

IMPLEMENTING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SYLLABUS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Teacher manual



2023

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"Implementing the English Language Syllabys in Primary Education" has been developed by the Curricula and Teacher Qualification Department of the Quality Assurance Agency of Pre-University Education in Albania.

Its aim is to support Albanian English language teachers who teach English to young learners in grades three to five to successfully align their teaching with the CEFR, national curricula and the English language syllabus.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SYLLABUS (ELS) OUTLINE	5
GOALS OF ELS	9
COMPETENCE-BASED LEARNING APPROACH OF ELSs	12
1. Key competences.....	12
2. Key competences learning outcomes for grades III-V.....	14
3. Communicative language competences.....	18
4. Communicative English language competences learning outcomes	20
5. Language Skills Descriptors for A1 Level	24
6. Examples of use in different domains for descriptors of online interaction and mediation activities	34
7. Strategies	38
8. Domains	40
9. Activities and Games.....	44
10. Attitudes and values.....	45
11. Distribution of teaching classes	46
12. Integration of the four skills	47
METHODOLOGY GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES	49
PEDAGOGY	53
1. Pedagogical Processes.....	54
ASSESSMENT	56
1. Types of Assessment.....	57
2. Planning a Balanced Assessment.....	63
LESSON PLANNING	65
BIBLIOGRAPHY	79



INTRODUCTION

This manual has been developed to support teachers of English to young learners in primary education (grades III-V) in successfully implementing the English language syllabuses for grades III, IV, V.

The English Language Syllabuses (ELS) for grades III-V have been designed to help every young learner reach their own full potential through a program of learning that is relevant and age appropriate. The ELSs recognize that the needs of young learners are diverse, and help all of them develop the knowledge, skills, and perspectives they need to become informed, productive, caring, responsible, critical thinkers in order to communicate effectively and thrive in an ever-changing global community. It is of great importance that young learners are closely connected to the curriculum and the whole learning process; that they see themselves in what is taught, how it is taught, and how it applies to everyday life and the world at large.

It is the right of every child to be provided with equal opportunities and to receive quality and equal education, by paying special attention to children from vulnerable groups and children with special needs. Children are born with an incredible capacity and desire to learn.

It is important that young learners are provided with rich experiences through play and activities, which can help develop their social and friendship skills. These activities also help them understand more about themselves, family and friends, as well as enhance their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Learning is a complex process of discovery, collaboration, and inquiry facilitated by language. Language is the primary basis of all communication and the primary instrument of thought. Through speaking, listening, reading and writing, ideas and information are expressed and communicated, aspirations, attitudes and emotions are articulated, and



possibilities are explored. Language has a great influence in the learning process and all aspects of language are interdependent. Young learners learn language, but they also learn through language. Language helps them clarify and interpret experiences, acquire new concepts, and add depth to concepts already grasped.

Spoken language is a crucial factor in the development of the young learner's cognitive abilities and it facilitates the acquisition of social and communicative skills. It is, above all, the principal integrating element in the English Language Syllabuses. Activities such as comprehension, responding to text and the simple approach to writing are based on a process of talk and discussion.

The approach to the teaching and learning of reading is based on the young learner's general language development and on the development of phonemic and phonological awareness. Having developed an awareness of the sounds in words through a rich oral language experience in grades I and II, the young learner then begins to acquire an understanding of sound-letter relationships and gradually jumps to spelling. From the earliest years, young learners should experience a print/screen-rich environment in which they have ready access to books and screen. By creating such an atmosphere, young learners are taught to appreciate the usefulness and the pleasures of reading.

The ability to write clearly, correctly and expressively is developed progressively through the process of writing. The young learner is encouraged to write for different purposes using a very simple language. This will stimulate creativity and develop the young learner's ability to use written language to express a wide range of ideas, attitudes and emotions in the future.

Knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is important to having a strong foundation of the language in order to enable effective communication. Grammar and vocabulary should be considered and used as resources to help learners express themselves and their ideas effectively and clearly.



Teachers should focus on grammar and vocabulary in the context of language use. At the primary level, greater focus should be placed on developing a rich vocabulary and practical grammatical knowledge for the purposeful use of language. More complex language use and grammar will be taught in the coming years in all other areas of language learning.

Technological skills are increasingly important for advancement in education, work, and leisure. The syllabuses of grades III-V offer opportunities for teachers to integrate information and communication technologies into the teaching and learning process and to provide children with opportunities to use modern technology to enhance their learning in English language. One of the digital learning platforms that English language teachers in primary education can use is Akelius platform¹, which is offered for free. More materials on the content of this platform and how to integrate it into lesson planning and delivery can be found in ASCAP webpage².

¹ <https://languages.akelius.com/>

² <https://www.ascap.edu.al/>



THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SYLLABUS (ELS) OUTLINE

The English Language Syllabuses for grades III-V are based on National Curriculum Framework, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: teaching, learning and assessment (CEFR) and CEFR-Companion Volume.

The syllabuses address a large audience including teachers, textbook authors, education specialists, faculties of education, learners, parents and community.

Teachers use the syllabuses to create a clear picture about what the young learners should learn at this stage and how to develop instruction in order to equip young learners with key and subject competences. In addition, they also help teachers to reflect on their practices of teaching and coordinate the work and their efforts to meet the needs of young learners in understanding the subject and its practical usage in and outside the classroom setting.

The CEFR's action-oriented approach represents a shift away from syllabuses based on a linear progression through language structures, or a pre-determined set of notions and functions, towards syllabuses based on needs analysis, oriented towards real-life tasks and constructed around purposefully selected notions and functions.

The English Language Syllabuses focus on the development of the key and language competences. They describe in details the communicative language competences, the learning outcomes for each competence and



the four language skills. ELSs also give a brief overview of the language learning strategies that young learners might use at this stage.

Teachers will also find in the syllabuses a wide range of topics, functions and activities which they can use while teaching English to young learners.

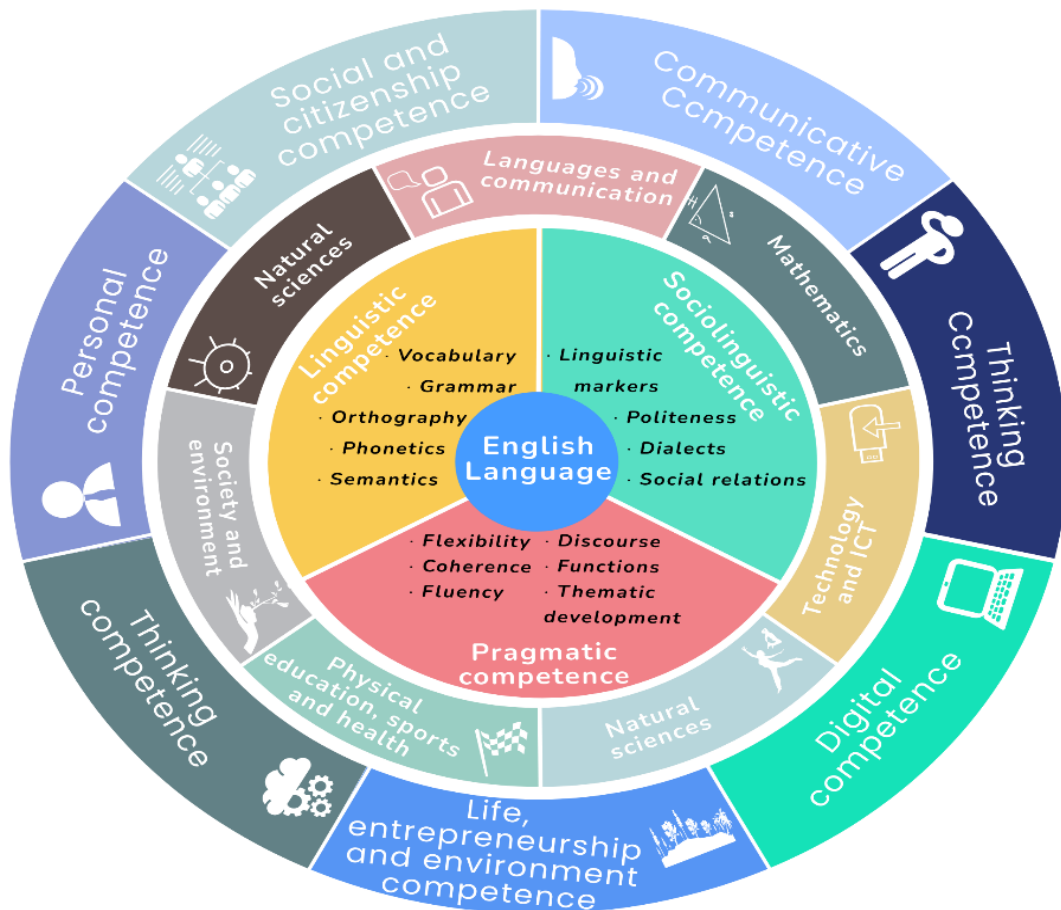
Methodology, pedagogy guidelines and principles will provide teachers with contemporary methods, approaches and strategies in teaching, learning and assessment.

The syllabuses offer teachers the right pedagogy and pedagogical processes they should use in order to teach the skills of the 21st century and make learning English a joyful experience for young learners by providing them with opportunities to explore, understand and experiment.

The last chapters of this document provide guidelines on assessment and lesson planning as important parts of teaching and learning, which will support teachers to plan realistically, and young learners to grow and appreciate learning English language and culture.

The following diagram shows how English language is an integral part of the national curricular framework, which aims at a student-centred teaching approach.





Textbook authors use the syllabuses to design textbooks for this appropriate age of young learners in alignment with the principles and guidelines of National Curriculum, and language levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, as well as make the textbooks more compatible with the young learners’ interests and needs. A closer study of the syllabuses for these grades help ensure coherence and avoid unnecessary overload.



Education specialists and local education administrators use the syllabuses for inspection purposes, monitoring, evaluation, research, etc. to ensure the fulfilment of the defined standards for respective stages.

Faculties of education use the syllabuses to adapt their curricula in order to effectively prepare future teachers as well as pre service teachers for their pedagogical practices.

Beneficiaries of this syllabus are: young learners, parents and the community.

Young learners benefit from progressive learning, apply knowledge, activities, skills, attitudes and values in English as a subject towards becoming a proficient user of the language. They are capable of mastering English language while recognizing that learning and progressing in the study of a foreign language requires dedication and determination.

