e-Textbook Writing Guidelines for
English Language Education Key Learning Area

1. Introduction

The purpose of this set of guidelines is to familiarise interested e-textbook publishers with the curriculum aims, targets and objectives and guiding principles for writing e-textbooks of English Language in a bid to ensure that the e-textbooks are written in accordance with the specific requirements of the curriculum, "The Seven Learning Goals of Primary Education" (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/7-learning-goals/about-7-learning-goals/primary.html) and "The Seven Learning Goals for Secondary Education" (www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/7-learning-goals/about-7-learning-goals/secondary.html) (For details, please refer to *Basic Education Curriculum Guide – To Sustain, Deepen and Focus on Learning to Learn (Primary 1-6)*(2014) and *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* (2017)). For the general principles and requirements for writing textbooks, publishers should refer to the latest edition of the *Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks* available from the Education Bureau's Textbook Information website (www.edb.gov.hk/textbook).

2. Curriculum Aims, Learning Targets and Objectives

2.1 Curriculum Aims

The overall aims of the English Language curriculum are:

- to provide every student of English with further opportunities for extending their knowledge and experience of the cultures of other people as well as opportunities for personal and intellectual development, further studies, pleasure and work in the English medium; and

- to enable every student to prepare for the changing socio-economic demands resulting from advances in information technology; these demands include the interpretation, use and production of materials for pleasure, study and work in the English medium.

2.2 Learning Targets and Objectives

The subject target of English Language is for students to develop an ever-improving capability to use English:

- to think and communicate;
- to acquire, develop and apply knowledge; and
- to respond and give expression to experience;

and within these contexts, to develop and apply an ever-increasing understanding of how language is organised, used and learnt. The subject target is supported by three interrelated strands:

- Interpersonal Strand
- Knowledge Strand
- Experience Strand

[For details of the Strand Targets for Key Stages 1 - 4, please refer to Appendix 2 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg).]

The Learning Objectives define more specifically what students are expected to learn and use in order to work towards the Learning Targets for different Key Stages. They cover the following areas:

- language forms and communicative functions
- language skills
- language development strategies
- attitudes specific to English Language learning
- generic skills
- positive values and attitudes

[For details of the Learning Objectives, please refer to Appendices 3 - 9 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg).]

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Content

3.1.1 The e-textbooks are written in line with the following CDC curriculum documents, which are accessible at http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg:

- *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - Secondary 6)* (2017)
- *English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - 6)* (2004)
- *Supplement to the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1 - 3)*(2018)
- *English Language Curriculum and Assessment Guide (Secondary 4 - 6)* (2007) (with updates in November 2015)

3.1.2 The four components of the curriculum (aims, content, learning/teaching strategies, assessment) are manifested through the following for the purpose of student learning:

- There is a balanced coverage of the Learning Targets in the Experience, Knowledge and Interpersonal Strands at each Key Stage.

- The e-textbooks provide quality resources for a task-based approach in the learning, teaching and assessment cycle.

- There is an adequate coverage of and a balance between the learning and teaching of language forms (vocabulary, text types, language items and structures) and communicative functions for the Key Stage concerned.

- The facts, information or ideas are accurate, up-to-date and clearly presented.

- Language items and structures are introduced in context. Opportunities are provided for students to explore the form, meaning and use of the target language items and structures at the text level. Grammar rules and terms are introduced in a progressive way at appropriate stages of learning.

- The language skills are taught in context and practised integratively and systematically.

- There are opportunities for the development and application of enabling skills, such as phonics, vocabulary building skills and reference skills, in appropriate contexts, to facilitate lifelong and self-directed language learning.

- Opportunities are provided for meaningful and appropriate use of English for purposeful communication, personal enrichment and reflection.

- There is adequate recycling of grammar and vocabulary learning/teaching and application of such knowledge and skills in meaningful contexts.

- The content contains cross-curricular elements to enhance English language learning by helping students connect their learning experiences acquired in different Key Learning Areas (KLAs).

