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TEST GUIDE

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TEST GUIDE

Contents

Preface p3

1 Guidance on developing and assessing tests p4

- A Year 9 Diploma Recommendations p4
- B Year 9 Diploma and Baccalaureate Examinations Recommendations p6
- C General guidelines for developing and assessing tests p9
- D Guidance on item writing and assessment p11
 - 1. Common item formats / task types p11
 - a. Multiple Choice Items p11
 - b. True/False Items p12
 - c. Matching p12
 - d. Short Answer Items p13
 - e. Gap Fill p13
 - Annex 1: Guidelines for well-written test items: Features and Brief Descriptions p14
 - Annex 2: Test Marking Issues p15
 - 2. Assessing common language task types p16
 - a. About the assessment approach p16
 - b. Using checklists for task development and assessment p16
 - Checklists for common language task types p18
 - c. Practice tasks p19

2 Guidance on Reading Comprehension Tasks p25

- A Zoom in on the text p25
 - Understanding and determining text complexity p25
 - Annex 3: Complexity rubric p27
 - Annex 4: Selected websites for assessment and teaching materials p29
- B Zoom in on the questions p30
 - Annex 5: Question formats suitable for assessing different reading abilities p31
 - Annex 6: A Taxonomy of Reading Comprehension Questions p33
- C Assessing and developing reading comprehension items p34
 - 1 Practice Activities: Examining texts p34
 - 2 Practice Activities: Examining and writing comprehension questions p41

3 Guidance on Writing Tasks p55

- A Quality review of writing tasks – Checklists p57
- B Practice Activities: Assessing free and guided writing tasks p59

4 Assessing the assessments p67

- Checklists for developing and assessing tests p67
- A Assessment of 9th Year Diploma Examinations p72
- B Assessment of Baccalaureate Examinations p83

Glossary p93

Appendices p99

References p138

Preface

This guide is for all English Language Teaching educators, novices and veterans. It provides a framework to improve the complex practices of test development and evaluation. Although they have certain knowledge and skills in those practices, they need to upgrade their related abilities due to changes occurring in the evaluation sphere.

Test Guide is not a finished comprehensive reference document; rather, it aims to fill a gap in the field and complement the efforts of colleagues who produced works dealing with various evaluation issues, such as Toumi Lafi's paper on assessment (2003), *Teaching and Assessing Reading*, by J. Ben Afia, R. Najar, E. Ammar, and A. Bahloul (2006) and *Test Sampler*, undertaken by a team of colleagues and coordinated by M. F. Beji (2008).

In the first chapter, users will find recommendations and guidelines for developing and assessing tests, with practice activities in *language*. Next, in order to provide ample practice in the nuts and bolts of test construction, the following two chapters present guidance on *reading* and *writing* activities, with materials to work on and assess, using checklists. The fourth chapter provides national examinations to evaluate. At the end of the book, I have added a concise glossary with key testing and assessment terms and useful appendices, including Bloom's taxonomy and the Ongoing Evaluation Documents for all levels.

This document is a joint project open to various contributions and seeks to help users extensively in order to produce quality tests. For that aim, they need to take informed decisions and appropriate actions. Indeed, that aim mainly rests on the relentless efforts of qualified educators, who are aware of the complexity of testing issues – from development and review, to marking and correction, to providing and getting feedback.

This work is a product of substantial collaboration generously provided by resourceful devoted people. I would first like to express my deepest appreciation to Rachid Najar, Ali Souli and Brahim Aloui for their invaluable insight and materials review. I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to ELT consultant and author Rod Bolitho, Chair of NILE Advisory Board, for proficiently evaluating the work and providing helpful feedback. For your embracing support and intellectual leadership, a humble thank you to all of you and to all the people who push us to be the best that we can be.

I am deeply indebted to colleagues who supported me wholeheartedly, especially to Lamjed Labidi and Jamel Requiq, for kindly reviewing my first draft and providing constructive suggestions and feedback. I also appreciate the contributions of many English teachers who provided some valuable materials used in the test design workshops over two years and also in this guide which will be genuinely helpful to all practitioners.

I dedicate this work to educators who work with passion, patience and a genuine desire for a positive change. I also dedicate it to the memory of my beloved mother, to my cherished spouse, whose unwavering support has been a constant source of stimulation, and our wonderful daughters and to my loving brother and his family. I finally dedicate it to my dear colleague Salem Lasmar, who has obtained his doctorate in French literature with honours.

1. Guidance on Developing and Assessing Tests

A. Year 9 Diploma Recommendations¹

I. General issues

Test item writers should:

1. Vary the themes dealt with in the reading comprehension, the language exercises and the writing tasks.
2. Give clear, simple and concise instructions.
3. Proof-read / revise for language accuracy and appropriacy and content validity.
4. Suggest accessible materials and tasks to **the average pupil**.
5. Make sure the test taker is familiar with the question types and the language used.
6. Avoid the heavy and demotivating cultural load and the depressing and shocking themes in texts/paragraphs/tasks suggested.
7. Avoid time-consuming tasks.
8. Have a clear rationale for each suggested task/exercise/question, etc.
9. Avoid testing the same thing twice.
10. Avoid repetition or overuse of a question type.
11. Avoid suggesting materials taken from coursebooks and commercial extracurricular workbooks “*livres parascolaires*”.

II. Specific issues

1. Reading Comprehension

Test item writers should:

1. Consider the number of words. **(200 words general / 150 words technical)**
2. Vary the questions to “demonstrate comprehension of text content and organization”
3. Suggest texts containing topical issues (recent, up-to-date themes, subjects which are of particular interest at the present time)
4. Design comprehension questions (4 or 5) according to text suitability for a good exploitation.
5. Avoid designing questions which require a variety of possible answers, with the exception of the question which requires test takers to “express reaction to the content of the text or the characters or people involved”.
6. When asking test taker to complete a summary with words from different paragraphs, test developers should:
 - a. Indicate **in the instructions** the paragraphs where the words exist.
 - b. Ask the test taker to identify and copy the words as they are. That is to say; without making any changes to the words.
7. Make sure the adjectives or adverbs suggested in the question type: ‘Circle / tick / underline... the adj./adv. which apply to...’ are familiar to the pupils. That is to say, the words are mentioned in the word lists/book maps/module maps/exist in lessons, etc. and ask for no more than **two items** – two adj./adv. – to be identified in the list suggested.

¹ These recommendations are provided for regional commissions involved in Year 9 exams proposals.

8. In the question type: 'Complete with details from the text...'
 - a. The detail ranges from one word to one full sentence, but no more.
 - b. The detail should be explicitly and completely written. Dots (.....), or ellipsis, are not accepted and the answer is considered false.
9. Test item writers should design a correct option and distractors in the multiple choice items of equal length: containing almost the exact number of words as in the correct answer.

2. Language exercises

Test item writers should:

1. Provide a complete sentence at the beginning of the paragraph/ leave the first sentence integral to set context.
2. Avoid ungrammatical words in the multiple choice items.
3. Spread items. Do not overload one or two sentences with test items.
4. Suggest "bare infinitive" in tense/form exercise as a rule. (Bracketed words)
5. Strike a balance between tenses and forms.
6. In the tense/form exercise, avoid items requiring a double task such as adding a prefix and a suffix; e.g., (**avoid**) to get **unavoidable**.
7. Vary the items in the multiple choice question/technique (prepositions, tenses, forms, lexical items, etc.)
8. Refer to the word lists/book maps/module maps/lessons to make sure the selected lexical items exist. Broadly speaking, each lexical test item should be found somewhere in the teaching materials in one of the official coursebooks in use (7th/8th/9th forms).

3. Writing tasks

1. In the production task, suggest a topic that should interest and motivate the pupil to write.
2. Suggest a theme that relates to the 9th form syllabus.
3. Design a task that allows the pupils to use their own ideas, activate and reinvest personal knowledge and language resources and express attitudes. The task should not be suitable for memorizing and learning off by heart data and ready-made sentences and rewriting them. It shouldn't lend itself to rote learning.
4. Avoid tasks that are ill-defined. The task should specify topic, a communicative situation, purpose, audience, clear context, genre/text type.
5. Specify a clear functional organization (e.g. narrative, argumentative, description of a process, contrast and comparison, cause and effect, making suggestions, etc.).
6. Suggest a task which is manageable within the time allotted and which doesn't require much background knowledge some pupils might not have.
7. Do not provide the test takers with helpful notes and hints in the free writing. Give the instructions only.
8. Quotes - when used - should not confuse or mislead the test takers. They should be clear enough, carefully selected, guiding and connected/related to the issue raised in the task.
9. Provide clear and appropriate lay-out.
10. Specify the length of the written text, i.e., the number of lines required.