Parents provide the most vital link between young learners and the school as they can contribute to the effectiveness of English language syllabuses by:









-  encouraging their children to study the English language and supporting such study while attending the progress based on the knowledge their children are expected to gain at a certain age and stage of studying;
-  providing diverse linguistic and cultural models based on their own or other peoples` background.

Community may use this document to understand more about the importance of languages and how languages contribute in the development of the community life. Based on recent changes in education in Albania for promoting community centre schools, the involvement of communities as resources are valuable to language students and teachers.



GOALS OF ELS

The main goals of teaching English in basic education in Albania include:









-  developing in young learners a positive attitude towards English and towards other languages and cultures;
-  encouraging and enabling young learners to communicate and interact in English in various real life situations (within the limits of these syllabuses);
-  developing reading, listening, speaking and writing skills to understand and communicate through English in real life situations;
-  developing and strengthening critical thinking and problem-solving skills;
-  supporting learner-teacher interaction;
-  promoting pupils' cognitive and social development;
-  catering for young learners' different learning styles by providing a variety of activities and materials;
-  developing a limited range of language learning strategies.

The purpose of teaching English from an early age is to provide the young learners with the opportunity of getting to know another language, different from their home language. Furthermore, they are going to use this new language as a tool to learn more and as a good start for the next stage, which will help them upgrade the level of the language.






The overall approach during the initial years of English language learning experiences will be focusing on learning through interaction, games, activities, projects without an in-depth study of linguistic elements. As young learners advance with their language learning experience, at later stages the focus will shift towards a more analytic approach, but always keeping a balance between the two.



The aims of the English Language Syllabuses for grades III-V are to:

-  promote positive attitudes and develop an appreciation of the value of English language and culture;
-  enable the young learner to develop awareness of other cultures and traditions through listening, speaking, reading, and writing;
-  create, foster and maintain the young learner's interest and enjoyment in communication activities;
-  develop the young learner's ability to engage appropriately in listener-speaker relationships;
-  develop the skill of listening actively and appreciate the significance of tone of voice, facial expression and gesture;
-  explore, experiment with and enjoy all the playful aspects of language;
-  develop print/screen awareness, an understanding of the purposes of print and screen;
-  develop an appropriate range of comprehension strategies.

To further strengthen lifelong learning and the integration and application of knowledge across all areas of language learning, the ELSs for grades III-V are enriched with a focus on:

-  encouraging children own selection of a wide variety of texts and materials which will help them enrich their language for independent listening, reading and viewing;
-  varying the exposure of children to information-rich content with increasing sophistication and complexity from multiple print, non-print and digital networked sources;
-  developing critical literacy skills that encourage critical and creative thinking, making connections beyond the texts, the co-construction of knowledge and creation of new understandings;
-  extensive listening, reading and viewing where children gather and try to analyze information from a variety of texts and multicultural contexts;
-  increasing opportunities for children to engage in the authentic and creative production of a variety of texts for different purposes through



speaking, writing and representing, so as to demonstrate the use of language with confidence.

In Albania, students start learning English in Pre-University education at grade I (Pre-A1 level) and continue up to grade XII (B2 level).

Young learners at grades III-V are identified as A1 language users.

Level A1 (Breakthrough) – is considered the lowest level of generative language use – the point at which the learner can interact in a simple way, ask and answer simple questions about themselves, where they live, people they know, and things they have, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, rather than relying purely on a very finite rehearsed, lexically organized repertoire of situation-specific phrases.³

The following table is taken from the CEFR global scale and shows what a learner is able to do in A1 Level.

A1-Basic User	<p>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</p>
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³<https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>



COMPETENCE-BASED LEARNING APPROACH OF ELSS

Competences are the sum of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that allow a person to perform actions. Competence-based curriculum means linking the key competences with language competences in the teaching and learning process and preparing learners for the world. Competence based learning empowers learners to focus on mastery of valuable skills and knowledge and learn at their own pace. This requires from teachers using the adequate methodology, selecting the proper techniques and strategies in reaching the desired learning outcomes.

1. Key competences

Key competences are those not specific to language, but which are called upon for actions of all kinds, including language activities.⁴

The seven key competences in the Albanian National Curriculum Framework are as follows:

Communicative Competence	The use of language as a tool for oral and written communication.
Thinking Competence	The ability to reflect upon and explain the steps of solving a simple problem faced in a real-life situation.
Learning to Learn Competence	The ability to plan courses of action and set goals in order to develop efficiency and autonomy during the lifelong learning process.

⁴ <https://rm.coe.int/1680459f97>



Social and Citizenship Competence	The ability to understand the social reality in which we live and the desire to contribute to its development.
Personal Competence	The ability to imagine, develop and evaluate individual or collective actions
Life, Entrepreneurship and Environment Competence	The ability to plan, interact and use the environment for educational purposes
Digital Competence	The ability to find, obtain, process and transmit information using traditional and modern technologies.

Key competences in the Albanian Curriculum Framework:

- 👩🏫 focus on the development of abilities rather than the assimilation of theoretical content;
- 👩🏫 challenge students to become competent in solving problems effectively;
- 👩🏫 develop progressively and can be acquired in different learning situations;
- 👩🏫 integrate knowledge from different academic areas;
- 👩🏫 promote equity as they guarantee an education that will respond to the necessities of modern society with all students expected to accept and develop them;
- 👩🏫 support lifelong learning process.

They also:

- 👩🏫 integrate formal and informal learning experiences;
- 👩🏫 allow students to use their skills in widely different contexts;
- 👩🏫 help clarify objectives, content and assessment criteria in all the subjects.
















2. Key competences learning outcomes for grades III-V

Communicative competence



The young learner:





-  tells a very short story;
-  expresses the emotions and feelings that one experiences while watching a movie or listening to a story or fairy tale with one`s own peers;
-  expresses simple opinions for a familiar topic during a group discussion;
-  reads aloud a minimum of a familiar half-page text;
-  writes a very short text;
-  expresses the message of a simple literary text through speaking, role – playing, etc.;
-  identifies main characters in a short narrative/story, drama or film and plays the role of one of the characters in interaction with his/her peers;
-  expresses the experiences that have accompanied him/her while watching and listening to a dialogue, short text through speaking, writing, drawing, miming, etc.;
-  asks and answers questions about name, age, family members, etc.;
-  writes disconnected words that identify different figures;
-  identifies the main characters of a story when helped by pictures and animation;
-  expresses orally and in writing simple sentences in the foreign language and translate them into the native language;
-  writes a short and simple greeting card.



Thinking competence











The young learner:

-  follows by reacting to and explains the steps to be followed in solving a simple problem, which one faces in a real-life situation;
-  answers to the questions addressed to by using words, memorized sentences or actions;
-  identifies characters in a story or short movie when helped by pictures or videos;
-  creates connections between words and pictures, symbols, numbers, groups, etc.

Learning to learn competence



The young learner:







-  follows simple instructions to perform an action/ activity/ task that is required;
-  asks and answers questions about a given familiar topic following a given pattern;
-  solves a very simple given task independently and presents possible ways of solving it in front of one`s own peers;
-  makes efforts to evaluate one`s own progress independently in a task or activity, using simple techniques for identifying mistakes;
-  collects and classifies materials of one`s own performance to prepare or enrich personal portfolio;
-  solves a given task/exercise with the help of the teacher;
-  works in pairs or in groups to accomplish the given task;
-  introduces himself, school, family, desires, etc., with pre-learned sentences.



Social and citizenship competence





The young learner:

-  develops and follows simple rules for group work in cooperation with the group members;
-  expresses one`s own opinion after asking for permission from the group members;
-  respects every group member`s idea by listening attentively and actively;
-  cooperates with all group members on ways that lead to the completion of a very simple activity;
-  expresses, listens and respects the opinion of each member;
-  uses polite words with teachers and peers.

Personal competence



The young learner:






-  cooperates with the others regardless of their background, abilities and specific needs;
-  cooperates actively with peers to achieve a common goal in class, school or outside of school activities.



Life, entrepreneurship and environment competence






The young learner:

-  prepares a simple daily plan for two-three daily activities, in written form, taking into consideration time, place, necessary materials and tools to accomplish the task;
-  identifies necessary sources (materials, tools, etc.) and uses them to accomplish a task or activity in class, school or home;
-  prepares simple posters with drawings and detached descriptive words about the environment, life at school and family;
-  finds similarities and differences between pictures and characters in a very simple story;
-  provides simple personal data.

Digital competence



The young learner:


-  tells a very story which one hears using audio-visual devices;
-  prepares original, personal works using images found from information sources, as a form to express his/her emotions;
-  identifies the characters, time, place of a short text heard (from audio-visual means), expressed clearly and slowly.




3. Communicative language competences

One of the most important goals of English language learning is the development of communicative competence. Young learners are expected to develop slightly the communicative competence so that they could be able to receive and reply to several types of messages successfully in their everyday life. When young learners start to develop communicative competence, they are able to convey and receive simple messages successfully; they use the language to participate in everyday familiar social interaction, and establish relationships with others. They can use the language to express their needs, likes, and dislikes. It is common knowledge that most young learners learn English language best when they are provided opportunities to use the target language to communicate in a wide range of activities. The more the young learners use English in simple and meaningful situations, the more rapidly they achieve communicative competence.


Communicative language competences⁵ of a learner involve knowledge, skills and know-how for each of the following three components:

 **Linguistic competence** deals with formal characteristics of a language such as grammar, phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax. For this age group the focus will be on lexicon, simple expressions, short sentences and very simple grammar rules.