- Language arts materials (e.g. poems, songs, short stories) are provided to develop students' capability to use English to respond and give expression to real and imaginative experiences and enhance their language skills.

- There are learning/teaching activities that promote the Updated Four Key Tasks (i.e. Moral and Civic Education: Towards Values Education, Reading to Learn: Towards Reading across the Curriculum,

Project Learning: Towards Integrating and Applying Knowledge and Skills across Disciplines, Information Technology for Interactive Learning: Towards Self-directed Learning) to facilitate students' whole-person development and foster their learning to learn capabilities to achieve lifelong and self-directed learning.

- There are learning/teaching activities, further reading lists and related websites that promote self-directed language learning.

3.1.3 The Elective Part

(For the three-year Senior Secondary English Language e-textbooks only)

- The content adequately prepares students for the elective modules in the three-year Senior Secondary English Language curriculum.

- Students are exposed to a wide variety of themes (e.g. sports, popular culture, social issues) and different text types (e.g. poems, song lyrics, short stories, drama scripts, debate speeches).

3.2 Learning and Teaching

3.2.1 Specific requirements for nurturing students' generic skills and positive values and attitudes

- There are opportunities for students to develop different generic skills for lifelong and self-directed language learning and use them integratively (e.g. "collaborative problem solving skills", "holistic thinking skills").

- There are attempts to cultivate students' positive values and attitudes in different cross-curricular domains (e.g. moral and civic education, life education, sex education, environmental education) for character building and whole-person development.

- There are opportunities for students to develop information literacy and equip them with the ability and attitude for effective and ethical use of information.

- There is a variety of presentations and adequate stimulus to motivate students and develop a positive attitude towards English language learning.

- There is room for imagination and creativity in the productive tasks.

- There are opportunities for students to develop their cognitive skills (e.g. critical thinking skills, logical reasoning).

- The chosen themes/topics are capable of promoting open-mindedness and cultural understanding.

- Issues are presented from different perspectives to enable students to look at the topics from different angles and make judgements.

- Over-generalisation, stereotyping and any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender, age, race, religion, culture or disability are avoided.

3.2.2 Special requirements and advice on the design of students' work

- The tasks, activities and exercises are useful and adequate in quantity in helping students achieve the learning targets and objectives.

- There is a balanced use of pedagogical and real-life tasks.

- The tasks and activities provide meaningful contexts and are well-integrated to provide students with opportunities to use the language purposefully and develop language development strategies.

- The tasks are well supported by relevant examples and language practice exercises.

- The tasks, activities and exercises are motivating and challenging.

- Where appropriate, life-wide learning activities, which help widen students' exposure to the authentic and integrative use of language skills, can be provided.

- Grammar and vocabulary are learnt and taught in context and through the use of a variety of tasks and texts.

- There are awareness-raising activities for students to explore and/or compare the forms and functions of the target language items in texts.

- The language practice exercises are contextualised and meaningful.

- There are opportunities for students to access and produce multimodal texts to enable them to understand how the interplay of different modes (e.g. images, sounds, animations) creates meaning and develop new literacy skills.

- There are opportunities to promote Language across the Curriculum (LaC) or Reading/Writing across the Curriculum (R/WaC) (where appropriate in support of STEM education) to connect students' learning experiences acquired in different KLAs and help nurture an entrepreneurial spirit.

- There are opportunities for students to select, synthesise and evaluate information from multiple sources in completing a task.

- Tedious, mechanical and repetitive learning tasks/exercises are avoided.

- There is a purpose and a target audience for a speaking or writing task.

- There is a good variety of reading/listening texts, activities and tasks/exercises that arouse students' interests.

- There are different types of questions on reading texts, including higher-order questions, to stimulate critical thinking.

- There are opportunities to help students develop metacognitive strategies (e.g. goal setting, monitoring their own progress, self-evaluation and reflection) in the learning materials and activities, and promote assessment for/as learning.

