _____ is good at sports.
4. In our class _____ is a fast reader.
5. In our class _____ is able to speak Mandarin.
6. In our class _____ is living in a village.
7. In our class _____ is excellent at English.
8. In our class _____ is a fast swimmer.
9. In our class _____ is living in Yuen Long.
10. In our class _____ is a member of the Computer Club.
11. In our class _____ is a member of the Science Club.
12. In our class _____ is an only child. (This means he/she has no brothers or sisters)
13. In our class _____ is living very near the school.
14. In our class _____ is good at spelling.
15. In our class _____ is a good singer.
16. In our class _____ is a fast writer.
17. In our class _____ is a good musician.
18. In our class _____ is having problems with English.
19. In our class _____ is older than me.
20. In our class _____ is good at drawing.

Have you got...?

Instructions:

- Move around the group (mingle), and ask people the questions.
- If they answer “yes”, fill in their name in the space provided.
- You can only use a person’s name once.
- Keep going until you have a name in every square.

Have you got any sisters?

**Have you got a bedroom
of your own?**

**Have you got any
McDonalds’ snoopies?**

How many? _____

How many? _____

**Have you got an
English dictionary?**

**Have you got a
computer?**

Have you got any pets?

How many? _____

**Have you got any plants
in your home?**

**Have you got a digital
watch?**

**Have you got any
brothers?**

How many? _____

How many? _____

**Have you got a favourite
T.V. programme?**

**Have you got a pair of
green trousers?**

**Have you got a
T.V. in your bedroom?**

What is it? _____

Jobs

a architect archaeologist amah artist accountant actor astronaut
b blacksmith bricklayer barber butcher baker banker beggar
c/k cook carpenter cleaner computer programmer
ch chesse-maker chat show host
d dentist doctor driver designer dancer
e economist ecologist engineer editor electrician executive
f/ph photographer football player fire-fighter flight attendant farmer
g/j journalist jockey judge jeweller janitor gardener
h historian hawker
I ice-cream seller ice-hockey player
l lawyer librarian
m mechanic miner musician manager
n nurse news-reader
o optician author
p painter pilot printer principal politician professor president
r radiologist real-estate agent rocket-scientist writer reporter
s servant secretary soldier scientist
sh chauffeur chef shop assistant shopkeeper
t teacher taxi driver travel agent train driver tailor translator
th therapist
u undertaker umpire
v vet vice-president
w waiter watchman watch maker
z zoologist zoo keeper

2. Saturday Morning Programme

Target group:

Weaker students from forms 2 and 3 , approximately 20 students in each group

Aims:

1. To help students build confidence and motivation
2. To reinforce grammatical structures
3. To give practice in listening, speaking and writing.

Programme:

i. Session 1

- Learning students names, introductions
- Phonic awareness using adjectives with same sound at beginning as English name (see P.64)
- Students writing a little about themselves

ii. Session 2

- Board games e.g. Scrabble, Mad, Monopoly: describing rules/ process, present tense
- *scissors, glue, pens and ideas for creating own board games next week*

iii. Session 3

- In teams, students plan and begin to make their own board games

iv. Session 4

- Students finish their board games and check the instructions and other written components.

v. Session 5

- Play students' board games

vi. Session 6

- Play grammar games

- Resources:
 - Watcyn-Jones, P. (1995) *Grammar Games and Activities*. England: Penguin
 - Obee, B. (1999) *The Grammar Activity Book*. England: Cambridge University Press
 - Zaorob, M.L. & Chin, E. (2001) *Games for Grammar Practice*. England: Cambridge University Press

vii. Session 7

- Play grammar games

viii. Session 8

- Warm-up – Listen to a Christmas song e.g. “Jingle Bells”
- Start organising a Christmas party and decide on the following:
 - Theme
 - Games
 - Music
 - Food
 - Decorations
 - Invitations
 - Venue

ix. Session 9

- Listen to Christmas songs e.g. ‘Christmas time is here again’, ‘Santa Claus is coming to town’ and ‘White Christmas’. Teachers can prepare the lyrics of the songs and prepare activities such as leaving some blanks for students to fill in while listening. Students may be asked to fill in specific grammatical items such as prepositions, verbs, phrasal verbs and articles.

x. Session 10

- Write invitations

xi. Session 11

- Write Christmas wishes and present them to the class

xii. Session 12

- Christmas Party

- Suggested schedule:

8:30-9:30 Set-up

9:30-11:00 Play games

Sing songs

Have snacks

Give out prizes /presents

11:00-11:30 Clean- up

Part E Suggested evaluation forms

It is essential to evaluate and to make recommendations for organising programmes in the future. To facilitate the evaluation, it is worth collecting feedback from students and staff members by various means, for example, making use of evaluation forms, conducting face-to face interviews and observing whether students appear to be enjoying individual activities. Examples of evaluation forms are found on the following pages.