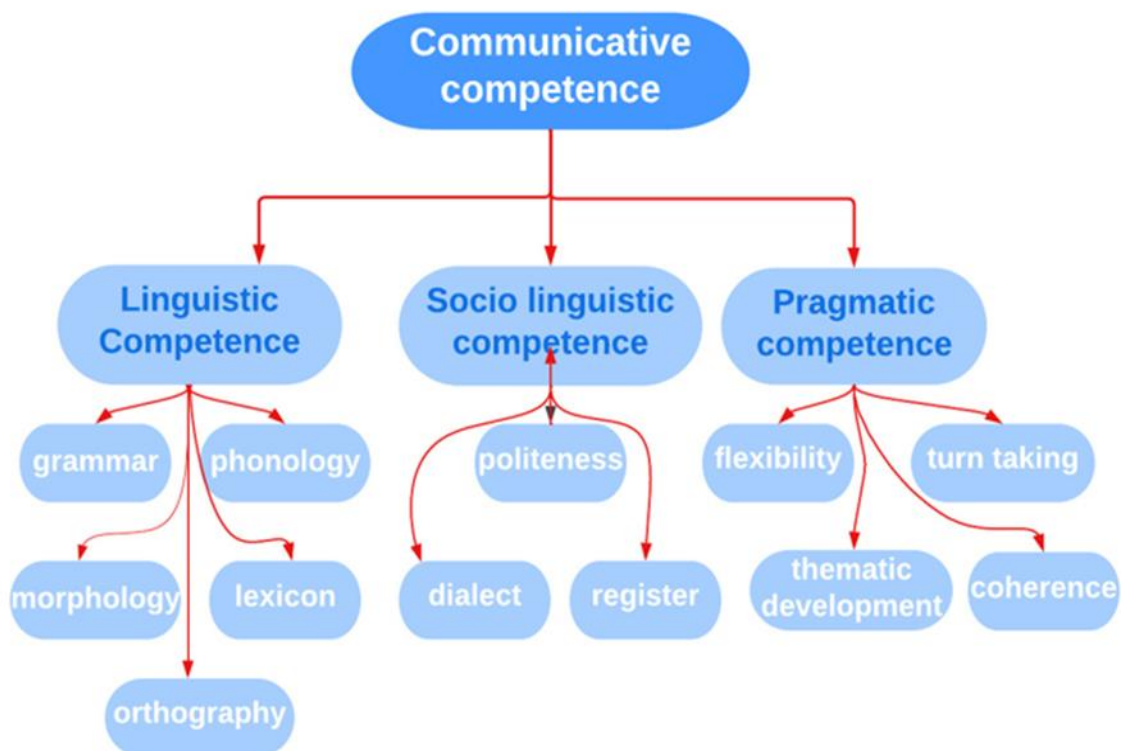
 **Sociolinguistic competence** relates to the socio-cultural dimension of language use such as politeness rules or social group repertoires, expressions of folk wisdom, dialects etc.; For this age group the focus will be politeness rules or social group repertoires.

⁵ <https://rm.coe.int/1680459f97>



 **Pragmatic competence** covers the functional use of language, for example the use in specific structures, communicative structures and scenarios of how to act in a given social event or how to participate in a discussion or interview. For this age group the focus will be the simple use of communicative structures.

The following diagram illustrates the component parts of the communicative competence.










Overall language proficiency is mainly achieved through two broad dimensions: the quantity dimension (the number of tasks learners can perform successfully by language use, in what number of contexts, in relation to what number of themes, domains etc.) which refers to the “Communicative Activities” and a quality dimension (how effectively and efficiently the learners can achieve their goals through language use) which refers to the “Communicative Language Competences”. Strategies, on the other hand, provide a vital link between these two dimensions.



4. Communicative English language competences learning outcomes

As mentioned above the communicative language competences refer to the quality dimension of the overall language proficiency. Below are given the learning outcomes at the end of A1 Level⁶, for the communicative language competences.





Subject area competences		Level A1 Outcomes 
Linguistic Competence	General linguistic range	 The young learner  has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete type;  uses some basic structures in one-clause sentences with some omission or reduction of elements.
	Vocabulary range	 has a basic vocabulary repertoire of words/signs and phrases related to particular concrete situations.
	Grammatical accuracy	 shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learnt repertoire.
	Phonological control	 understands with some effort the pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases;

⁶ <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>



		<p>reproduces correctly a limited range of sounds as well as stress for simple, familiar words and phrases;</p> <p>reproduces sounds in the target language if carefully guided;</p> <p>articulates a limited number of sounds, so that speech is only intelligible if the interlocutor provides support (e.g. by repeating correctly and by eliciting repetition of new sounds);</p> <p>uses the prosodic features of a limited repertoire of simple words and phrases intelligibly, in spite of a very strong influence on stress, rhythm and/or intonation from the other language(s) they speak; their interlocutor needs to be collaborative.</p>
	Orthographic control	<p>copies familiar words and short phrases, e.g. simple signs or instructions, names of everyday objects, names of shops, and set phrases used regularly;</p> <p>spells their address, nationality and other personal details.</p> <p>uses basic punctuation (e.g. full stops, question marks).</p>
Socio- Linguistic	Sociolinguistic appropriateness	<p>establishes basic social contact by using the simplest everyday polite forms of: greetings and farewells; introductions; saying please, thank you, sorry, etc.</p>
Pragmatic	Flexibility	No descriptors available
	Turn taking	No descriptors available



	Thematic development	 No descriptors available
	Coherence and cohesion	 links words/signs or groups of words/signs with very basic linear connectors (e.g. "and" or "then").
	Propositional precision	 communicates basic information about personal details and needs of a concrete type in a simple way.
	Fluency	 manages very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words/signs, and to repair communication.



Qualitative features of spoken language for A1 Level










Range	Accuracy	Fluency	Interaction	Coherence	Phonology
The young learner has as a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations.	The young learner shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire.	The young learner manages very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication.	The young learner asks and answers questions about personal details, interacts in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition, rephrasing and repair.	The young learner links words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like “and” or “then”.	Pronunciation of a very limited repertoire of learnt words and phrases can be understood with some effort by interlocutors used to dealing with speakers of the language group concerned. The young learner reproduces correctly a limited range of sounds as well as the stress on simple, familiar words and phrases.



5. Language Skills Descriptors for A1 Level

The number of tasks young learners can perform successfully by language use, in what number of contexts, in relation to what number of themes, domains etc. constitute the quantity dimension of overall language proficiency. These tasks are referred to as communicative activities. Young learners take part in a lot of communicative activities during the class which develop on their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills.

Young learners in this language level will be able to:

-  listen for information and enjoyment;
-  listen, understand and start using simple words and expressions to identify different objects related to their everyday life and immediate needs;
-  express their ideas by identifying and naming various items;
-  use drawing, mark making, symbols to communicate ideas and information;
-  read short and simple sentences with understanding and enjoyment;
-  explore and work with different materials, such as songs, role-play, images and pictures which provide sufficient exposure to the English language;
-  understand a series of simple oral statements in a controlled and structured context;
-  engage actively in various activities;
-  use familiar everyday words and simple expressions to talk out daily routines and activities.

Below are given the learning outcomes and descriptors of the language skills and activities young learners perform in grades III-V, based on the descriptors of A1 Level according to CEFR and its Companion Volume.



A1⁷ Level

Reception

Oral comprehension



Overall oral comprehension

The young learner can follow language, which is very slow and carefully articulated, with long pauses for them to assimilate meaning. Can recognise concrete information (e.g. places and times) on familiar topics encountered in everyday life, provided it is delivered slowly and clearly.




The young learner:




Understanding conversation between other people

-  understands some expressions when people are discussing them, family, school, hobbies or surroundings, provided the delivery is slow and clear;
-  understands words/signs and short sentences in a simple conversation (e.g. between a customer and a salesperson in a shop), provided people communicate very slowly and very clearly.


Understanding as a member of a live audience

-  understands in outline very simple information being explained in a predictable situation like a guided tour, provided the delivery is very slow and clear and that there are long pauses from time to time.

Understanding announcements and instructions

-  understands instructions addressed carefully and slowly to them and follow short, simple directions;
-  understands when someone tells them slowly and clearly where something is, provided the object is in the immediate environment;
-  understands figures, prices and times given slowly and clearly in an announcement by loudspeaker, e.g. at a railway station or in a shop.


Understanding audio (or signed) media and recordings

-  picks out concrete information (e.g. places and times) from short recordings on familiar everyday topics, provided they are delivered very slowly and clearly.

⁷ <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>



Watching TV, film and video

-  recognises familiar words/signs and phrases and identify the topics in headline news summaries and many of the products in advertisements, by exploiting visual information and general knowledge.

Reading Comprehension



Overall reading comprehension

The young learner can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required.







The young learner:



Reading correspondence

-  understands short, simple messages on postcards;
-  understands short, simple messages sent via social media or e-mail (e.g. proposing what to do, when and where to meet).

Reading for orientation

-  recognises familiar names, words/signs and very basic phrases on simple notices in the most common everyday situations;
-  understands store guides (information on which floors departments are on) and directions (e.g. where to find lifts);
-  understands basic hotel information (e.g. times when meals are served);
-  finds and understand simple, important information in advertisements, programmes for special events, leaflets and brochures (e.g. what is proposed, costs, the date and place of the event, departure times).

Reading for information and argument


-  gets an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short, simple descriptions, especially if there is visual support;
-  understands short texts on subjects of personal interest (e.g. news flashes about sports, music, travel or stories) composed in very simple language and supported by illustrations and pictures.




Reading instructions

 follows short, simple directions (e.g. to go from X to Y).

Reading as a leisure activity

 understands short, illustrated narratives about everyday activities described in simple words.

 understands in outline short texts in illustrated stories, provided the images help them to guess at a lot of the content.

Production

Oral production

Overall oral production


The young learner can produce simple, mainly isolated phrases about people and places.




The young learner:

Sustained monologue: describing experience

 describes themselves, what they do and where they live;

 describes simple aspects of their everyday life in a series of simple sentences, using simple words/signs and basic phrases, provided they can prepare in advance.

Sustained monologue: giving information

 names an object and indicate its shape and colour while showing it to others using basic words/signs, phrases and formulaic expressions, provided they can prepare in advance.

Written production

Overall written production




The young learner can give information about matters of personal relevance (e.g. likes and dislikes, family, pets) using simple words/signs and basic expressions. Can produce simple isolated phrases and sentences.





The young learner:

Creative writing

-  produces simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do;
-  describes in very simple language what a room looks like;
-  uses simple words/signs and phrases to describe certain everyday objects (e.g. the colour of a car, whether it is big or small).

Interaction

Oral interaction



Overall oral interaction

The young learner can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition at a slower rate, rephrasing and repair. Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.







The young learner:

Understanding an interlocutor


-  understands everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to them clearly and slowly, with repetition, by a sympathetic interlocutor;
-  understands questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to them and follow short, simple directions.

Conversation




-  understands everyday expressions aimed at the satisfaction of simple needs of a concrete type, delivered directly to them in clear, slow and repeated language by a sympathetic interlocutor;
-  takes part in a simple conversation of a basic factual nature on a predictable topic (e.g. their home country, family, school);
-  makes an introduction and use basic greeting and leave-taking expressions;
-  asks how people are and react to news.






