



PROJECT ON THE CULTURE AND CIVILISATION OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD

Guidelines for 12th grade
bilingual and intensive English students
in view of obtaining the Certificate of
English language competence



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SECTION 1: Background information

This set of guidelines has been designed in accordance with the methodology (OM nr.4853 / 31.08.2009) regarding the organisation and implementation of the examination aimed at classes of bilingual and intensive English students in order to obtain the certificate of English language competence. The format is based on a model from Sheffield Hallam University.

What is the certificate of English language competence?

It is a document that certifies the level of competence of English language acquired by high school students in the years of study up to their graduation. It is awarded after the candidates have passed a written and oral examination in English.

What are the advantages of having a certificate of English language competence?

This certificate is the only document which attests your bilingual or intensive specialisation. It is the proof that you studied the language more than 2 hours per week. It is useful for your further academic studies because there are universities in the country and abroad that require such certificates / diplomas that attest to the level of competence in a foreign language.

Fees and registration

Candidates can take the English language competence examination twice, free of charge. Subsequent retakes of the exam are conditioned by the payment of certain exam fees, which are established by the school inspectorate.

Candidates will register for the English language competence examination at the school Secretary during the established registration period. Candidates are expected to register and submit their projects 10 days before the date of the examination.

Content of examination

The certificate of English language competence can be obtained after the candidates have passed a written and oral examination. The content of the examination is as follows:

- written paper (project) on a culture and civilisation theme that should reflect one of the themes from the culture and civilisation curriculum, approved by the English department
- short oral presentation of the written paper (project) followed by questions from the members of the board

The student's personal contribution to the paper (project) will represent 50% of its content.

Who will evaluate the project?

The examination board will be made up of:

- president – the English inspector (no right to evaluate)
- vice-president – the school Principal or Vice-Principal (no right to evaluate)
- secretary – the Head of the English Department (no right to evaluate)
- evaluators – two English teachers from the school (other than the supervisors)

Examination preparations and post-examination arrangements

The examination will take place between 2nd and 31st May 2011, at a date announced by the inspectorate.

The examination board has the following responsibilities:

- preparing the examination framework (timetable, rooms, equipment) and informing candidates about it at least two weeks before its start

- posting the examination schedule (day and time), in alphabetical order, according to class and specialisation
- examining, evaluating and marking candidates, as well as giving them oral feedback
- posting the results at the end of the examination
- writing a report about the examination including suggestions for its improvement
- the president and vice-president monitor the exam and ensure that the examination methodology is followed

Subjects for the written paper (project)

The subjects for the written papers will be selected by students from among the ones proposed by teachers in accordance with the fundamental aspects contained in the culture and civilisation curriculum. Students will focus especially on the practical application of the chosen theme. The themes selected by students and approved by teachers will have equal degrees of complexity.

The students will write their papers under the close supervision of their teachers. The length of written work will be between 8 and 10 pages. For detailed information about the format of the written work please read Section 2 of these Guidelines.

Evaluation of the candidates' performance

The evaluation will be made individually by two evaluators from the board. Each evaluator will give one mark, from 10 to 100 points, based on the evaluation criteria (see Appendix 1). The divergence between the marks of the two evaluators cannot be more than 10 points. The final average mark is the arithmetic mean, with two decimals, of the final marks given by each evaluator. The final marks are obtained by converting the points from 10 to 100 into marks from 1 to 10. In order to pass the examination, the candidates will have to obtain at least an average mark of 7 (seven).

Further observations

No complaints are accepted at any stage of this examination.

The candidates' papers (projects) will be archived according to the legal requirements.

The English language competence certificate is issued by the Secretariat of the high school after the candidates' graduation.

The issuing of the certificate is not conditioned by the candidates' passing of the Baccalaureate exam.

SECTION 2: Writing and presenting your project

This project will give you the opportunity to explore fascinating aspects related to the culture and civilisation of the English-speaking world and also to develop your research and presentation skills. Moreover, it will equip you better for your future academic life where such skills will be valuable and it will open the door to a better understanding of the topic chosen.