B. Recommendations for Year 9 Diploma and Baccalaureate Examinations²

I. General issues

Test item writers should:

1. Vary the themes in the Reading comprehension, Language exercises and Writing tasks.
2. Make sure test takers are familiar with the question types and the language used. Avoid repetition or overuse of a question type.
3. Suggest accessible materials and tasks to the **average pupil**.
4. Have a clear rationale for each suggested task / exercise / question, etc. Avoid time-consuming tasks.
5. Give clear, simple and concise instructions.
6. Avoid heavy and demotivating cultural load and depressing / shocking themes in texts / paragraphs.
7. Avoid testing the same thing twice.
8. Not use materials from coursebooks and commercial workbooks “*livres parascolaires*”.
9. Revise and proofread for language accuracy and appropriacy and content validity.

NB Regional commissions involved in exams proposals are requested to provide copies of the sources/references cover page and the pages containing the text, the language exercises and the guided writing tasks.

II. Specific issues

1. Reading Comprehension

Test item writers should:

1. Consider the words number. (**Basic**: General: 200; Technical: 150. **Secondary**: 300, Sciences. / Arts: 350 / Sport: 200.)
2. Suggest texts containing topical issues (themes / subjects: recent, up-to-date, of particular present time interest). For Secondary levels: accessible literary texts conveying universal values is possible.
3. Design comprehension questions according to text suitability for a good exploitation; the following option has been considered a realistic and practical solution:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9th Y. (6 items): 4 or 5 questions• The Arts (<i>Lettres</i>) branch (15 items): 6 or 7 questions maximum• The Sciences branch (12 items): 5 or 6 questions maximum |
|--|

4. Vary the questions to “demonstrate comprehension of text content and organization”.
5. Avoid designing questions which require a variety of possible answers, with the exception of the question which requires testees to “express reaction to text content or characters / people involved”.
6. When asking examinees to complete a summary with words from different paragraphs, test developers should:

² These recommendations are provided for regional commissions involved in exams proposals.

- indicate in the instructions the paragraphs where the words exist.
- ask the testee to identify and copy the words as they are—without making any changes to them.

7. In the question type: ‘Circle / Tick / Underline... the adjectives/adverbs which apply to...’,

- make sure the adjectives or adverbs suggested are familiar to the pupils—the words are mentioned in the word lists/book maps/module maps/exist in lessons, etc.
- ask for no more than two items – two adjectives/adverbs – to be identified in the list suggested.

8. In the question type: Complete with details from the text,

- the detail ranges from one word to one full sentence, but no more.
- the detail should be explicitly and completely written. Dots (.....), or ellipsis, are not accepted and the answer is considered **false**.

9. [For BAC exams/tests.] For “identifying evidence that a given statement is false”, the instruction is worded as follows:

- For each of the following statements, pick out one detail from the text showing that it is **false**.
- Each statement is followed with the paragraph number—the paragraph where the detail exists.

10. Test item writers should design a correct option and distractors in the multiple choice items of equal length: containing almost the exact number of words as in the correct answer.

2. Language exercises

Test item writers should:

1. Provide a **complete sentence** at the beginning of the paragraph—leave the first sentence integral in order to set context.
2. Avoid suggesting **ungrammatical words** in the multiple choice items.
3. **Spread items**; do not overload one or two sentences with test items.
4. Suggest the **bare infinitive** in tense/form exercises as a rule. (Bracketed words)
5. Strike a **balance between tenses and forms**.
6. In the tense/form exercise, avoid items requiring a **double task** such as adding a prefix and a suffix; e.g. *avoid* to get unavoidable.
7. **Vary the items in the multiple choice** question (prepositions, tenses, forms, lexical words, etc.)
8. Refer to the word lists/book maps/module maps/lessons to make sure the **selected lexical items exist**—each lexical test item should be found somewhere in the teaching materials in one of the official coursebooks in use.

3. Writing tasks

- *For BAC exams*

1. In developing full sentences from notes, test item developers should make sure notes are not single words, but **chunks/series of words separated by slashes**.
2. **Avoid overloading tables/biography data** with many details and notes. Suggest a reasonable amount of information to be developed in a paragraph/short text written in the specified and provided number of lines.
3. Say: a **correct sentence** (not a *coherent* sentence) and a **coherent paragraph**.

- *For 9th Year Diploma and BAC exams*

Production task

1. Suggest a **topic** that should “**interest and motivate** the pupil to write”.
2. Suggest a **theme** that relates to the syllabus.
3. Design a task that allows the pupils to use their own ideas, activate and reinvest personal knowledge and language resources, and express attitudes. The task should not be suitable for memorizing and learning off by heart data and ready-made sentences and rewriting them. It shouldn't lend itself to **rote learning**.
4. Avoid ill-defined tasks—they should specify topic, **a communicative situation, purpose, audience, clear context, genre/text type**.
5. Specify a clear **functional organization** (e.g. narrative, argumentative, description of a process, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, making suggestions, etc.)
6. Suggest a task which is **manageable within the time allotted** and which **doesn't require much background knowledge** some pupils might not have.
7. **Avoid scaffolding**—do not provide the test takers with helpful notes and hints in the free writing; give the instructions only.
8. **Quotes** – when used – should not confuse or mislead the test takers .They should be clear enough, carefully selected, guiding and related to the issue raised in the task.
9. Provide **clear and appropriate lay-out**.
10. Specify the length of the written text – **the number of lines required**.

C. General guidelines for developing and assessing tests

“An answer is only as good as the question, and a poorly constructed or vague question can only result in a poor or useless answer.”³

This section offers guidelines and tips that will help further improve teacher skills of test development and assessment. It is meant to complement the previous recommendations.

1. **Make testing productive:** make the test a less intimidating experience by explaining to the students the purpose of the test and emphasizing the positive effects it will have.
2. **Be Fair.** To be valid, the test needs to be fair, giving all the students an equal chance to show what they know and can do. **Guard against bias** (cultural, gender, etc.).
3. **Let students excel.** Give them a chance to demonstrate their best performance, by designing tasks that are engaging and accessible and that permit the students to demonstrate what they know or can do.
4. **Make the test accurate and appropriate,** providing the evidence it was meant to provide and measure the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities you believe are important.
5. **Test what you teach effectively;** test what your students **learn effectively⁴**, avoiding any ‘mismatch’ between teaching and testing.
6. Provide in the test a **representative** sample of the objectives and tasks taught in class, avoiding repeatedly focusing on specific language areas and themes covered – otherwise “what is (frequently) assessed becomes what is valued, which becomes what is taught”.
7. Include texts, contexts, and tasks which simulate ‘**real life**’ and use situations and tasks which are likely to be familiar and **relevant** to examinees.
8. **Don’t assume the students understand the instructions.** Wording in tests is critical. Unclear directions can confuse test takers, affect responses, and lead to inaccurate information about what the students actually know and can do.
9. **Write questions that match the average student’s ability level.** Test the questions by actually taking the test; evaluate your answers and marking and identify the key knowledge and concepts needed to gain maximum marks.
10. The main criterion for measuring the value of an item type is its **appropriacy** for use in testing language in a particular situation and for a specified purpose – choose the item⁵ type that provides the most direct means of measuring the desired learning outcome.
11. Characteristics of what a “**good question**” is⁶:

Intention: Did the question assess what you intended to assess?
Demonstration: Did learners demonstrate that they learned what they needed to learn?
Progress: Were learners able to show progress in their learning?
Motivation: Did the question help motivate learners to further their academic pursuits of the subject matter?
Distinction: Did the question help distinguish learners from “non-learners”?

³ Brian Allison et al. *Research Skills for Students*.

⁴ Bear in mind that in one test, we cannot assess ALL the things we expect students to learn well.

⁵ The term ‘item’ is used as a shorthand for a question on the test.

⁶ For more on this issue, see [Annex 1](#), Guidelines for Well-Written Test Items, placed at the end of the next section.