Informal discussion (with friends)

-  exchanges likes and dislikes for sports, foods, etc., using a limited repertoire of expressions, when addressed clearly, slowly and directly.







Goal-oriented co-operation

-  understands questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to them and follow short, simple directions;
-  acts on basic instructions that involve times, locations, numbers, etc;
-  asks people for things, and give people things.



Obtaining goods and services

-  asks people for things and give people things;
-  asks for food and drink using basic expressions;
-  handles numbers, quantities, cost and time.

Information exchange

-  understands questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to them and follow short, simple directions.
-  asks and answers simple questions, initiates and responds to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics;
-  asks and answer questions about themselves and other people, where they live, people they know, things they have;
-  indicates time by lexicalised phrases like “next week”, “last Friday”, “in November”, “3 o’clock”;
-  expresses numbers, quantities and cost in a limited way;
-  names the colour of clothes or other familiar objects and can ask the colour of such objects.

Interviewing and being interviewed

-  replies in an interview to simple direct questions, puts very slowly and clearly in direct, non-idiomatic language, about personal details;
-  states in simple language the nature of a problem to a health professional and answers simple questions such as “Does that hurt?” even though they have to rely on gestures and body language to reinforce the message.



Written interaction




Overall written interaction

The young learner can ask for or pass on personal details.





The young learner:




Correspondence

-  composes messages and online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies and likes/ dislikes, using simple words and formulaic expressions, with reference to a dictionary;
-  composes a short, simple postcard;
-  composes a short, very simple message (e.g. a text message) to friends to give them a piece of information or to ask them a question.

Notes, messages and forms


-  fills in numbers and dates, own name, nationality, address, age, date of birth or arrival in the country, etc., e.g. on a hotel registration form;
-  leaves a simple message giving information regarding for instance where they have gone, or what time they will be back (e.g. "Shopping: back at 5 p.m.").

Online conversation and discussion

-  formulates very simple messages and personal online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc., relying on the aid of a translation tool;
-  uses formulaic expressions and combinations of simple words/signs to post short positive and negative reactions to simple online postings and their embedded links and media;
-  responds to further comments with standard expressions of thanks and apology.



Goal-oriented online transactions and collaboration


-  completes a very simple online purchase or application, providing basic personal information (e.g. name, e-mail or telephone number).

Mediation


Overall mediation

The young learner can use simple words/signs and non-verbal signals to show interest in an idea. Can convey simple, predictable information of immediate interest given in short, simple signs and notices, posters and programmes.


Mediating a text

 The young learner:


Relaying specific information in speech or sign

-  relays (in Language B) simple, predictable information about times and places given in short, simple statements (delivered in Language A).



Relaying specific information in writing

-  lists (in Language B) names, numbers, prices and very simple information of immediate interest in oral texts (in Language A), provided the articulation is very slow and clear, with repetition.


Processing text in speech or sign

-  conveys (in Language B) simple, predictable information given in short, very simple signs and notices, posters and programmes (in Language A).

Processing text in writing

-  conveys, with the help of a dictionary, (in Language B) the meaning of simple phrases (in Language A) on familiar and everyday themes;
-  copies out single words and short texts presented in standard printed format.


Translating a written text in speech or sign

-  provides a simple, rough oral translation (into Language B) of



simple everyday words/signs and phrases (written in Language A) that are encountered on signs and notices, posters, programmes, leaflets, etc.

Translating a written text in writing


 translates, with the help of a dictionary, simple words/signs and phrases (from Language A into Language B), but may not always select the appropriate meaning.

Expressing a personal response to creative texts



 uses simple words/signs to state how a work made them feel.

Mediating concepts


Collaborating in a group

 The young learner:


Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers

-  invites others' contributions to very simple tasks using short, simple phrases prepared in advance;
-  indicates that they understand and ask whether others understand.


Collaborating to construct meaning

 expresses an idea and ask what others think, using very simple words/signs and phrases, provided they can prepare in advance.


Leading group work

 The young learner:

Encouraging conceptual talk

 uses simple isolated words/signs and non-verbal signals to show interest in an idea.

Mediating communication

 The young learner:


Facilitating pluricultural space

 facilitates an intercultural exchange by showing a welcoming attitude




and interest with simple words/ signs and non-verbal signals, by inviting others to contribute, and by indicating whether they understand when addressed directly

Acting as an intermediary in informal situations (with friends)

 communicates (in Language B) other people's personal details and very simple, predictable information (in Language A), provided other people help with formulation.

Facilitating communication in delicate situations and disagreements


 recognises when people disagree or when someone has a problem and can use memorised, simple expressions (e.g. "I understand" or "Are you okay?") to indicate sympathy



6. Examples of use in different domains for descriptors of online interaction and mediation activities

The following examples, elaborating the descriptors for online interaction and mediation


activities for the four domains set out in CEFR for A1 Level, intend to assist teachers in selecting activities appropriate to their learners for each descriptor.

Online interaction			
Descriptors	Personal	Public	Educational
Online conversation and discussion	Situations and roles		
 <p>Can write very simple messages and personal online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc., relying on the aid of a translation tool.</p>	<p>making contact online with remote friends and / or family - also as a possible language classroom simulation.</p>	<p>public postings to a festival/ event website - also as a possible language classroom simulation</p>	<p>in a Q&A section of a school learning platform - also as a possible language classroom simulation</p>
<p>Can use formulaic expressions and combinations of simple words to post short positive and negative</p>	<p>making contact online with remote friends and / or family -</p>		<p>in a Q&A section of a school learning platform -</p>




reactions to simple online postings and their embedded links and media, and can respond to further comments with standard expressions of thanks and apology.	also as a possible language classroom simulation		also as a possible language classroom simulation
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Goal-oriented online transactions and collaboration	Situations and roles		
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 <p>Can complete a very simple online purchase or application, providing basic personal information (such as name, e-mail address or telephone number).</p>		ordering goods by completing a simple order form with familiar words and illustrations	enrolling on a course online, but likely only as a language classroom simulation
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Mediating a text



Relaying specific information in speech	Text and discourse environment		
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 <p>Can relay (in Language B) simple, predictable information about times and places given in short, simple statements (spoken in Language A).</p>	TV schedule announcements about upcoming programmes of interest.	The location and starting time of an event/performance, travel itineraries.	The location and timings of a school excursion or afterschool
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------



			activity, location of canteen, toilets and water fountains.
Relaying specific information in writing	Text and discourse environment		
 Can list (in Language B) names, numbers, prices and very simple information of immediate interest (given in Language A), provided that the speaker articulates very slowly and clearly, with repetition.	From a TV channel repeatedly demonstrating products.	Announcements about when a store opens/closes.	A simple, short telephone message about a change to a timetable, schedule or meeting point.
Processing text in writing	Text and discourse environment		
 Can, with the help of a dictionary, render in (Language B) simple phrases written in (Language A), but may not always select the appropriate meaning. Can copy out single words and short texts	Letters with news.	Public notices, transportation information	Simple narratives.



presented in standard printed format.			
Translating a written text in speech	Text and discourse environment		
 Can provide a simple, rough spoken translation into (Language B) of simple, everyday words and phrases written in (Language A) that are encountered on signs and notices, posters, programmes, leaflets etc.	Not applicable	Signs and notices, posters, programmes, leaflets, etc.	Signs and notices, posters, timetables.
Translating a written text in writing	Text and discourse environment		
 Can, with the help of a dictionary, translate simple words and phrases from (Language A) into (Language B), but may not always select the appropriate meaning.	Letters with news.	Public notices, transportation information	Simple narratives.



7. Strategies⁸

Strategies serve as a vital link between the qualitative and quantitative dimension of the overall language proficiency. At this early stage of language acquisition young learners use some very simple language learning strategies which will in the course of academic period be fully mastered and used.

Reception Strategies	
Identifying cues and inferring (Spoken and written)	The young learner can deduce the meaning of an unknown word for a concrete action or object, provided the surrounding text is very simple, and on a familiar everyday subject.
Production Strategies	
Compensating	The young learner can use gesture to support simple words in expressing a need.
Planning	No descriptors available
Interaction Strategies	
Asking for clarification	The young learner can indicate with words, intonation and gestures that he/she does not understand; express in a simple way that he/she does not understand.
Turn taking (taking the floor)	No descriptors available
Cooperating	No descriptors available

⁸ <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>








Written assessment grid for A1 Level

Overall	Range	Coherence	Accuracy	Description
<p>The young learner writes simple isolated phrases and sentences. Longer texts contain expressions and show coherence problems that make the text very hard or impossible to understand.</p>	<p>The young learner has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations.</p>	<p>The young learner links words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like “and” and “then”.</p>	<p>The young learner shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire. Errors may cause misunderstandings.</p>	<p>The young learner writes simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do, etc.</p>



8. Domains











In order to master the communicative language competences, which naturally lead to the strengthening of the key competences, young learners must gain knowledge, develop concepts, acquire the necessary skills and shape values and beliefs. The following domains are considered as the most important ones to be included in English language syllabuses:

-  Everyday life.
-  School life.
-  Personal and social life.
-  The world around us.
-  The world of communication.


















The knowledge young learners get from a very early age and onwards, in order to be proficient users of the English language, starts from the simplest to the most complicated, from the known to the unknown, building slowly but surely on the previously acquired knowledge.

The information in the following tables is not exhaustive and gives an overview of the main domains, topics, functions, activities and games that teachers can employ while teaching English to young learners. Teachers have the flexibility to provide appropriate learning opportunities based on their young learners' abilities, interests and development needs. Topics, learning outcomes, functions, structures, examples, activities and games are not listed in any particular order. Learning outcomes will serve as a guide for teachers to design their lesson plans for each topic. Functions, structures, activities and games are only suggested examples to be referred to.


