No two projects are the same but they usually involve:

- an investigation of a subject of your choice
- working on your own, supervised by your teacher
- about 7 months to complete (September to April / May)
- gathering information about the subject
- applying various skills (critiquing information, interpreting data, etc.)
- introducing a personal angle
- dealing with emotional ups and downs
- following particular conventions
- writing a paper assessed at the end of the year by a board of teachers

Why is this project necessary to obtain the certificate of English language competence? To show that you can:

- choose an appropriate and relevant topic
- research information about your chosen topic
- structure the information in a clear and coherent way (analysing information, justifying arguments, exemplifying, synthesising information etc.)
- reflect on the whole process and introduce a personal angle / contribution
- communicate the information using accurate and complex language and vocabulary structures, both in writing and speaking

Selecting the subject / theme

Your paper / project must be based on a theme selected from the culture and civilisation curriculum (see Appendix 2 for a recommended bibliography). It is advisable that you start browsing through the culture and civilisation coursebooks recommended in order to get familiar with the topics. Your subject / theme will be commented on and discussed with you by your teacher before being approved.

When choosing your theme it is important to remember that the English-speaking world covers a wide geographical and cultural area, as follows:

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| - Great Britain | - Ireland | - Australia |
| - England | - The USA | - New Zealand |
| - Wales | - Canada | - Asia |
| - Scotland | - West Indies | - Africa |

When browsing through the recommended books, you will find a wide range of themes to choose from: history, arts, music, literature, language, film, fashion, lifestyles, law, politics, education, sport, racism, multiculturalism, gastronomy, traditions, religion, etc. You are free to select one or several aspects connected to any of these themes and explore it/them in depth.

However, you must ensure you demonstrate the link between the chosen subject and the themes contained in the culture and civilisation curriculum. In other words, a topic totally outside the curriculum might not be approved by your teachers if you cannot demonstrate this link.

Choosing the title

Ideally, the title of your paper should consist of two parts:

- 1) the area of study
- 2) the nature of the problem to be considered

Here are a few examples:

The Generation Gap: a cliché?

Queen Victoria – the woman behind the queen

Gospel Music: God in the Guitar

The title should encapsulate the theme and should be appealing to the reader.

The title must be submitted to the Head of the English Department by the date entered in the calendar of the examination (Appendix 3). After this date it cannot be amended.

Your personal contribution

During your research period, you will be coming across many sources of information which you will be using in your paper. However, remember that your personal contribution to the paper must represent 50% of its content. In other words ensure that you give weight to your project by adopting a personal angle, making a personal interpretation of the facts presented or giving a personal account in relation to your written work.

Your personal contribution should be present not only in the introduction of your paper, but should occur consistently throughout.

Plagiarism or the “copy-paste” method

At your current level of study and knowledge of the English language and culture you are expected to be able to read extensively and process the information you assimilate. You need to be able to demonstrate that you can analyse and synthesise the information you have collected, compare and contrast, exemplify and justify, and organise the information in a way that follows a logical structure and is also appealing to the reader.

Plagiarism or the “copy-paste” method is totally unacceptable and will be penalised accordingly. Your paper will be handed back to you and changes should be made according to the instructions in the methodology, up to the deadline set by your supervisor.

Bibliography or references?

As soon as you start researching your topic it is advisable to keep a record of the sources you come across. From this list you will, later on, select your references at the end of the paper. A bibliography refers to all the material you have read on a theme, whether or not you have used it in your paper, whereas references include only those sources you have used (cited) in your paper. For an example of how to organise this information, see Appendix 2.

Information collected from online sources should be cited as follows:

Ross, J. (1999): *Ways of Approaching Research: Qualitative Designs*, last accessed on 7.01.2005 at <http://www.fortunecity.com/greenfield/grizzly/432/rra3.htm>

Gunpowder Plot, last accessed on [date] at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunpowder_Plot

Font, size and line spacing

Throughout the whole of your paper you should use Times New Roman 12. The line spacing should be 1.0 and the text layout should be block justified. Margins: left 2.5 cm, all others 2.