3.2.3 Catering for learner diversity

- The tasks, activities and exercises can be easily used/adapted to suit students of different needs, interests, abilities and learning styles.

- Where appropriate, suggestions on extended tasks can be provided for stretching the potential of students.

3.3 Structure and Organisation

Specific requirements on curriculum organisation

- The content is suitably organised and suited to students' needs, interests and abilities and relevant to their everyday experience.

- There is an appropriate balance of both depth and breadth in the presentation/exploration of the theme/topic/issue to avoid overload in content.

- The learning points are arranged in proper sequence, i.e. from easy to difficult, from simple to complex, and from factual to conceptual.

- The table of contents and titles/headings/outlines provide a clear indication of the content of the e-textbooks for students' reference and are well-presented.

3.4 Language

- The language used is accurate and appropriate.

- The language used is of an appropriate level of difficulty.

- The e-textbooks/learning materials provide good models of authentic language in use.

- The style and vocabulary used in the texts are suitable.

3.5 Illustrations

- The illustrations are necessary and related to the content.
- There are sufficient and appropriate illustrations.
- The illustrations are suitably labelled and explained.
- The illustrations are of satisfactory quality in terms of clarity, design, attractiveness and effectiveness.

3.6 Pedagogical Use of e-Features

3.6.1 Features of interactive activities and subject-specific e-features

- There is use of e-features for learning, teaching and assessment, including:
  - demonstration of reading aloud continuous texts and dialogues;
  - demonstration of pronunciation of key words and illustration of meaning of key words in audio and/or visual formats; and
  - switching on/off the texts in listening practice.

3.6.2 Print on Demand (Optional)

- It is suggested that a print-on-demand function be provided for users to create one or multiple hard copies of the primary reading materials.

3.7 Learning Elements/Skills Not Replaceable by Digital Means

- Skills such as penmanship and proofreading skills are not replaceable by digital means.

3.8 Technical and Functional Requirements

- Refer to the latest edition of the *Guiding Principles for Quality Textbooks* for the relevant requirements.

4. Others

4.1 When writing e-textbooks, publishers have to ensure that the contents and information provided in the materials should be correct, complete, up-to-date, objective and impartial. The source and the date of the information should be provided as appropriate. The information in the illustrations and images should avoid showing brand-names of commercial items unless it is necessary.

4.2 Publishers should avoid putting excessive hyperlinks in the e-textbooks so as not to violate the self-containment principles. The contents of the hyperlinks should be placed in the Teacher's Book or the publisher's online learning

platforms as far as possible for teachers and students' reference. The hyperlinks should link to the websites with high credibility, such as the official websites and the websites of academic institutions, and avoid linking to commercial or social media platforms.

4.3   It is incumbent on the publishers to ensure that all proof-reading work, including the language, information, punctuation, illustration, pagination, etc., is completed and accurate before submitting the e-textbooks for review.

4.4   Publishers should clear all copyright issues of the e-textbooks as appropriate.

4.5   Publishers should pay attention to the curriculum time allocation suggested in the curriculum documents of this subject to ensure that the learning contents are designed with an appropriate quantity and level.

4.6   If publishers submit other versions (such as printed version) of the same textbook title for review at the same time, they should duly check the consistency of the contents among all the versions. If another version will be submitted at a later stage, the suggestions in the review reports for the previous submitted version should be thoroughly followed before submission.

4.7   Publishers should submit or make available the audio scripts of all the listening and phonics practices in the e-textbooks, and the answer keys to all practices.

4.8   For additional learning and teaching resources (e.g. presentation slides, worksheets) which normally come with the Teacher's Book in printed textbooks, publishers should remove them from the Student's Book, or tailor-make them to suit students' needs, interests and abilities to facilitate self-directed learning.

4.9   Publishers may make reference to the glossary provided in the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 - Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg) for the description of terms used in the Curriculum Guide.

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Curriculum Development Institute
Education Bureau
September 2020