Domains	Topics	Learning outcomes
Everyday life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My world - My toys and games - My clothes - My favourite food/ lunch/ breakfast - Free time activities - My pets - Eating right - Let`s have fun 	<p>The young learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  listens to short dialogues introducing pets, toys, free time activities, etc.;  names or lists the free time activities that he/she likes doing with family and friends;  names and lists pets, food, toys, activities presented in pictures, short dialogues or stories;  mimes and guesses the actions as for example running, dancing, playing football/basketball etc.;  listens and sings chants introducing numbers;  identifies food and drink items in a simple menu;  identifies what characters` favourite food items are when shown in pictures;  writes a simple shopping list;  prepares a simple menu;  describes their favourite activities;



School life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My school - My class - My classmates - School subjects - School time table - Time for science - Let`s learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  names, writes colours of, and colours the given objects;  names, writes, reads and draws and colours classroom objects as instructed;  listens to, sings songs and repeats the words and phrases of songs;  prepares a simple timetable with the main school subjects.  describes classmates, classroom, teacher using adjectives;  says what their favourite subject is;  expresses likes and dislikes about school subjects.
Personal and social life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Me and others - My family - My friends - My body - My house - My community - Planning the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  labels the body parts in pictures or short story clips;  listens and repeats the words and basic expressions related to body parts;  asks and answers questions related to body parts using simple language structures;  listens to and sings songs introducing family members;  identifies family members through pictures in short stories;  describes family members using simple sentences;  names and lists bedroom objects;  creates a simple family tree;  makes a simple plan of what to do during holidays using future forms;  describes the neighborhood using simple sentences.



<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">The world around us</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My garden - Animals - Jobs - The forest/ park/ beach - Nature - The farm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  names and lists animals, plants, or parts of a tree shown in pictures or in illustrated short stories;  distinguishes among animals shown in pictures or short stories;  draws, writes the names of and colours animals, plants or shapes as instructed;  asks and answers simple questions related to animals` abilities;  names and distinguishes among professions shown in pictures or in short stories;  writes and says the days of the week, seasons of the year;  describes seasons using simple sentences.
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">The world of communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hello! - Introducing friends and siblings - Birthday cards - Messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  uses greeting words and expressions in very short dialogues;  listens and understands short dialogues in which the characters introduce and greet each other;  listens and sings greeting songs;  listens and repeats in English greeting words and expressions;  wishes friends on their birthday;  asks and answers about his/her age, nationality, family members, friends etc.;  uses greetings to greet the teacher and peers;  writes a birthday cards using pictures, short phrases and sentences.



9. Activities and Games

Songs, rhymes, chants

Simon Says

Miming

Guessing game; what`s missing memory game; guess the flashcard

Matching (pictures with words or numbers; colours with fruits etc.)

Colouring

Tracing; Drawing

Puzzles

Cutting and pasting

Anagrams (finding the words)

Responding to commands and instructions (TPR)

Labelling

True and False

Bingo

Pictionary

Art projects

I spy with my little eye something that ...













Tic-tac-toe

Hide and seek



10. Attitudes and values

The young learners are introduced not only to English language, vocabulary, functions and structures but they are also introduced to attitudes and values⁹ which will be further consolidated throughout the school years. English language as part of Albanian national competence-based curriculum teaches young learners how to:

-  appreciate other cultures and diversity;
-  show empathy to family, friends and peers;
-  love learning languages;
-  care about people, objects, animals and environment;
-  help at home, tidy up and look after the environment;
-  share with and help friends;
-  be safe and secure;
-  choose healthy food;
-  be on time;
-  be kind to family and friends;
-  be polite, say sorry, say nice things;
-  take turns when speaking.

⁹ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/rfcdc-volumes>



11. Distribution of teaching classes

The following table gives a general overview of how teachers may distribute the teaching classes for grade III, IV, V. (35 weeks X 3 classes per week = 105 classes)

Grade III	Linguistic Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence	Pragmatic Competence	Project and ELP (European Language Portfolio)	Total
	45 classes	30 classes	30 classes	10 classes	105 classes

Grade IV	Linguistic Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence	Pragmatic Competence	Project and ELP (European Language Portfolio)	Total
	45 classes	30 classes	30 classes	10 classes	105 classes

Grade V	Linguistic Competence	Sociolinguistic Competence	Pragmatic Competence	Project and ELP (European Language Portfolio)	Total
	45 classes	30 classes	30 classes	10 classes	105 classes

Teachers may use the number of classes available per each competence flexibly, to meet the young learners' progress and needs. Nearly 60-70% of the teaching classes within each competence should be used to introduce new knowledge and concepts, and nearly 30-40% should be used for revision, tests, etc.



12. Integration of the four skills

Listening and reading are receptive skills, which are required for the making and generation of meaning from ideas or information. Speaking and writing are productive skills that enable the creation and communication of meaning.

The integration of receptive and productive skills provides the context for both oral and written communication.

Listening and speaking place attention on the power of the spoken word and encourage students to respond actively, develop empathy and participate with respect, conviction and sensitivity. For this to happen, they have to be threaded intentionally throughout all areas of language learning, bearing in mind that much of listening and speaking, unlike reading and writing, occur in real time and the utterances, once articulated, sometimes cannot be retracted or repeated as easily. At the primary level, greater attention is paid to the development of positive dispositions in listening to enable students to engage effectively when communicating or collaborating with others.

At the primary level, students build their foundation in literacy skills, including developing a positive disposition towards reading and viewing. They will read a variety of texts of increasing difficulty, in order to explore a range of issues and perspectives. To develop such skills, teachers will encourage students to read, listen to and view texts widely and for enjoyment, knowledge and learning, both in and out of the classroom, so that they can write about and discuss topics of relevance and interest to them as well as apply their knowledge in other subject areas.

Students learn to create a broad range of cohesive and coherent texts appropriate to purpose, audience, context and culture, utilizing print, non-print and digital resources to meaningfully engage readers by communicating with effect, impact and attention to affect. At the primary



level, students also have the opportunity to convey their personal and critical responses to texts, experiences/situations, and popular topics/issues, so as to develop personal and critical points of view, strengthen elaboration and persuasion skills, and develop their voice and style in writing and representing.

Knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is integral to acquiring a strong foundation in the language to enable effective communication. Students are to regard grammar and vocabulary as resources to help them effectively express themselves and convey their ideas. The study of grammar and vocabulary also includes the metalanguage for students to talk about the features of words and language, both every day and academic, and their associative meanings. Teachers will focus on grammar and vocabulary both explicitly and in the context of language use. At the primary level, greater focus is placed on developing grammatical knowledge and rich vocabulary for the purposeful use of language. More complex language use and purposes will be taught in tandem with development in all other areas of language learning.

The skills of viewing and representing are integrated with listening, reading, speaking and writing, so as to connect conventional literacies to multiliteracies and the different semiotic modes in language learning and development. Infusing viewing and representing into the areas of language learning allows teachers to integrate linguistic with non-linguistic skills, the use of print with non-print sources, as well as incorporate information, media and visual literacy skills to help students achieve 21st century competencies.



METHODOLOGY GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES

Choosing the right instructional methodology is important and crucial for effective teaching and learning. It is the duty of teachers to update their knowledge on the new instructional methodologies, strategies and techniques so as to help young learners develop their desire for learning foreign languages and become lifelong learners and successful in their lives. The following techniques and strategies: pair work; group work; brainstorming; think-pair –share; debate; role-play; jigsaw; graphic organizers, semantic mapping; projects etc., give young learners the opportunity to work with others and see different points of view and learn more effectively when working together rather than apart, and also help improve self-confidence in young learners.

English Language instruction is based on the following methodological guidelines and principles:

Student-Centered Instruction (SCI)

The National Curriculum Framework emphasizes the importance of student-centred instruction with the ultimate goal for students to gain independence, higher order/critical thinking skills and the capacity to make decisions about their life-long learning. In such an environment the teacher acts as a facilitator to help young learners access and process information. SCI also focuses on effective learning strategies, where learning is recognized as an *active* and *dynamic* process and young learners *construct* their own meaning of what they are learning. Teachers recognize that young learners learn in different ways and have different learning styles, thus providing young learners with practical and continuous feedback through authentic assessments.



Examples of student-centred instruction include discussion, games, simulation, discovery and problem solving. Although young learners appear to “drive” their learning, teachers are responsible for planning and facilitating the arrangements that put young learners at the centre of learning.

Differentiated instruction (DI)

Every young learner is unique, and therefore each young learner learns and understands information differently. Young learners come from a wide range of experiences and situations that determine how they react to classroom activities and classroom management procedures. DI allows teachers to engage each young learner by accommodating to their specific learning style. Differentiating instruction offers a way to meet *all* young learners’ needs encouraging them to express what they have learned in varied ways. In order to identify individual differences, teachers may look at many different sources for information. Sources might include classroom observations, work samples and opinion/ feedback from other teachers. It also allows for various working arrangements (for example, working alone or as part of a team to complete the task) and use of diverse types of resources in preparing assignments, projects etc.

Collaborative Learning (CL)

CL is a method of teaching and learning where young learners team together to further explore concepts learned, create meaningful projects, and the like. It encourages collaborative behaviours among groups of young learners where learning is highly social and influences the development of the brain. Cooperative Learning is a form where young learners work cooperatively in small groups, which benefits them in the short term, for their future academic period and also in the long term, where they are prepared for the world of work, where jobs increasingly depend on cooperation.



Collaborative learning increases young learners' retention, enhances young learners' satisfaction with their learning experience, helps develop skills in oral communication, develops young learners' social skills, promotes their self-esteem, and makes them autonomous learners.

Utilizing Technology in the Classroom

Integrating technology into the classroom is a great way to empower young learners to stay connected in this technological era. Technology-rich and challenging lessons keep young learners motivated and engaged longer. Some examples of utilizing *technology in the classroom* are: multimedia presentations such as a video, animation, or some type of graphic, utilizing a tablet, iPad, interactive white boards, taking young learners on a virtual field trip. Any of these technology integration strategies will have a positive impact on young learners learning.

Project-based learning (PBL)

PBL involves a dynamic classroom approach and a teaching method through which young learners acquire a deeper knowledge by active exploration of real-world challenges and problems. It helps learners develop flexible knowledge, effective problem-solving skills, self-directed learning, effective collaboration skills and intrinsic motivation.

Project Based Learning creates new instructional practices, which reflect the current environment where young learners live and learn. It places new demands on young learners and teachers that challenge the traditional practices in English language instruction. Learning from doing complex, challenging, and authentic projects requires resourcefulness and planning by the learner, new forms of knowledge representation in school, expanded mechanisms for collaboration and communication, and support for reflection and authentic assessment.



Game-based learning

Game based learning is also an active learning approach where games are used to enhance student learning. In a game-based learning environment, the learning comes from playing the game and promotes critical thinking and problem solving skills. Game-Based Learning helps children learn through familiar devices and also stimulate their imagination. Learning through games lasts a lifetime because children learn by doing and collaborate with each other in situations where difficult concepts are simplified.