12. **Item difficulty** depends on the degree of complexity and range of knowledge it requires as well as the cognitive operations that are required to process the item.
13. **Avoid trick or catch questions** in the test.
14. **Design the test so that the students can complete it in the time available.** A test that has more questions than students can complete in the allotted time measures knowledge and ability to perform rapidly and under time pressure. The results from such a test are difficult to interpret: it is impossible to tell whether students who performed poorly did so because they did not master the knowledge or skill being tested, or because they were unable to demonstrate their ability in the allotted time.
15. The most common questions types used at various cognitive levels:

Factual Knowledge	Application	Analysis and Evaluation
Multiple Choice True/False Matching Type Sentence Completion Short Answer	Multiple Choice Short Answer Problems Essay	Multiple Choice Short answer Essay

16. **Avoid setting tasks that may cause marking problems**—look ahead to how the test will be marked, and avoid items which would be sure to cause marking problems.⁷
17. **Grade the test objectively.** You can score all the papers for one component (e.g. reading) as a group before going on to the next component (e.g. writing). Make notes on tests, to **explain** marks, to **help** students understand their mistakes and correct them, etc.
18. **After the test.** In order to use test results to improve learning and teaching, return the marked tests to the students in due time and
 - a) discuss the different ways the students responded to each task. Give them the opportunity to revise their responses. This experience helps them learn how to evaluate their work. Prepare remedial work based on your students' identified needs.
 - b) provide constructive, high-quality feedback and 'feedforward' to the students. A score alone doesn't give students sufficient information about their performance on the assessment. Tell students
 - Their areas of strength and weakness
 - What they did correctly and incorrectly and why
 - What they can do differently next time to improve their performance
 - c) You can use a questionnaire to get students' input about the course and the test. Encourage them to tell you if they felt a question/task type was difficult/unfamiliar.
19. Check how the class as a whole as well as how the average student scored on the test (calculate the average score; apply item analysis...), and guard against misinterpreting test scores by assuming that high scores indicate good instruction, low scores indicate poor students, etc.
20. Collaborate with colleagues to construct a joint test avoiding, as much as possible, pitfalls of individually-made tests. Test development requires more than one individual's skills and effort in order to be effective and as error-free as possible – it is demanding and rigorous.⁸

⁷ Bear in mind that the quality of task design and scoring are interdependent. When coordinated, scoring is more effective, and the results are more valid. Regarding marking, see [Annex 2: Marking Issues](#).

⁸ "To be able to prepare a good test, one has to have a mastery of the subject matter, knowledge of the pupils to be tested, skill in verbal expression and the use of the different test formats."

D. Guidance on item writing and assessment

1) Common item formats / task types

- **Selected response**, where the test takers choose answers from a number of available options, e.g. MCQs, true/false, matching
- **Short response**, in which test takers must produce words, phrases, or short sentences to complete the task, e.g. sentence completion, tense/form tasks
- **Extended response**, which requires the production of longer stretches of discourse, e.g. essays

a. Multiple Choice Questions

✦ Use:

Frequently used to assess at the level of recall and understanding and, if carefully constructed, can also be used to assess higher-order cognitive skills; commonly used in tests of reading, listening, and language.

✦ Advantages:

- Allow considerable coverage of content
- Guessing reduced
- No writing for student
- Marking is quick, accurate, and objective.

✦ Limitations:

- Often difficult to construct good items which are unambiguously worded and which will elicit the key
- Often difficult to devise enough plausible distractors
- Time-consuming to write

✦ Tips for Writing Good Multiple Choice items:

- Items** should be independent of others.
- The stem** should contain as much of the information as possible, avoid unnecessary material, and be stated in positive form, wherever possible.
- Alternatives** should be grammatically consistent with the stem, parallel in form, similar in length, free from clues to the correct answer, and be presented in some order.
- Alternatives** should not contain any words repeated in each option, overlap in meaning, or be synonymous with one another.
- Distractors**⁹ should be plausible, clearly/demonstrably incorrect, and similar to the key. They should avoid merely stating the reverse of the key. They should use only correct language. They should not be easily identified as wrong choices.
- The answer** should be fully correct or clearly the most appropriate¹⁰; it should not be too obvious, relative to the other options (check whether it should be shortened, lengthened, made less concrete...) ¹¹. The position of the key in the options should be randomised.

⁹ Distractors should not be tricky. Check whether there is any way you could justify one or more as an acceptable correct answer. Avoid implausible distractors (arcane, trivial, overly implausible...); avoid providing too much specific detail in the correct response alternative; this makes it simple for examinees to arrive at the correct response by merely eliminating the less specifically worded distractors. Consider writing a brief Distractor Analysis.

¹⁰ Unlike Absolutely-Correct Type Test Items (in language tasks), Best-Answer Test Items (in reading comprehension tasks) carry some risk for confusion & controversy – more than one response alternative will contain information that involves some truth, is relevant or correct; however, one of these should be more complete or more relevant to the

b. True/False Questions¹²

✦ Use:

Alternative response items may be used to assess outcomes concerned with the recall of information or the ability to discriminate; they are better used for self-assessment and diagnostic assessment than for summative assessment.

✦ Advantages:

- Can test large amounts of content
- Mostly used for testing reading and listening – testing gist or intensive understanding
- Easy to construct and mark

✦ Limitations:

- They are easy.
- It is difficult to discriminate between students that know the material and students who don't.
- 50-50 chance of getting the right answer by guessing.
- Need a large number of items for high reliability.
- Not recommended for high-stakes tests and exams.

✦ Tips for Writing Good True/False items:

- Avoid lengthy and ambiguous statements; each statement is clearly true or clearly false.
- Use positive rather than negative statements.
- Avoid specific determiners (e.g. never, sometimes, only, may, few).
- Use only one central idea in each item.
- Don't emphasize the trivial – trivial details should not make a statement false.
- Avoid quoting statements exactly from text.
- Make more false than true – students are more likely to answer true.

c. Matching

✦ Use:

Knowledge level; testing vocabulary and main ideas in reading and listening and some comprehension level, if appropriately constructed

✦ Types:

- Terms with definitions
- Phrases with other phrases
- Causes with effects
- Parts with larger units
- Problems with solutions

✦ Advantages:

- Maximum coverage at knowledge level in a minimum amount of space
- Valuable in content areas that have a lot of facts

✦ Limitations:

- Time consuming for students
- Not good for higher levels of learning
- One item in one list might be able to be matched to several items in the other.
- Can be difficult and time-consuming to construct

✦ Tips for Writing Good Matching items:

specific information given in the item's stem. This requires consensus of opinion among knowledgeable persons (the item writer and other practitioners) that it is the most appropriate answer.

¹¹ Novice item writers tend to produce keys that are longer and more detailed than distractors. Test-wise students will be drawn to the longest response.

¹² Types of true-false items: True-False/Right-Wrong and Yes-No.

- In the instructions, clearly state the basis for matching and indicate whether responses can be used more than once.
- Make all responses plausible.
- Keep the list of premises short with brief responses on the right.
- The answer list should be larger than the first list to reduce the chance of guessing by a process of elimination.
- There should be no more than one correct response for each statement.
- Put responses in some logical order (chronological, alphabetical, etc.).

d. Short Answer Items – WH-questions, information transfer, etc.

✖ Use:

Good for most cognitive skills: recall, comprehension, application, analysis, etc.

✖ Advantages:

• Easy to construct • Minimizes guessing • Less time-consuming to construct than multiple choice or matching items • Encourages more intensive study – student must know the answer vs. recognizing the answer.

✖ Limitations:

• May overemphasize memorization of facts • Some writing is involved, which makes marking difficult and subjective. • Questions may have more than one correct answer. • Scoring is laborious.

✖ Tips for Writing Good Short Answer Items:

- Use direct questions, not an incomplete statement.
- Phrase the question so there is only one single, brief answer possible, or a very limited number of acceptable answers.
- Phrase the item so that the examinee knows that the answer should be concise.
- In the instructions, specify whether badly constructed or misspelled responses are accepted, whether they are awarded partial credit, etc.

e. Sentence completion / Gap Filling

✖ Advantages:

• Authentic and realistic task. • Easy to construct, administer and score. • Can test a broad range of knowledge, skills, vocabulary, grammar, listening for specific words / details quickly.

✖ Limitations:

• Developing such tests to accurately measure more complex, higher-level thinking skills is difficult and time consuming. • For reading, it tests knowledge of language.

✖ Tips for Writing Good Gap Fill Items:

- Omit only the key words and avoid omitting so many key words as to make the sentence unintelligible; leave enough clues, but avoid grammatical clues.
- Leave the first sentence integral to give the student an idea of what the paragraph is about.
- Leave blanks at nearly equal intervals; avoid putting several blanks close to each other such that the overall meaning is obscured; and keep the blanks the same length.
- Require a single word or short statement for the answer.
- Avoid splitting an item between two pages.
- Two important issues related to scoring:
 - * Spelling and sentence structure.
 - * Students must be informed if these will be assessed on the test.

Annex 1

Guidelines for well-written test items: Features and Brief Descriptions

Word frequency/familiarity.

Test items should use words that have a high frequency in common literature for that group of test takers.

Word length.

Longer words tend to be less familiar and should be avoided where possible.

Sentence length.

Not only should sentences be shorter but their grammatical structure should be simple.

Voice of Verb Phrase.

Passive voice should be avoided.

Length of Nominals.

Noun phrases with several modifiers are troublesome to ELL test takers.

Complex question phrases.

Longer questions with a complex structure are also troublesome to ELL test takers.

Comparative structures.

Comparative constructions are another source of construct-irrelevant difficulty to test takers.

Prepositional phrases.

ELL students have difficulty with prepositional phrases.

Sentence and discourse.