Illustrations

You should aim to achieve a balance between text and illustrations (pictures, charts, diagrams etc.). These should bear a caption and the source in smaller font (TNR 10).

Oral presentation of your project

After you have completed the written work, it is advisable that you start working on your oral presentation. This should be preferably a PowerPoint presentation but you may choose any other visual format / aids. The advantage of a PowerPoint presentation is that it allows you to present content effectively if text and images are well balanced.

Remember that the PowerPoint presentation is not a mere copy of your written work. You should do the following:

- cover much less content than your written work
- give your presentation a simple and logical structure
- include a short introduction in which you outline the points you intend to cover
- include a main body in which you present the main ideas / arguments
- use examples to make things clearer
- make difficult points easier to understand by preparing the listener for them
- include a short conclusion in which you go over the main points of your talk

How to speak confidently in public

Speaking confidently in public is not easy, everyone gets nervous, but you can learn how to improve your presentation skills by applying a few simple techniques.

The main points to pay attention to when speaking in public are:

- the quality of your voice (volume, speed and fluency, clarity and pronunciation)
- your rapport with the audience (eye contact, posture, sensitivity to how the audience is responding to your talk and the image you transmit to your audience)
- the use of notes (use notes with headings and points to be covered, do not read long notes and do not memorise your speech)
- the use of visual aids (PowerPoint presentation, film, printed handouts)

Time management and action planning

In order to complete your project successfully, you need to carefully plan all the stages of the process. This means:

- choosing the right time and place to work on your project
- establishing priorities
- avoiding procrastination by creating an action plan (Appendix 4)
- reflecting on your research and the results obtained
- asking for help if you encounter obstacles
- adhering to deadlines

SECTION 3: Format of the completed project

Title page

This is the first page, or cover, of your paper, and it should include the full title, your name, your supervisor's name, the name of the high school and the examination (Appendix 5). Your title page should conform in every way to the sample presented in the appendix.

Contents page

This should show chapter headings and subheadings if appropriate, as well as appendices and references, and the corresponding page numbers.

Introduction

This is your starting point. You should say why you chose the topic, what the research problem is and why it is so important to you. You should start writing this section at the beginning of your research but refine it until the end.

Researching the theme

You must not "photocopy" existing authors and materials. You should make use of relevant reading in order to develop your argument, which should be directly linked to the title. When researching, it is advisable to record the sources (initially as Bibliography and then filtered down to References) and to make notes. These will help answer your research question(s) and inform your writing. Another effective tool while researching is to compile a review of all the materials you have read on a subject. This should not be included in your written work as such, but you can use it to shape your ideas and refine your argument.

Structure

You should attempt to structure your paper around a series of questions: what? (topic), why? (reason and purpose), so what? (relevance, importance, new approach, personal contribution emphasized) and how? (brief presentation of the structure of the paper and method employed). You should present the information you have collected throughout your reading and research in a logically structured way and analyse, interpret, synthesise and justify it. Refer your findings back to the statement of the problem.

Conclusions

In this part of the paper you should say nothing new but sum up your findings and state the extent to which you have illuminated the problem.

References

These should be done in author surname alphabetical order, with author's initials, date of publication, full title in italics and publisher. In the case of journal articles, give journal volume and page numbers. Include only those books and articles that you have read.

Appendices

Material presented in appendices is often that which would spoil the flow of the argument if put in the text (e.g. questionnaires or interviews). The appendices should be numbered and titled.

Final observations

Your paper should not exceed 10 written pages (excluding illustrations) and it should be printed single-sided on A4 paper. You have to submit the final version of your paper to the coordinator between 14th and 30th March 2011 for corrections, observations and suggestions for improvements. One spiral bound copy with a black back cover should be submitted to the Secretariat by 15th April 2011. This final copy has to be approved by your coordinator.