PEDAGOGY

It is an established fact that the foundation of language learning is laid from an early age. Therefore, the focus on the accuracy and fluency in oral communication will help teachers develop 21st century skills and make young learners enjoy the learning process.

Teachers should pay attention to create early literacy skills to young learners and put emphasis on learning-focused interaction at class and group levels.

Pedagogical practices that teachers use in the classroom must include activities and experiences for all domains of development such as cognitive, socio-emotional, language and literacy etc. Teachers should provide opportunities for young learners to explore, understand, experiment, experience and transform information into meaningful content and skills. Teachers are facilitators of young learner`s learning and they should very carefully:

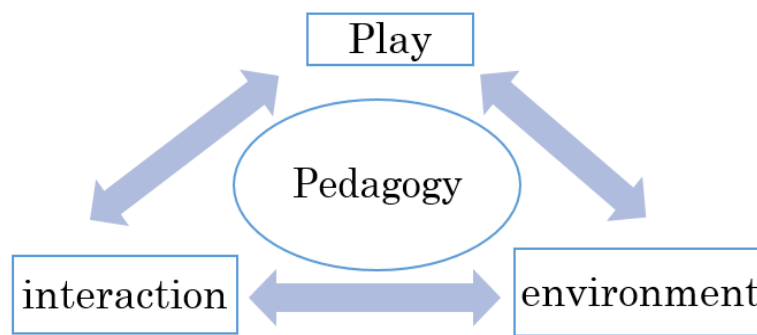
-  plan and design age-appropriate learning experiences for young learners to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and beliefs. Teachers should identify the learning outcomes based on the ELS as well as on young learners` interests, needs and their prior knowledge and experience;
-  facilitate young learners` learning process and extend their thinking by engaging young learners in learning through games and providing authentic learning and quality real life interaction;
-  prioritize and support young learners of vulnerable social groups and those with special needs;
-  observe and assess young learners` learning and progress by collecting, documenting and interpreting information to find out what young learners know, understand and can do;
-  enhance professional skills by engaging in reflective practice and professional development;
-  collaborate with families and the community to enhance young learners` learning.



1. Pedagogical Processes

Pedagogical processes are the strategies that teachers are recommended to use, in order to implement the curriculum in such a way that young learners construct their knowledge and learning by exploration, investigation, problem solving and critical thinking.

It is important for teachers to keep in mind that there are three components of pedagogy in early childhood: play, interactions and the environment. These components must be addressed fully during syllabus implementation:



Play is at the heart of how young learners learn. Through play, young learners demonstrate what they are learning, what they are interested in, and what they are concerned about. Play is universally regarded as young learner’s way of learning. They love to play and are happy when they are given freedom to explore and experiment through play.

Interaction, most importantly peer interactions that is engaging with other children in play, provides an important context for learning where young learners observe, imitate and build on what they observe. They gain social and emotional skills when they share, solve problems, coordinate with other young learners, create their own games. Young learners develop social values when they learn to wait for their turns, play games based on rules etc.







Young learners are in constant interaction with their **environment**. They want to touch everything they see. This is how they learn. Through a variety of activities and material, young learners explore the physical, social and



natural environment by manipulating objects, asking questions, making predictions and developing generalization. The learning environment for young learners should be welcoming, safe and predictable, offer variety of developmentally appropriate material for young learners to explore and experiment independently. All young learners especially those with special needs develop their self-esteem and self-confidence when they are appreciated, encouraged and responded to.

Approach to EL Teaching and Learning

The foundation of language learning should be laid from lower primary in order to empower students with the 21st century skills and provide them with the joy of learning. This can be achieved through:

-  a greater focus on accuracy and fluency in oral communication (i.e., listening and speaking skills) using appropriate teaching techniques for different year levels;
-  a focus on the enjoyment of language, even though children learn the grammatical items associated with texts. There should be a systematic and explicit instruction of grammar, with a focus on word, phrase and sentence level grammar before having a gradual incorporation of theoretical grammar from upper primary to secondary levels;
-  attention to phonemic awareness, phonics and early literacy skills starting very slowly in grades I and II and continues in grades III-V with the purpose of laying the foundation for acquiring reading fluency, comprehension and viewing skills and strategies at all levels;
-  attention to vocabulary development at all grades;
-  an emphasis on learning-focused interaction at class and group levels;
-  attention to greater integration between receptive and productive skills with encouragement of positive attitude towards learning and the development of metacognitive skills from the early years.

ASSESSMENT

In the early language learning stage, assessment and evaluation should be regarded as a playful, non-threatening process to track the young learners' progress in developing their English language skills and competencies. Assessment should provide directions for learning new skills.

Classroom based assessment will be carried out on a continuous basis and it must be based on qualitative judgements of young learners' activities. These activities will be the ones those young learners normally do in the classroom, for example quizzes, matching activities, games and so on. Teachers may use a checklist which directly links to the learning outcomes of the syllabus and will be observing each young learner to monitor progress - the extent to which s/he was moving towards certain learning outcomes.

Assessment should focus on young learner's strengths rather than his/her weaknesses.

Responsive Teaching, Responsive Assessment

Implementing a responsive assessment policy is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle. Assessment that is responsive helps teachers and students know where the students are, where they are going and how to get there. It uses information from different assessment tasks to provide evidence of student learning and progress, and hence shapes reflection, instructional planning and adaptations to instruction. It also helps to address learning gaps, improve teaching practices, provide clarity of purpose for instruction and consequently helps students to progressively become self-directed learners.

Why Assess





For teaching and learning to be effective, teachers should identify and monitor students' changing needs, proficiencies and interests so that they can plan or adapt their teaching methods and approaches to help



students. Teachers help students know and recognize the attainment targets and the criteria against which they can monitor and assess their own progress. Teachers also give timely and useful feedback to students and provide them with opportunities to act on the feedback to improve their learning. These responsive learner-centered processes help students reflect on how well they have learnt, making them self-directed learners.

Aims of Assessment in School

English language teachers in primary education should practice responsive assessment to:

-  promote and improve children's learning through regular progress monitoring;
-  establish what children can do as learners of English language based on the aims and learning outcomes in the syllabus;
-  support self-directed learning;
-  use assessment information to differentiate instruction and cater to children's different levels of learning readiness, interests and learning profiles.

1. Types of Assessment



a. Formative Assessment (assessment for learning)

Formative Assessment is the most powerful type of assessment for improving young learners' understanding and performance. This type of assessment of young learners' learning at different levels provides information that teachers can use to design lessons plans, conduct classes to suit the young learners' needs by utilizing the English language syllabus effectively. This occurs in the short term, as young learners are in the process of making meaning of new content and of integrating it into what they already know. Feedback to young learners is immediate (or nearly so), to enable them to change their behaviour and understanding right away.



Formative Assessment also enables the teacher to rethink instructional strategies, activities, and content according to young learners' understanding and performance. Formative Assessment can be as informal as observing the young learner's work, or as formal as a written test.

Progress Monitoring Assessment, introduced in the Albanian curriculum, collects evidence about young learners' progress toward achieving objectives as measured in relation to the stages of language learning process. These ongoing assessments may occur at any point during the teaching process except at the end of the course of the study. This kind of assessment serves to:

-  give important information about young learners' progress;
-  help teachers adjust instruction and planning periodically.

Types of formative assessment include informal observation, worksheets, short quizzes, journals and diagnostic tests.

Letter sound sorting

cross curricular

What doesn't belong?



Teachers can also use different digital platforms, like Akelius digital learning platform, for their formative assessment. The teacher needs to base next lesson plan on results from test taken on platform. The teacher may determine which words the students have not acquired and reteach the words using different strategies. In addition, the teacher may discuss with the students the words that they have not acquired and the students may practice more using the platform.

Assessment for young children should be formative, continuous and stem from experiences planned in the curriculum. Formative and continuous



assessment implies observing and documenting the development of the young learner, by interpreting the evidence from day-to-day experiences of the young learner with the purpose of recognizing and encouraging strengths, and addressing learning/ developmental gaps. Each young learner's progress needs to be assessed on a continuous and comprehensive basis, through observations of their behaviour; their artwork and other products, anecdotal records, checklists, portfolios and interactions with other young learners. The current level of performance should be rewarded to reinforce small steps of accomplishments towards the long-term goals.

Teachers must document each young learner's learning in a variety of ways. The documentation will provide teachers with valid information on how to improve the programme, make changes, if necessary, plan, organize on what to do next, what questions to ask and resources to provide for.

Assessment can be done by using various tools and techniques:

Anecdotal records

Brief written notes based on observations of young learners-how and where young learners spend time, their social relationships, their use of language, modes of interaction, information about health and nutrition habits.

Portfolios

A portfolio is a flexible and adaptable collection over time of various concrete work samples showing many dimensions of the young learner's learning. This type of assessment also focuses on the young learner's strengths and demonstrations of knowledge and skills.



Observations

Observation could be planned purposefully for observing a young learner or group of young learners in specific situation. It is also carried out as an on-going natural process in everyday teaching learning activities. Observation carried out scientifically is a source of valid information about young learner's various personality dimensions and learning progress.

Checklist

Checklists are a list of learning outcomes, behaviours, or traits of a young learner in a particular development area. Teacher are to determine whether these traits exist in a young learner or not. They have to mark on the checklist as "Yes" or "No" to indicate whether a particular young learner exhibited a behaviour during that observational period.

Rubrics

A rubric is a tool used for assessing the performance of tasks, skill levels, procedures, processes, qualities, quantities, or end product. Rubrics are similar to checklists except that they indicate the degree of accomplishment rather than just yes or no.

b. Summative Assessment (assessment of learning)

Summative assessment evaluates young learners' achievement at the end of the term or school year with a grade and is usually comprehensive in nature.