Sentences in a paragraph may have different discourse structures that confuse some ELLs.

Subordinate clauses.

Subordinate clauses are more complex than coordinate clauses and thus challenge the ELL.

Conditional clauses.

Conditional and adverbial clauses contribute to text difficulty.

Relative clauses.

Some test takers have limited exposure to relative clauses, which may cause them to perform lower than expected.

Concrete versus abstract.

Narrative presentations tend to be better understood than expository presentations.

Negation.

Negation is harder to comprehend. Negation is not recommended as a general item writing principle.

Source: *Linguistic Modification*, Abedi-Sato, 2006.

Annex 2: Test Marking Issues

Key Principles & Recommendations

* **Major concern of marking:** To ensure student work is marked reliably and accurately. Aim for: accuracy, consistency, objectivity, and fairness.

- a **Accuracy**—doing things in an exact way without making a mistake; = exactness, correctness, precision; ≠ inaccuracy, carelessness
- b **Consistency**—always behaving or performing in a similar way; = regularity, agreement; ≠ inconsistency
- c **Fairness**—treating people equally or in a way that is reasonable / making judgements free from discrimination or dishonesty; conformity with rules or standards; = equity, impartiality, honesty; ≠ dishonesty
- d **Objectivity**—freedom from bias or partiality; = disinterest, impartiality, impersonality; ≠ bias, partiality, prejudice, subjectivity

* **Give students the benefit of the doubt:** When there is **ambiguity**, students **should receive benefit of the doubt**.

* Marking errors

Errors occur when questions are ambiguous / poorly designed. On a high-stakes exam, one poorly written question can determine a student's classification as "passing" or "failing," and reversal is difficult. Guard against marking errors: **Leniency; Strictness; Restriction of range; Inconsistency; Halo...**

- a **Leniency / generosity**—evaluating all students as outstanding and giving inflated ratings; rating higher than deserved
- b **Strictness / severity**—marking all Sts at the low end of the scale; being overly/too critical of performance
- c **Restriction of range**—restricting marks to:
 - i. one particular polarity of the scale (either lenient or severe ratings) OR
 - ii. the midpoint of the scale (**central tendency**), failing to employ ratings in other portions of the scale. Markers with **central tendency error** avoid both extremes of the scale marking every work as average and hesitating in giving out extreme marks/judgments. Rating everyone in the middle is often due to "anchoring" on the middle level by assuming that everyone is average (or proficient) unless there is a lot of evidence he/she is not.
- d **Inconsistency**—applying one or more marking scales in a manner inconsistent with the way in which the other markers apply the same scales; the marker exhibits more random variability than expected in his/her ratings
- e **Contrast effect**—evaluating a student relative to other students rather than the test requirements
- f **Halo**—rating on one dimension determined by rating on another
- g **Similarity**—rating influenced by how similar the observed classroom or school is to yours, how similar the practice observed is to yours, or how similar the person being observed is to you
- h **Context effects**—performance of peer group influences ratings

2) Assessing some common language task types

a. About the assessment approach

Like any other human product, a test will have its development strengths and weaknesses. Nonetheless, because item-writing flaws may render test questions easier or more difficult than intended, directly affecting validity, and because of potential test impacts on students and parents, on teachers and schools, and on the whole education system, considerable effort and professionalism are required from both test developers and test evaluators in order to produce quality tests, and eventually, inform and improve learning-teaching.¹³ Educators cannot afford to stand helplessly in front of errors – developing tests with the fewest errors is not beyond reach. We need to bear in mind that improvement comes with practice – and for high effectiveness, item writing and assessment are best done using a team approach at various stages of the exercise (*Together Everyone Achieves More.*).

Objective of assessment:

Improving test construction and evaluation skills in accordance with given recommendations and guidelines, through rigorous development and assessment/review of test items

What is not a set purpose of assessment:

Looking for weaknesses in the works of others, holding people accountable for faulty practices, and stopping at that stage, rather than exploiting invalid items and making good use of the identified errors by fixing them and learning from them

Key considerations for item writing and assessment – Reminder: For each item, we need to consider the timing, grade appropriateness, difficulty level, and potential sources of bias. We also have to make sure that item validity is not affected by factors that unnecessarily increase the difficulty of the item, such as unfamiliar or overly difficult vocabulary,¹⁴ grammar, directions, contexts, or stimulus materials.

b. Using checklists for task/test development and assessment

- ✓ **Aim at making each checklist item actionable.** A checklist is a detailed number of concise and actionable items that can be used repeatedly to identify weaknesses in developing and assessing tests. The power of a quality checklist is that you can take action on each item and ensure you are meeting the intent of that item.
- ✓ **Don't skip anything on the list.** Use your checklist fully each time; if you find yourself skipping questions, you should ask if the checklist is properly designed for your purposes.

¹³ In England, a “serious” error in a GCSE English exam in 2017 meant the paper was “not fit for purpose” and cost the exam board OCR a £175,000 fine. See “Shakespeare rewrite means six-figure fine for exam board OCR.” 2 July 2018 <<http://www.bbc.com>>.

¹⁴ In 2018, a year 13 history exam question asked for New Zealand high school students to write an essay on whether they agreed with a quote from Julius Caesar which reads: “Events of importance are the result of trivial causes”. The students have demanded examiners ignore that they don't know what the word “trivial” means. They claimed the “unfamiliar word” was too hard and left many confused, and the exam should now be marked according to each student's different understanding and interpretation of “trivial”. See “Students say they don't know what 'trivial' means in exam question fiasco.” 16 Nov. 2018 <<http://www.theguardian.com>>.

Item construction and assessment approach

The suggested checklists¹⁵ aim to be as useful, purposeful, and practical as possible. They are intended to assist educators in addressing a number of aspects of test components required for consideration in the Ongoing Evaluation documents. They are intended to streamline and create consistency within the test development/assessment process, not to be definitive measures. For details on any checklist item/dimension, you can refer to related chapters as convenient; navigation between the checklists and the related materials will hopefully be easy and meet your needs. You can use the suggested checklists:

- when developing a test, to ensure that your work conforms to the ‘standards’, as much as possible, and to identify strengths and weaknesses in your item writing.
- when assessing your work or the work of others, to ensure a rigorous, methodical assessment of test item quality.

When developing and assessing items, you can use the suggested checklists and guidelines as they stand, or adapt and adopt them as you see fit for your purposes and contexts. Then you can use the ‘satisfactory’ items as models for future reference; as for the ‘unsatisfactory’ items, you can work with other colleagues in order to make improvements as accurately as possible.

How to use the checklists

Each aspect/item has to be assessed on its own before reaching a final evaluation of the whole component addressed.

Step 1: Check the **PRESENCE** of the items – all of the checklists items are REQUIRED for a quality test. Make sure no item is missing; otherwise, the quality and validity of the test is affected.

Step 2: Check the **QUALITY** of the items – once you ensure all of the checklists items are there, you can now proceed to assess the appropriateness and relevance of each item.

You can indicate the degree of satisfaction on a scale ranging from **4** points for an excellent / outstanding test item to **0** point. Any aspect that receives a low score (less than 2) has to be changed. The best possible score within a dimension, **4** points, indicates that the item would be of optimal benefit to students.

Ratings:

4 = Excellent.

3 = Good.

2 = Satisfactory.

1 = Unsatisfactory.

0 = Totally lacking.

(NA: Not applicable)

¹⁵ *Sources:* Mostly based on Ongoing Evaluation documents, Year 9 Diploma and BAC Exams Recommendations, materials provided by inspectors, and a number of select print and electronic sources.

Checklists for common language task types

General guidelines for most language tasks

- a) Is the item format correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- b) Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of difficulty and time? Free of tricks/trivia?
- c) Is language simple and clear—accessible to students?
- d) Is the task material authentic? Is the task contextualized?
- e) Is the first sentence of the paragraph integral, providing enough context?
- f) Are the items well spaced out (evenly spread)?
- g) Are the items free of clues within and among them?
- h) Is there only one key for each item?¹⁶
- i) Is the mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- j) Is the task well laid out, with adequate spaces for answers, on the same page?
- k) Has the task been revised and proofread?

(a) Fill in Task

- 1 Do the blanks include a balance of content words and function words?
- 2 Do the options include a balance of content words and function words?
- 3 Do the options include two plausible distractors?
- 4 Do the options appear in the textbook word list?
- 5 Do the options precede the gapped paragraph, in a box, separated by slashes?
- 6 Are blank lines (___) of equal length used? Are these numbered?

(b) Tense/Form Task

- 1 Is the instruction precise? (Put the bracketed words in the appropriate tense/form.)
- 2 Are the bracketed words supplied in the base form, in **bold** type?
- 3 Are students familiar with the bracketed words?
- 4 Are students familiar with the tenses/forms required?
- 5 Is there a balance between tense and form in the task?
- 6 Are items requiring a double task, e.g. adding a prefix & suffix (able → disabled), avoided?
- 7 Are lines (___) used for the blanks? Are these numbered?