Appendix 1

Criteria for the evaluation of the project

Written work: 30 points

1. Choice of subject – **5 points**
2. Language (semantics / lexis / morphology and syntax) – **10 points**
3. Structure of the project (introduction, contents, conclusion, references) – **15 points**

Delivery / Oral presentation: 60 points

1. Presentation:
 - ability to present the main ideas – **5 points**
 - ability to illustrate these ideas with relevant examples – **5 points**
2. Interaction:
 - ability to answer the evaluators' questions clearly, without digressions or unnecessary details – **15 points**
 - ability to argue – **10 points**
 - ability to express a personal point of view – **5 points**
 - ability to express nuances of interpretation – **5 points**
3. Linguistic accuracy (morpho-syntactic accuracy, complexity of vocabulary, quality of communication, pronunciation) – **15 points**

10 points are awarded ex officio.

Appendix 2

Culture and Civilisation of the English-speaking World

RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cleary, M. (2008). *World Around. An intercultural journey through English-speaking countries*, Helbling Languages
- Oakland, J. (2006). *British Civilization. An Introduction*, Taylor & Francis, Routledge
- Roberts, R.J. (2006). *Speak Up. The English-speaking World*, Modern Languages, Milan
- Tierney, J. (2001). *Focus on Civilization. History – Past and Present*, Modern Languages, Milan
- Tierney, J. (2001). *Focus on Civilization. Culture and Free Time*, Modern Languages, Milan
- Tierney, J. (2001). *Focus on Civilization. Festivals and Special Occasions*, Modern Languages, Milan
- Wallwork, A. (1999). *The Book of Days. A resource book of activities for special days in the year*, C.U.P.

Appendix 3

Examination dates and deadlines for submitting work

Date / Period	Action to be taken	Observations
15.09 – 06.12	Read widely and find a subject	See Appendix 2
06.12 – 10.12	Present the subject to your teacher	
13.12 – 14.01	Receive feedback and refine your subject/title	
15.01	Submit your final title to your supervisor	
07.02 – 18.02	Submit your first draft to your supervisor	Introduction, chapter structure
21.02 – 11.03	Submit your second draft to your supervisor	Complete structure, conclusion
14.03 – 30.03	Submit your final draft to your supervisor	Last fine-tuning of your work
31.03 – 15.04	Submit your written work to the Secretariat	One spiral bound copy
18.04 – 02.05	Prepare your oral presentation	PowerPoint
02.05 – 31.05	Examination of written and oral work	Date to be announced
02.05 – 31.05	Announcement of results	Date to be announced

Appendix 4

ACTION PLAN

Before writing your action plan, score yourself on the following 20 questions on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent.

	Action	Score
1	I am well motivated.	
2	I set goals and targets for myself.	
3	I am good at identifying my strengths and weaknesses.	
4	I am aware of how I learn, and I read books about the process of learning.	
5	I reflect a lot on what I have achieved.	
6	I am good at doing research and I use my research notes to best advantage.	
7	I read a lot to inform myself of many different views of a subject.	
8	I can work well on my own.	
9	I have good time management skills.	
10	I am good at IT.	
11	I am good at searching journals, web sites and text books.	
12	I am used to looking at texts in a critical way.	
13	I know how to do referencing.	
14	I have good learning and memory strategies.	
15	I have developed good writing skills.	
16	I am good at writing a review of all the materials I have read on a subject.	
17	I have learnt how to do good introductions and good conclusions.	
18	I know how to deliver good presentations.	
19	I know who to talk to when / if I have problems with my project.	
20	I have good coping strategies.	

ACTION PLAN (continued)

You can use the model below to plan your research and writing activities. You must ensure to establish specific, measurable and realistic / achievable objectives.

Name:	Date:
What do I want to achieve by writing this project? <ul style="list-style-type: none">••••	
What have I done so far? <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••	
What do I need to improve on or develop? <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••	
My new priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what? • when? • how?	
Notes:	

COLEGIUL NAȚIONAL „ANDREI ȘAGUNA” BRAȘOV

**LUCRARE PENTRU OBȚINEREA ATESTATULUI
LA LIMBA ENGLEZĂ**

[TITLUL LUCRĂRII ÎN LIMBA ENGLEZĂ]

Elev:
[Prenume, nume]

Profesor coordonator:
[Prenume, nume]

2011