Summative assessment takes place at the end of a large amount of learning, with the results being primarily for the teacher's or school's use. Thus, Summative Assessment tends to have the least impact on improving an individual young learner's understanding or performance. Young learners/parents can use the results of Summative Assessments to compare their performance against a standard (language levels according to CEFR) or a grade-level group. Teachers/schools can use these assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses of the syllabus and

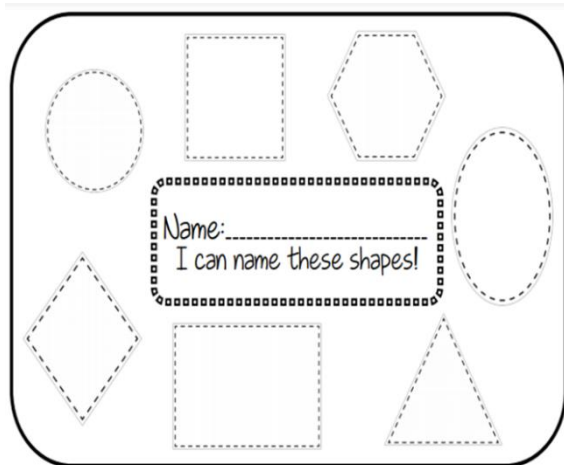


instruction, with improvements affecting the next year's/term's young learners. In addition to being developed by teachers or school executives, summative assessment instruments are also developed by local, national or international institutions.

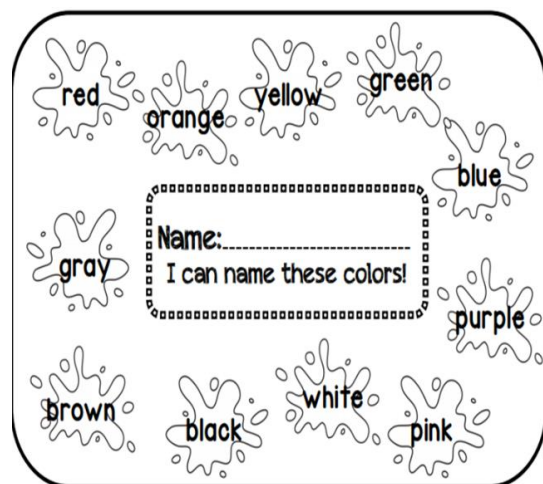
c. Assessment as Learning

Assessment as learning develops and supports students' metacognitive skills. This form of assessment is crucial in helping students become lifelong learners. As students engage in peer and self-assessment, they learn to make sense of information, relate it to prior knowledge and use it for new learning. Students develop a sense of ownership and efficacy when they use teacher, peer and self-assessment feedback to make adjustments, improvements and changes to what they understand.

Example 1



Example 2



European Language Portfolio as a Self-Assessment Tool

Students' Language Portfolio is an assessment tool which students use for judging their own proficiency level in English, motivating and raising their awareness, helping them to appreciate their strengths, recognizing their weaknesses and orientating their learning more effectively. It also encourages autonomous learning in order to give students greater control of their learning and to inform them of their learning process.

European Language Portfolio (ELP) is used as a self - assessment tool as well as another classroom indicator to the teacher of students' progress and growth. It provides information that can be used for assessing students' areas of comprehension, fluency, vocabulary and grammar.

It consists of three parts:

Language Passport

Language passport records language skills, qualifications and intercultural experiences. Language skills are defined in terms of levels of proficiency presented in the document "CEFR for languages, learning, teaching, assessment"

Language Biography

Language Biography records personal language learning history. i.e. includes information of linguistic and cultural experiences in and out formal educational context; helps the learner to set learning objectives to reflect and assess his learning process.

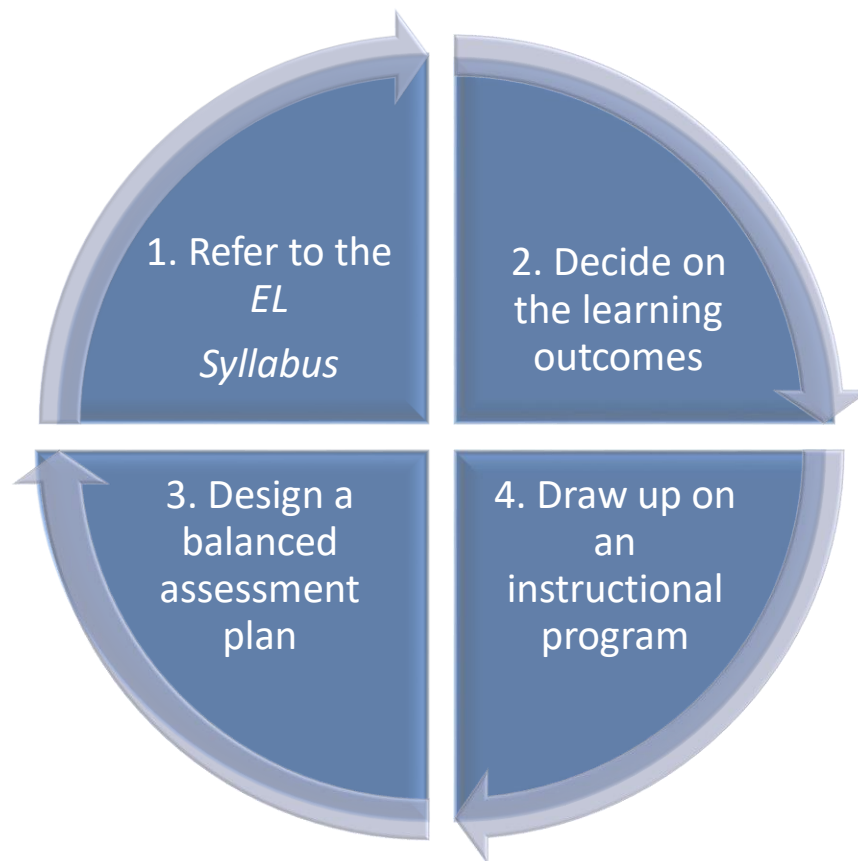
Dossier




Dossier holds documents to illustrate achievements and experiences related to the foreign language(s) learning. It offers students the opportunity to select and document students work as evidence of their competence in the languages they are learning. It will help them to reflect on their progress in these languages. The dossier demonstrates what students are able to do in different languages. Children can start having their Portfolio since the very first year of learning a language.



2. Planning a Balanced Assessment

It is important for teachers to plan assessment in alignment with the requirements and learning outcomes of the syllabus as well as based on children needs and learning styles. The following diagram might help as a guide:








1. The English language syllabuses for grades III-V present and describe in detail the learning outcomes for each level.
2. Learning Outcomes should be attained for each year level and in the areas of language learning as presented in *EL Syllabuses for grades III-V*.
3. Draw up an instructional programme that helps students attain the Learning Outcomes and learning goals by identifying:
 -  what to be taught and assessed;
 -  strategies how to teach;
 -  print and non-print resources that will enhance teaching and learning.



4. the assessment plan should assess language skills and knowledge in a valid, reliable and holistic manner.

While planning the assessment teachers should consider:

-  the purpose of the assessment;
-  a wide range of assessment modes and tasks that will appropriately match children learning needs, specifically their readiness, interests and learning styles;
-  the length of time needed for children to acquire and practice the skills and learner strategies before being assessed;
-  the quality and use of feedback to facilitate children learning and progress;
-  specifications to guide assessment at different year levels in order to closely align assessment with teaching;

Formative and summative assessment are not separate elements. Teachers are encouraged to use both the formative and summative purposes of assessment to inform and support teaching and learning at all times and to inform future practice.



LESSON PLANNING

Lesson plans generally provide a structured breakdown of what teachers intend to do during class time. They also provide teachers with a general overview of their teaching goals, learning objectives and outcomes. A carefully structured lesson plan guides teachers and provides measurable objectives for students. Lesson plans require careful planning in advance and ensure that each lesson has a purpose and advances the overall curriculum and class goals. Moreover, lesson plans keep teachers on track when teaching and help them fill class time with relevant and appropriate activities. Without a lesson plan, teachers may find themselves unsure of how to fill leftover time in class, repeating the same activities until children lose interest. A successful lesson plan addresses and integrates three key components:

- Learning outcomes
- Learning activities
- Assessment to check for student understanding

Building a lesson plan is a process that's equally creative and critical, as teachers incorporate a wide range of strategies to engage students, assess progress and support learning and understanding.

Below are just some of the essential points to include in while planning English lessons plan and to factor in when deciding what concepts to cover and which activities to conduct.

Learning outcomes

When designing a lesson plan or deciding which pre-made resource or online platform to use, it's important to take into account what the learning outcomes for that specific lesson are. In other words, what the target language to teach is, and what children would be able to do by the end of the lesson. Defining specific teaching objectives helps teachers to achieve the curriculum goals, and to create focused lessons that have a purpose, and measure specific learning outcomes for each individual class. Having



students take ownership of their own learning happens when they can understand what they are learning, **why** they are learning it, and **how** they will know **when** they are successful. Learning outcomes should be about skills and learning, not about the activities. Activities should be built around the lesson learning outcomes. Even when planning blended lessons, activities on digital learning platform should not be a result, but rather should be introduced as a tool to support achieving your targeted learning outcomes as a result.

Required materials

When delivering a lesson, teachers need certain materials, such as paper, markers, handouts, a projector, or access to certain digital tools. A lesson plan is a great place to note all of the required materials for a lesson. In a blended learning environment, where teachers of English plan to include different digital learning tools and platforms, it is important to make sure that the materials chosen to be used are suitable for the digital classroom as well.

Timing

Planning how much time each part of the lesson plan will take is of importance for teachers so that they have enough material (but not too much) to teach the lesson well within the allotted class time. Teachers should always try including one optional activity at the end of class to anticipate any leftover time they might have. The planned activity might be a game from Akelius or other digital learning platforms. (memory game, guessing game, falling objects etc.)

Class age, level, and size

Each time teachers create a lesson plan; they should always take into account how many children they have in the class, their age and English level. These factors will shape the entire lesson, and noting these details on the lesson plan will make it easier to reuse the plan for future classes.



It's no secret that children love games and songs. One solution to this is to allow for more activities from the Akelius platform or other digital learning platforms.

Anticipated problems

While preparing their lesson plans, teachers should note any potential problems they anticipate and how they plan to solve them. This problem could be fast finisher activities, filling leftover time, reducing side conversations during group work, or dealing with a technological issue. When planning ahead how to deal with these problems, teachers can be in control during the class and reduce wasted time. In their plan to solve different potential problems, teachers should take the Akelius platform or other digital learning online tools into consideration.

Teaching method

In a competence-based curriculum, an example of a teaching method is Task-Based Learning (TBL), which uses real-life scenarios or learning situations to practice the language. This method requires teachers to plan activities that prioritize real-world language practice.