(c) Multiple-Choice Task

- 1 Is the instruction precise? (Circle the **correct** option.)
- 2 Do options in the same item share the same part of speech – 3 adjectives, 3 adverbs, etc.?
- 3 Does the item test one thing at a time—e.g. tense OR form?
- 4 Is there a balance between content words and function words?
- 5 Are distractors plausible but clearly incorrect?
- 6 Do distractors include only correct forms and vocabulary?
- 7 Are all the bracketed options in **bold** type?

¹⁶ Are misspelt answers penalized? → No credit is given to answers with spelling or capitalization errors.

(d) Matching Task

- 1 Are premises and options rather short in order to reduce the amount of reading?
- 2 Are premises longer than options?
- 3 Are the premises in the right order?
- 4 Are the options and premises related to one central theme, familiar to testees?
- 5 Are there more response options than premises?
- 6 Have the task sentences been divided into sentence parts only once?
- 7 Are the premises numbered (1, 2, 3...) and the options identified by letters (a, b, c...)?
- 8 Are the instructions appropriate?¹⁷

c. Practice tasks

Review the quality of the items / tasks below, using the suggested checklists.

Consider these two examples.

Tick the correct alternative.

(1) He went to the UK ____.
<input type="checkbox"/> a. because he wanted to learn English.
<input type="checkbox"/> b. because he wanted to get a better job.
<input type="checkbox"/> c. because he wanted to stay with his parents.

- **Assessment:** Badly constructed item
- **Justification:** Problem: redundant wording—needless repetition, which is a common problem in item writing, particularly of multiple-choice type items.
- **Correction/improvement (when necessary):**

He went to the UK because he wanted to ____
<input type="checkbox"/> a. learn English.
<input type="checkbox"/> b. get a better job.
<input type="checkbox"/> c. stay with his parents.

(2) I ____ here since three o'clock.
<input type="checkbox"/> a. have been
<input type="checkbox"/> b. am being
<input type="checkbox"/> c. am be

- **Assessment:** Badly constructed item
- **Justification:** Problem: Negative washback through non-occurrent forms—Through use of incorrect structures of the language it is possible to teach errors to the students. Option c (am be) does not exist in the English language. The possibility exists that a learner might think that 'am' may serve as an auxiliary of 'be'.
- **Correction/improvement (when necessary):** change option be; e.g., c. will be

Now assess each item below.

- **Assessment:**

¹⁷ E.g. Match each sentence part in Column A with its corresponding part in Column B to get a coherent paragraph. The sentence parts in Column A are in the correct order. Use each part in Column B only once.

- Justification:
- Correction/improvement (when necessary):

1. Multiple-Choice Items ➤ As part of the ritual, objects (**symbolize / symbolizing / symbolic**) different professions are arrayed in front of a child.

➤ (**Gamers / Researchers / Physicians**) at Liverpool Moore's University compared the energy expenditure of adolescents when playing sedentary and new generation active computer games.

➤ A 2009 American analysis concluded that online students performed much (**swifter / better / easier**), on average, than those getting face-to-face instruction.

2. Fill in the blanks with six words from the box.

strong / but / party / old / could / office / in

Rachel wanted to give Michelle a special birthday gift. **1**_____ she didn't have any money. One afternoon Rachel noticed that Mrs. Will next door was giving away **2**. _____ furniture. Old chairs and tables were stacked on the sidewalk. Rachel asked Mrs. Will if she **3**. _____ take one of the wooden chairs. "Sure," said Mrs. Will. The chair was covered with cuts and marks, but it looked **4**. _____. Rachel found cans of old paint **5**. _____ her garage. Carefully she painted a bright sky and lots of flowers on the chair. Then she took it to Michelle's birthday **6**. _____. She hid it behind a bush until it was time to open presents. "I love it!" screamed Michelle when she saw the chair. What a special gift the chair made!

Key: 1 But/but; 2 old; 3 could; 4 strong; 5 in; 6 party

3. Circle the correct option.

Rachel wanted to give Michelle a special birthday gift. **(1. So/But/And)** she didn't have any money. One afternoon Rachel noticed that Mrs. Will next door was giving away old **(2. furniture/clothes/baggage)**. Old chairs and tables were stacked on the sidewalk. Rachel asked Mrs. Will if she **(3. should/could/must)** take one of the wooden chairs. "Sure," said Mrs. Will. **(4. The/That/A)** chair was covered with cuts and marks, but it looked strong. Rachel found cans of old paint **(5. at/in/on)** her garage. There were lots of different colours. Carefully she painted a bright sky and lots of flowers on the chair. Then she took it to Michelle's birthday party. She hid it behind a bush until it was time to open **(6. presents/things/projects)**. "I love it!" screamed Michelle when she saw the chair. What a special gift the chair made!

Key: 1 But; 2 furniture; 3 could; 4 The; 5 in; 6 presents

4. Put the words in brackets in the correct tense/form.

Rachel wanted to give Michelle a special birthday gift. But she **(1. not have)** _____ any money. One afternoon Rachel noticed that Mrs. Will next door was giving away old furniture. Old chairs and tables were stacked on the sidewalk. Rachel asked Mrs. Will if she **(2. can)** _____ take one of the wooden chairs. "**(3. Sure)** _____," said Mrs. Will. The chair was covered with cuts and marks, but it looked strong. Rachel found cans of old paint in her garage. **(4. Careful)** _____ she painted a bright sky and lots of flowers on the chair. Then she took it to Michelle's birthday party. She hid it behind a bush until it was time **(5. open)** presents. "I love it!" screamed Michelle when she **(6. see)** _____ the chair. What a special gift the chair made!

Key: 1 didn't have; 2 could; 3 Surely/Sure; 4 Carefully; 5 to open; 6 saw

5. Fill in the blanks with six words from the box.

recycle – don't – cause – up – garbage – smog – clean – fumes

Pollution can be found anywhere. Garbage, dust and dirt are bad for your health; they can 1. _____ sickness. There are ways to keep your environment healthy. Keep it clean and 2. _____ pollute. Clean your home every week. Get the whole family involved. Keep your kitchen and bathrooms 3. _____. Help keep your children's school or a nearby park clean. 5. _____ cans, bottles and paper. Pick 4. _____ trash and throw your trash in 6. _____ cans. Children are always watching and learning from their parents and other adults. We need to model good environmental health.

Key: 1 cause; 2 don't; 3 clean; 4 recycle; 5 up; 6 garbage

6. Circle the correct option.

People start smoking for a variety of different reasons. Some think (1. **they/it/its**) looks cool. Others start (2. **so/because/too**) their family members or friends (3. **smokes/ smoking/smoke**). Statistics show that about 9 out of 10 tobacco (4. **uses/using/users**) start before they are 18 years old. Most adults (5. **which/who/when**) started smoking in their teens never expected to become (6. **addicted/addiction/addict**). That's why people say it's so much easier not to start smoking at all.

Key: 1 it; 2 because; 3 smoke; 4 users; 5 who; 6 addicted

7. Put the words in brackets in the correct tense/form.

Rita trembled as she waited backstage. "In a few minutes, I (1. **go**) _____ onstage and sing," she thought. She practiced every day for many months. So she (2. **not know**) why she felt so (3. **frighten**) _____. She took several deep breaths to calm down. Then she thought about the song she was going to sing. (4. **Sudden**) _____, her mind went blank. She (5. **can not**) _____ remember any of the words! "What am I going to do?" she thought. Then her music began, and she walked onstage. The audience looked up at her, and she looked back at them. She began (6. **sing**) _____ in a clear, strong voice. When she finished her song, the audience cheered. "Bravo! Bravo!" they shouted. Rita bowed, and she smiled from ear to ear.

Key: 1 'll go; 2 didn't know; 3 frightened; 4. Suddenly; 5 couldn't; 6 singing

8. Fill in the blanks with eight words from the box.

those – symptoms – surveys – better – income – those – likely – than – protect – for

New research suggests that people who live close to the sea are happier. They have (1) _____ mental health than people who live in land. This is for the rich and the poor. The (2) _____ looked at data from (3) _____ of 26,000 people, asking people questions about their happiness, lifestyle and (4) _____. They found that (5) _____ who live within one kilometre of the coast are 22 per cent less (6) _____ to show any signs of mental health problems. People who lived more (7) _____ 50 kilometres from the coast had more (8) _____ of mental health problems. The area along coasts seemed to protect people from experiencing mental health problems and improve people's health and wellbeing.

Key: 1 better; 2 researchers; 3 surveys; 4 income; 5 those; 6 likely; 7 than; 8 symptoms

9. Fill in the blanks with seven words from the box.

despite – on – technology – great – him – born – at – although – academically

Stephen Hawking was an English physicist, cosmologist, author, and director of research at the centre for Theoretical Cosmology at the University of Cambridge. He was **(1)** _____ on January 8, 1942, and he showed an interest in science and **(2)** _____ at an early age. Although known at school as “Einstein”, he was not successful **(3)** _____ at first. With time, he began to show **(4)** _____ aptitude for scientific subjects and decided to study mathematics at university. His father advised **(5)** _____ to study medicine, concerned that there were few jobs for mathematics graduates. **(6)** _____ his illness, he developed a reputation for brilliance; his scientific work included research **(7)** _____ the origins and structure of the universe. His illness gradually paralyzed him over the decades. He died on 14 March 2018 at the age of 76.

Key: 1 born; 2 technology; 3 academically; 4 great; 5 him; 6 despite; 7 on

10. Circle the correct option.

Stephen Hawking was an English physicist, cosmologist, author, and director of research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology at the University of Cambridge. He **(1. born – was born – birth)** on January 8, 1942, and he showed an **(2. interested – interesting – interest)** in science and technology at an early age. Although **(3. known – know – knew)** at school as “Einstein”, he was not successful academically at first. With time, he began to show great aptitude for **(4. science – scientific – scientist)** subjects and decided to study mathematics at university. His father advised him **(5. study – studying – to study)** medicine, concerned that there were few jobs for mathematics graduates. **(6. Although – Despite – In spite)** his illness, he developed a reputation for brilliance; his scientific work included research **(7. in – at – on)** the origins and structure of the universe. His illness **(8. gradual – gradually – graduate)** paralyzed him over the decades. He died on 14 March 2018 at the age of 76.

Key: 1 was born; 2 interest; 3 known; 4 scientific; 5 to study; 6 Despite; 7 on; 8 gradually

11. Put the bracketed words in the appropriate tense/form.

Stephen Hawking was an English physicist, cosmologist, author and director of research at the centre for Theoretical Cosmology at the University of Cambridge. He **(1. birth)** _____ on January 8, 1942, and showed an interest in science and technology at an early age. Although known at school as “Einstein”, he was not **(2. success)** _____ academically at first. With time, he began to show great aptitude for scientific subjects and **(3. decide)** _____ to study mathematics at university. His father advised him **(4. study)** _____ medicine, concerned that there were few jobs for mathematics graduates. Despite his illness, he developed a reputation for brilliance; his **(5. science)** _____ work included research on the origins and structure of the universe. His illness **(6. gradual)** _____ paralysed him over the decades. He died on 14 March 2018 at the age of 76.

Key: 1 was born; 2 successful; 3 decided; 4 to study; 5 scientific; 6 gradually

12. Circle the correct option.

Martin Luther King did more than dream. He worked hard to make his dream **(1. come / go / have)** true. He talked with leaders about the unfair treatment of black people. He gave **(2. speaks**

/ speechless / speeches) to huge crowds. He (3. stressed / discouraged / dealt) that we should judge people by their actions and words, not by their skin colour. His message was clear – black, white or brown, all should be treated (4. equal / equality / equally). Black families suffered (5. to / from / about) racism. They (6. are / being / were) forced to sit at the back of city buses, could not use the same bathrooms (7. as / of / on) white people and were sometimes beaten, just because of their skin colour. King listened to their stories and gave them (8. word / hope / thank). He worked to make changes in the law. He did much more than dream!

Key: 1 come; 2 speeches; 3 stressed; 4 equally; 5 from; 6 were; 7 as; 8 hope

13. Put the bracketed words in the appropriate tense/form.

Garbage collectors in the Turkish capital Ankara are recycling the books they find in the trash. They (1. create) _____ a mobile library, full of books that people have thrown away. There (2. be) _____ now 9,000 books on the library's shelves, divided into 20 categories, (3. include) _____ drama, thrillers, romance, healthy living, etc. It is inside a truck that tours schools in the suburbs. The garbage collectors hope to create a greater passion for reading in children, (4. special) _____ in the age of mobile phones and tablets. Many schools (5. not have) _____ a reading room or their own library. The library has got a lot of attention in the country and there is now a campaign for it to grow. People (6. send) _____ books to it. "The interest is growing," said its director. "Each day we have guests coming here to borrow books or have a quiet time to read."

Key: 1 have created; 2 are; 3 including; 4 especially; 5 do not have; 6 are sending

14. Fill in the blanks with six words from the box.

trouble / rate / preferably / actually / employees / valued / contribute / ignored

Working women today have it better than ever before. But few people agree on how to help them rise further. If both female and male _____ become more "gender intelligent" about how their work and behavioural preferences are innate. It would _____ to a more harmonious workforce. Women have been choosing to leave companies at twice _____ of men. Women often tell their bosses that they are quitting for personal reasons, but the majority _____ leave because they feel excluded from teams and not _____ for their contributions. Yet, the reality is that women often have _____ communicating with other women at work as well. Women also often lack the financing that male entrepreneurs enjoy.

Key: employees – contribute – rate – actually – valued – trouble

15. Match the sentence parts in column A with those in column B to get a coherent paragraph. There is one extra-part in column B. Write your answers in the space provided.

A	B
1- Exposure to continuous noise	a- may cause headaches.
2. In some cases, it leads	b- on our health and mind.
3- It affects concentration and	c- creates discomfort and irritation.
4- Therefore, it has harmful effects	d- increase the quality of life.
	e- to complete deafness.

Now use some of the paragraphs below to develop language tasks of your choice. Check the quality of your work using the suggested checklists.

1. There is a nice park near Grandma's home. Pam and Grandma are going to have a picnic. Grandma made good things to eat. "Yum!" said Pam. "I can't wait!" Pam got her games and books. Grandma put their things in the car. But then it started to rain! "What about our picnic?" Pam asked. "Don't give up on it," said Grandma. She took the things out of the car. Pam helped. "Let's go inside," said Grandma. She lit the fireplace. "Are we having a picnic here?" asked Pam. "Yes, we are!" said Grandma. They had a great time!

2. Cats make wonderful pets. Like dogs, they can be very loving. They like to rub up against people with their soft fur. When people pet cats, they purr to show they are happy. Cats are also good at telling you what they need. They will meow when they are hungry. They will scratch at a door if they want to be let inside. Sometimes cats like to be left alone, so they will not take up a lot of your time. They sleep more than most other animals. Some cats sleep 16 hours a day! When they wake up, they may want you to play with them. Some cats are shy and would rather hide behind a chair or a desk. But you will see them soon enough when it is feeding time!

3. Football is the number one sport for British teenagers! They wear football clothes all the time – they even wear football pyjamas in bed! They have posters of famous footballers in their bedrooms. Girls play football, too. Gabriella, 17, is the captain of her school team. 'People think that girls don't like football, but it's not true. I love playing football.' Charlotte, 16, doesn't agree. She says, 'I hate football. My brothers watch it on TV all the time, and I go to my bedroom and listen to music or read a book. When I grow up, my children aren't going to play football, or watch it – there will never be a football in my house!'

4. *Joker* is a 2019 American thriller movie inspired by the characters of an American comic book company. Its story is set in 1981 and follows Arthur Fleck, a failed comedian who turns to a life of crime and chaos in Gotham City. Always feeling alone in a crowd, the joker looks for getting connected to others as he walks the streets. He lives a poor life with his mother. He is isolated, bullied and disregarded by society. So he embarks on a slow descent into madness as he transforms into the criminal mastermind known as the joker. The movie premiered at the 76th Venice Film Festival on August 31, 2019, where it won the Golden Lion and was released in the U.S. on October 4, 2019. It polarized critics; while Phoenix's performance was praised, the dark tone, portrayal of mental illness, and handling of violence divided responses.

5. A Japanese university has said it will no longer hire teachers who smoke. It wants to create a healthier environment for its workers and students. Its president said: "Our job as a university is to look after our staff. We feel we have to discourage them from smoking." Many companies have also started not recruiting smokers. The president said there would be a ban on smoking anywhere in the university by teaching and other staff from August. In addition, staff and students will be banned from taking cigarettes into any areas of the university from April 2020. The no-smoking policy taken by the university is part of a growing trend in Japan to ban smoking in public spaces. There are currently bans in many public places, including restaurants and bars, in the lead-up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

6. Thai Ngoc from Vietnam hasn't slept since 1973. Doctors say he should have died in 1973 when an illness stopped him from being able to sleep. It is believed he caught a fever and hasn't slept at all since that time. Investigators have watched him for several days and nights and said he really doesn't sleep. They said that during the night, Thai works on his small farm. No doctors have been able to help him. Sleeping medicines have no effect on him. Nobody can explain how Thai is still alive, or how he can keep going for such a long time without any sleep. Thai said his dream was to sleep and have a dream. Unfortunately for Thai, his dream has never come true.