Teachers don't need to choose to create their own lesson plans from scratch. They can use a variety of frameworks for their lesson plans and research the ways that experts consider to be most effective for different levels, learners, and situations.

The following are some of the most common ways to plan a lesson:







PPP method (Present, Practice, Produce) – a classic way to plan a lesson, with higher teacher input at the beginning moving children toward independent use of new concepts by the end of the lesson.

TTT method (Test, Teach, Test) – giving children a task that has new concepts, checking what they already know and giving feedback, and then repeating the task to demonstrate progress made.



TBL (Task-Based Learning) – putting the new concepts into actual practice by simulating real-life situations and identifying a goal to be accomplished using the language learned.

Growth Mindset Learning – explicitly persuading students of their own ability to learn new things and apply them, with space to make mistakes. Whatever method teachers use to plan their lessons; they should keep in mind the following:

-  Identifying the learning outcomes for each lesson.
-  Planning the specific learning activities for each learning outcome.
-  Planning to assess student understanding for the new concepts.
-  Planning to sequence the lesson in an engaging and meaningful manner.
-  Creating a realistic timeline for each activity and for the lesson as a whole.
-  Planning for a lesson closure.

During the planning process for each part of the lesson, it is recommended to incorporate the following strategies:

Always plan with children in mind

Teachers should always keep in what learning looks like from the other side of the classroom. What might children think, feel and question? Are there any points where they're likely to get confused? Is the amount of new material overwhelming? Is learning interesting and relevant to their age and everyday lives? Putting themselves in their children's shoes, helps teachers make each lesson more engaging and also helps the information stay for a long time.



Keep the same overall structure every time

Teachers teach different material and concepts each day, but it is important that they keep the flow the same that is, starting with the reviewing of previous knowledge, passing on to the introduction of new concepts, and then to reinforcement and conclusion. This routine helps children know what to expect and build good classroom habits which leads to a more effective lesson delivery and less time-consuming for teachers.

Set SMART learning outcomes for each lesson

Setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable/ attainable, Realistic/relevant, Time-bound) objectives is always the key to a successful lesson planning and delivery. What should students know or be able to do at the end of each lesson? This very question helps teachers work backward in creating the class' learning activities.



The table below contains the characteristics of clear learning outcomes:

Characteristics	Description
Clearly explained tasks	Free from jargon and complex vocabulary; describe specific and achievable tasks (such as 'describe', 'analyse' or 'evaluate') NOT vague tasks (like 'appreciate', 'understand' or 'explore').
Important learning goals	Describe the essential (rather than trivial) learning in the course which a child must achieve.
Achievable	Can be achieved within the given period and sufficient resources are available.
Demonstrable and measurable	Can be demonstrated in a tangible way; are assessable; achievement and quality of achievement can be observed.
Fair and equitable	All children, including those with disabilities or constraints, have a fair chance of achieving them.
Linked to program learning outcomes	Consider the broader goals - i.e. program goals.

Plan a variety of classroom activities








While writing the lesson plan, teachers should plan various and interesting activities. Akelius platform can help teachers include different games and activities in their lesson. Children learn best when they're actively engaged with the content, meaning teachers need to plan variety into their lessons. These activities might be a group activity, film, presentation, quiz, independent reading assignment, class discussion, journal entry, or hands-on experiment. Keeping things fresh, engaging, entertaining and interactive takes a lesson from average to superb.

As teachers plan learning activities, it is important that they estimate how much time is needed for each activity. The teachers also need to be



prepared to move on quickly from one activity to another, from one stage of the lesson to the other, and also to identify strategies that check for understanding.

The following are some questions teachers should ask to themselves while designing learning activities either in traditional or blended learning environments:

-  What will I do to explain the topic?
-  What will I do to illustrate the topic in a different way?
-  How can I engage students in the topic?
-  What are some relevant real-life examples, analogies, or situations that can help children understand the topic?
-  What will children need to do to help them understand the topic better?
-  In which part of the activity do I have to use online tools?
-  Which online tool fits with this activity?

Activity Type	Learning activity	Description
Interaction with content <i>Children remember the information better when they are asked to interact with the new material given.</i>	Drill and practice	Problem/task is presented to children where they are asked to provide the answer; may be timed or untimed.
	Lecture	Convey concepts verbally, often with visual aids (e.g. flash cards, pictures, presentation slides)
	Quiz	Exercise to assess the level of children understanding and questions can take many forms, e.g. multiple-choice, short-structured, matching etc.
	Student presentation	Oral report where children share their simple work on a



		topic and take on a position and/or role.
Interaction with digital content <i>Children experiment with decision making, and visualize the effects and/or consequences in virtual environments</i>	Game	Goal-oriented exercise that encourages collaboration and/or competition within a controlled virtual environment.
	Simulation	Replica or representation of a real-world phenomenon that enables relationships, contexts, and concepts to be studied
Interaction with others <i>Peer relationships, informal support structures, and teacher-student interactions/relationships</i>	Discussion	Formal/informal conversation on a given topic/question where the instructor facilitates student sharing of responses to the questions, and building upon those responses
	Feedback	Information provided by the instructor and/or peer(s) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding
	Guest Speaker	Feelings, thoughts, ideas and experiences specific to a given topic are shared by an invited presenter
Problem solving and Critical thinking <i>Presenting children with a problem, scenario, case, challenge or design issue, which they are then asked to address or deal</i>	Case Study	Detailed story (true or fictional) that students analyse in detail to identify the underlying principles, practices, or lessons it contains
	Concept Mapping	Graphical representation of related information in which











<p><i>with provides children with opportunities to think about or use knowledge and information in new and different ways</i></p>		<p>common or shared concepts are linked together</p>
	<p>Real-world projects</p>	<p>Planned set of interrelated tasks to be executed over a fixed period and within certain cost and other limitations, either individually or collaboratively</p>
<p>Reflection</p> <p><i>The process of reflection starts with the child thinking about what they already know and have experienced in relation to the topic being explored/learnt.</i></p>	<p>Reflection journal</p>	<p>Written records of students' intellectual and emotional reactions to a given topic on a regular basis (e.g. weekly after each lesson)</p>



Plan to sequence the lesson in an engaging and meaningful manner

The events of instruction, a nine-step process proposed by Robert Gagne, is useful for teachers when planning the sequence of their lesson. It helps designing engaging and meaningful instruction.



Steps	Description	Examples
Gain attention	Make sure children attend so that they will watch and listen while the teacher presents the learning content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  present a story or a problem to be solved;  Utilize ice breaker activities, current news and events, case studies, YouTube videos, and so on. The objective is to quickly grab children attention and interest in the topic;  Utilize technologies  Oral report where children share their simple work on a topic and take on a position and/or role.
Inform children of learning outcomes	Allow children to organize their thoughts regarding what they are about to see, hear, and/or do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Include learning objectives in lecture slides, the syllabus, and in instructions for activities, projects and papers;  Describe required performance  Describe criteria for standard performance
Stimulate recall of prior knowledge	Help children make sense of new information by relating it to something they already know or something they have	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Recall events from previous lessons, integrate results of activities into the current topic, and/or relate previous information to the current topic;



	<p>already experienced and is familiar to them.</p>	<p>ask children about their understanding of previous concepts and vocabulary.</p>
<p>Present new content</p>	<p>Use a variety of methods including lecture, readings, songs, activities, projects, multimedia, and others.</p>	<p>Sequence and chunk the information to avoid overload</p> <p>Blend the information to aid in information recall</p> <p>Bloom's Revised Taxonomy can be used to help sequence the lesson by helping you chunk them into levels of difficulty.</p>
<p>Provide guidance</p>	<p>Advise children of strategies to support them in learning content and of resources available. With learning guidance, the rate of learning increases because children are less likely to lose time or become frustrated by basing performance on incorrect facts or poorly understood concepts.</p>	<p>Provide teaching support as needed – as scaffolds (cues, hints, prompts) which can be removed after the student learns the task or content;</p> <p>Model varied learning strategies – mnemonics, concept mapping, role playing, visualizing;</p> <p>Use examples;</p> <p>Personalize.</p>
<p>Practice</p>	<p>Allow children to apply knowledge and skills learned in group or individual activities.</p>	<p>Ask deep-learning questions, make reference to what children already know;</p> <p>have children collaborate with their peers;</p>



		<p>ask children to recite, revisit, or reiterate information they have learned;</p> <p>Facilitate children elaborations – ask them to elaborate or explain details and provide more complexity to their responses.</p>
Provide feedback	Provide immediate feedback of children performance to assess and facilitate learning.	<p>Consider using group / class level feedback (highlighting common errors, give examples or models of target performance, show children what you do not want);</p> <p>Consider peer feedback.</p>
Assess performance	To evaluate the effectiveness of teaching, test to see if the expected learning outcomes have been achieved. Performance should be based on learning outcomes.	<p>use a variety of assessment methods including exams/ quizzes, written assignments, projects, and so on.</p>
Enhance retention and transfer	Allow children to apply information to personal contexts. This increases retention by personalising information.	<p>Provide opportunities for children to relate what they are learning to their personal experiences;</p> <p>Provide additional practice</p>



Lesson planning checklist		
1	Clear, concrete and precise learning outcomes taken from English Language Syllabus for the specific grade.	
2	Cross-curricular links should be maximized.	
3	Flows naturally through from receptive (reading and listening) to productive skills (speaking and writing).	
4	Uses range of exciting and relevant resources, including authentic texts, audio, visual, ICT and realia /concrete resources.	
5	Individual lessons connect to each other and build on prior learning and young learner's knowledge.	
6	Teaching, learning, tasks & activities relate to learning outcomes.	
7	Continuous learning outcomes are regularly revisited and consolidated/extended as appropriate.	
8	A wide range of teaching strategies and techniques are used, including whole class, small group, paired and peer led.	
9	Opportunities are given to young learners to talk about tasks; before, during and after.	
10	Differentiation in place, taking account of learning and language needs of young learners - and not always differentiation by learning outcome.	
11	New words and expressions are put into practice in young learners' own speaking and writing, rather than practice exercises from work book.	
12	Shared writing, in appropriate form, precedes independent writing.	
13	Shared listening and language modelling extend independent speaking.	
14	Assessment opportunities identified, with reference to each strand of year group learning outcomes.	
15	A range of learning styles are accommodated, including where necessary provision for pupils learning or language difficulties.	
16	Authentic texts used.	
17	Opportunities to share, feedback, review and improve oral and written work.	



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