2. Guidance on Reading Comprehension Tasks

A. Zoom in on the text

1. The choice of appropriate texts involves student-related factors – students' levels, interests, background knowledge..., and text-related factors – relevance¹, authenticity², complexity³... Texts should also display craft – at a level that is noteworthy and widely recognized, and contain interesting, engaging, and significant ideas / themes. Eventually, text choice depends on experience, judgment and a certain amount of common sense – qualities that a handbook cannot provide; practice is necessary.
2. Testees need to be familiar with genre categories: article, letter, report, speech, story, biography, etc., and type categories: narrative, expository, persuasive, argumentative, descriptive.
3. You can modify⁴ a text; be careful about removing some of the features which make it authentic or making it difficult to follow the links which make it cohesive. Note that newspaper articles may not be clearly organised: they often have short paragraphs, not necessarily clearly linked (with the first paragraph usually summing up the whole story).⁵
4. The text should not be a close approximation to texts students have already dealt with.
5. Do not repeatedly select texts of a particular kind simply because they are readily available.
6. Texts that cannot be selected display some of the following,
 - unfamiliar/unsuitable topics/concepts (war, death, religious beliefs, etc.); topics outside the experience of students' age group, unsuitable for their maturity level or interests
 - linguistically dense; too high a level of difficulty of vocabulary or concepts
 - complex grammatical structures (e.g., passive sentences, conditional phrases or long, complicated sentences with embedded clauses)
 - too great an assumption of cultural knowledge
7. Teacher teams can collaborate to select and make use of suitable quality sources of reading materials.⁶ 'Suitable' text sources include magazines, newspapers, text-based websites, etc., such as *The Guardian*, BBC News, CNN, *She* magazine, *Woman* magazine, etc. See Annex 4 for a list of selected websites for possible assessment and teaching materials.

¹ The topic, the type of text and the information the text sustains make it relevant. Consider whether the text acts as a window or a mirror – culturally responsive text selection includes finding texts that both reflect the students' identities, experiences and motivations (mirrors) and provide insight into the identities, experiences and motivations of others (windows).

² Authenticity in its broader concept – the text itself as well as its context and related tasks should be authentic.

³ See Annex 3, placed at the end of this section: Understanding and Determining Text Complexity

⁴ Modification, involving simplification and/or elaboration, purposes: "Text adaptations aim to fit readability requirements and to fit acceptable standards of content, language, and values." (Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, and Murphy; 1988). What is needed is simplification of the task, not the text.

⁵ Regarding text length – How many extra words to tolerate beyond the recommended length: an extra 10% may be tolerable, e.g., for Year 1, a text having 275 words instead of 250, especially if the text is not 'complex'.

⁶ The text cannot be taken from extra-curricular, commercial books, previous exams, etc.

Understanding and Determining Text Complexity

Text complexity refers to the level of challenge a text provides (i.e. how simple or complex it is) based on a trio of considerations:

- a. its quantitative features,
- b. its qualitative features, and
- c. reader/text factors.

When teachers know what aspects of the text are likely to be challenging for students, they can make decisions about the suitability/appropriateness of a text.

a. Determining the quantitative measures of the text

What is the degree of “readability” of the text, measured by computer software?

Readability formulas attempt to assign difficulty based on a combination of semantic features (vocabulary) and syntactic features (sentence-length). A computer program will tell you about:

- Word length
- Word frequency
- Word difficulty
- Sentence length
- Text length
- Text cohesion (features that can be counted or quantified; ‘how’ the text is complex),

but not about the content of the text.

Using technology to help determine the degree of complexity a text:

- MS Word – see the appendices for details on using it.
- Free online tools – see the appendices for a few online tools websites.

b. Analyzing the qualitative measures of the text

How can teachers measure the complexity of the content of the text?

To determine the complexity of a text based on its qualitative features (‘why’ the text is complex), you need to consider the students who will be reading the text and use criteria keyed to each dimension to analyze those areas that may interfere with students’ comprehension.

Dimensions to analyse:

- * Text Meaning / Purpose
- * Text structure
- * Language features
- * Knowledge demands

Estimating the level of text complexity – sample questions to ask:

- Does the passage have a single level of meaning or multiple meanings?
- Is the purpose explicitly stated, or is it vague?
- How is the text organized: chronologically or in another logical fashion?
- Is the text laid out in a simple format of a main idea with details to help convey meaning?
- Are vocabulary and sentence structure accessible to the average student?
- How much background knowledge will a student need in order to understand the passage?
- How easy/complex are the comprehension questions?

The following chart clarifies the various issues related to text complexity.

Annex 3: COMPLEXITY RUBRIC

Comfortable	Moderate	Challenging
1. PURPOSE and MEANING		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: simple, clear, concrete, easy to identify; text has a singular perspective; purpose or main idea directly stated at the beginning of text • Meaning: The information is clear, ideas are simple, concepts are concretely explained; single and literal levels of meaning. Theme: obvious, revealed early in text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implied but easily identified based on context; may be somewhat subtle/abstract and requires interpretation • The information includes simple and complex, abstract ideas and extensive details; more than one level of meaning. Theme: clear, revealed early in text. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstract, implicit, ambiguous; student must use interpretative skills to identify it; revealed through the totality of text; text may contain multiple purposes. • The information is abstract, intricate; significant density and complexity; multiple layers of content topics. Theme: implicit/subtle/ambiguous, revealed over entirety of text.
2. TEXT STRUCTURE: Genre + Organisation + Connections between ideas + Signal words		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Genre: familiar; text is consistent with the genre rules. ➢ Organization: ~Single, clear structure (chronological, sequential); focuses on facts; connections between concepts, processes, or events are clear and explicit (informational text). <p>~Simple conventional chronological plot pattern, with few/no shifts in point of view or time; plot is highly predictable; relationships among ideas or characters are clear and obvious (narrative text). • Signals and transitions are overt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Text exemplifies one genre, but deviates from typical characteristics of that genre. ➢ ~More than 1 conventional structure; includes facts and / or a thesis; connections between concepts, processes, or events may be implicit and subtle (informational). <p>~Somewhat unconventional; may have two or more storylines and shifts in time and point of view; plot is sometimes hard to predict; relationships among ideas / characters are subtle & complex (narrative). • Signal words and phrases are present.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Unfamiliar; the text bends and expands the genre rules; may include other embedded genres. ➢ ~Intricate, may combine multiple structures / genres, abstract; connections between concepts, processes, and events are intricate and subtle (informational). <p>~Intricate and unconventional, with multiple subplots and shifts in time and point of view; plot is unpredictable; relationships among ideas/characters are complex and embedded, and must be inferred (narrative).</p>
3. LANGUAGE CONVENTIONALITY and CLARITY: Style + Vocabulary + Sentence structure		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Language: explicit, literal; style is simple, conversational ➢ Vocabulary: mostly contemporary and familiar; can be determined through context clues ➢ Sentences: mostly simple with a few concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Language: largely explicit, literal, with some occasions for complex meaning; style is objective ➢ Familiar and academic vocabulary combined ➢ Variety of sentence structures, with subordinate phrases or clauses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Language: Generally complex, abstract, ironic, and/or figurative ➢ Archaic, academic, demanding, domain-specific ➢ Variety of sentence structures, with subordinate phrases and clauses and transition words
4. KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS. To what extent does the passage correspond with the knowledge of the intended audience?		
<p>The text is complex when... • Background knowledge (Life Experiences). Demands on the student extend well beyond his or her personal life experience. General topic is unfamiliar with many/most details unknown to the student.</p> <p>• Prior knowledge (Subject-matter Knowledge). Demands on the student extend well beyond what he or she has been formally taught in school. Specialized / technical content knowledge is presumed; little review or explanation of these concepts is present in the text.</p> <p>• Cultural Knowledge (Culture and Literature). Demands extend well beyond student's cultural experiences, may include references to archaic/historical cultures.</p>		

c. Student and Task Considerations

Exploring the Student / Exploring the Tasks / Exploring the Questions

➤ TEXT AND STUDENT

- Reading skills and cognitive capabilities.
 - Do the students have the literal and critical comprehension skills to understand this text?
 - Will the students have the ability to infer the deeper meanings of the text rather than just achieve literal understanding?
 - Does the information / story involve the appropriate level of cognitive engagement?
- Prior knowledge, experience, and engagement.
 - Vocabulary / topical knowledge. Do the students have the adequate prior knowledge & academic vocabulary / topical knowledge required for navigating this text and managing the material that is presented?
 - Genre familiarity. Are the students familiar with this particular text genre and its characteristics in order to manage the material that is presented?
 - Type familiarity. Are the students familiar with this particular text type and its characteristics?
 - Topic familiarity. Do the students have adequate prior knowledge and/or experience regarding the topic of this text to manage the material presented?
 - Text relevance and validity; Content suitability. Does the text match the students' interests; is its content useful, meaningful, and interesting for them? Is it relevant for their lives and related to their real-world reading purposes? Can they relate to the topic?
- Content and/or Theme Concerns
 - Do the students have the maturity level required to address the text content/theme?

➤ TEXT AND TASKS / QUESTIONS

Matching Text to Tasks/Questions: Teachers should consider what students will be asked to do with what they read (Task Concerns/Demands):

- Exploitability. Is this text ideal for the tasks? Does it lend itself to the expected task and its purpose, e.g. skimming for information, identifying text structure, comparing / contrasting, etc.?
- Familiarity. How much experience do the students have with these types of tasks / questions?
- Accessibility. What is the level of difficulty of the tasks / questions associated with this text?

In brief

➤ *Literary texts tend to be more complex if they involve...*

- Multiple layers of meaning
- Subtle themes subject to interpretation
- Several narrators, speakers, or points of view
- Unfamiliar or archaic vocabulary

- Varied sentence structure
- No predictable narrative, dramatic, or poetic pattern
- Numerous shifts in time and place
- Characters using ambiguous, subtle, or ironic language
- Reliance on background knowledge of literary genres
- Many unexplained allusions to other texts
- Reliance on knowledge of cultural experiences and situations unfamiliar to most 21st-century (young) students

♦ ***Informational texts tend to be more complex if they involve...***

- Several abstract ideas and concepts
- Complicated connections among ideas, processes, or events
- Several organizing structures (e.g., sequential, cause and effect, problem and solution)
- Reasoning hard to follow due to dense, ambiguous, or inconsistent ideas
- Illustrations and other graphics containing essential information
- Dense and academic vocabulary
- Many compound-complex sentences
- Many references to other texts, ideas, or theories
- Reliance on knowledge of historical, scientific, technical, or artistic content unfamiliar to most 21st-century young students

Annex 4: Selected websites for assessment and teaching materials

- **The Guardian:** www.theguardian.com
- **BBC:** www.bbc.com/news
- **Time:** www.timeforkids.com
- **The New York Times:** <https://www.nytimes.com/section/learning>
- www.newsela.com
- <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/>
- www.tweentribune.com
- <https://www.readingvine.com/>
- <https://www.rif.org/>
- <https://www.readworks.org/>
- <https://www.dogonews.com/>
- <https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org/>
- <https://teachingkidsnews.com/>
- <https://learningenglish.voanews.com>
- <https://youngzine.org/>
- <http://www.onestopenglish.com/skills/news-lessons/monthly-topical-news-lessons/>
- <https://learnwithnews.com/>

B. Zoom in on the comprehension questions

1. Items should **measure important knowledge, skills, and understandings**. They should not focus on incidental or insignificant material in the text.
2. Items should not elicit knowledge or skills unrelated to reading (e.g., mathematics).
3. Craft questions that assess comprehension skills as directly and authentically as possible by **employing a range of question types** relevant to instruction and life.⁷
4. Ensure that the questions are motivating, engaging and relevant to students.
5. Develop questions that are accessible, valid, accurate, authentic, respectful in representation, and consistent with universal design principles.
6. Questions should have **varied difficulty levels**. Refer to Bloom's taxonomy in the appendices.
7. Answers have to be derived from what is **stated** or **implied** in the passage (and graphics, if any) rather than from prior knowledge of the topics – **avoid items which can be answered without using the text**, e.g. using background knowledge only.⁸
8. **Avoid items which can be answered without understanding the text** – such items usually involve simply matching a string of words in the question with the same string in the text.
9. The sequence of items should approximate the manner in which readers would typically process the target text.
10. Items requiring skimming, searching, and so forth should precede prompts requiring careful (bottom-up) skills. Also, order the questions from general to specific.⁹ You may present items in the order in which the answers can be found in the text.
11. Items must cover the entire passage; avoid creating several items all concentrated on a single paragraph while leaving the rest of the passage without any item coverage. Ensure the entire task offers a good and complete coverage of the passage.
12. Items should use language at or slightly below grade level to avoid any misunderstanding of what is being asked, be clear and concise leaving no doubt as to what the question is asking and avoid using contractions and multiple-meaning words.
13. **Ensure the item is written in clear, accurate language**. Simplify the instructions in order to provide maximum readability and comprehensibility – avoid double barrelled, loaded, leading, ambiguous, or biased items; avoid including superfluous information in order to minimise the reading load, etc.
14. Review every question multiple times to ensure that the questions are written in a way that models good instruction for the teacher and productive work for the student.
15. **Responses should make minimal demands on writing ability** – students may read the text perfectly well but difficulties in writing prevent them demonstrating this.
16. We should not expect test taking strategies such as the following to appear:
 - Matching words in the question with the same words in the passage.

⁷ See **Annex 5**: Reading Comprehension Items: Item formats suitable for assessing reading abilities.

⁸ The question to cater for is: Is all information necessary for comprehension in the passage itself?

⁹ The order in which questions are presented should be as natural as possible, with general questions about central ideas, themes, point of view, overall text structure, and the like coming early in the sequence (so that students can first build and demonstrate an understanding of the passage as a whole), followed by more localized questions about details, words in context, evidence, and the like (after students have had an opportunity to consider the whole passage and how its parts interrelate).

- Using clues appearing in other questions to answer the question under consideration.
- Using one's existing knowledge or experience to answer the questions.
- 'Blind' guessing not based on any particular rationale.

Annex 5:

Reading comprehension item formats suitable for assessing different reading abilities.

Skill to assess (objectives)	The most appropriate item formats to use	The instructions to use
1) Reading for gist (skimming)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice • Matching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle/underline/tick the most appropriate option. • Match each paragraph with its main idea / title.
2) Reading for detail (scanning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice • Fill-in • Short response • False/justify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill in / Complete the following table with the appropriate information. • Complete the following table with causes, effects... as appropriate. • Complete the following sentences / paragraphs with the appropriate information from the text – One word per blank. • WH-questions • For each of the following false statements, pick out one detail from the text showing that it is false.
3) Identifying main ideas and supporting details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match each paragraph with its supporting details.
4) Inferring logical relationships (sequence, cause-effect...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching • Fill-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match each cause with the appropriate effect. • Complete the following causes or effects as appropriate.
5) Identifying the functions of utterances...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching • Short response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match the following utterance(s) with the appropriate function(s). • What do(es) the following utterance(s) express?
6) Summarizing main points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill-in 	Complete the following paragraph with the appropriate information from the text.
7) Identifying reference relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do the underlined words in the text refer to? → in paragraph X refers to:
8) Inferring meaning from context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice • Short response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the underlined word in each sentence mean? Circle / Underline the most appropriate option. • For each of the following words / expressions, find one word in paragraph X that means approximately the same. • For each of the following definitions, find one word in paragraph X that means approximately the same.
9) Reacting to content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WH-questions • Yes / No questions; justify.

Chart prepared by Inspector M. Gbahi.

Notes:

- 1) a. Regarding ‘**Select the words that apply to...**’ items: Care should be taken when marking this item type – if the question asks for two items: for an answer providing:
 - 2 correct items plus one incorrect item → 1 mark is allotted rather than 2.
 - 2 correct items plus 2 incorrect items → no credit.
 - 1 correct item plus 1 incorrect item → 1 mark.
 - 1 correct item plus 2 incorrect items → no credit.b. A similar marking issue may arise when marking a test item that asks examinees to pick out from the text, say *three* pieces of information (causes, problems, details, etc.) and write each one in one table cell (**information transfer**), e.g.

causes: (a) ...	(b) ...	(c) ...
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: for an answer providing:
 - all 3 correct items written in one cell (e.g. cell (a)) → full credit (3 marks).
 - 3 correct items plus one incorrect item all written in one cell → partial credit (deduce 1 mark from total mark: 2 marks instead of 3).
 - 3 correct items written in one cell plus one incorrect item written in another cell → partial credit (deduce 1 mark: 2 marks instead of 3).
- 2) Regarding the **Paragraph Completion** item: The instructions should specify the policy towards misspelled answers: normally, a misspelt answer is accepted as long as meaning is not altered, e.g. forgotten.
- 3) Regarding the **False/Justify Item type**: The instruction should specify that the detail ranges from one word to one full sentence, but no more, and that it should be written entirely, without using ellipsis (.....).
- 4) Regarding **Short-Answer Questions**: These are not easy to construct. The question must be worded in such a way that all possible answers are foreseeable. The reliability, fairness, and practicality of scoring short-answer items depend on a complete answer key that accommodates unanticipated student responses (Airasian & Russell, 2008; Alderson, 2000).
- 5) Regarding the **Reaction-to-Text Item Type**: Student response should be reasonably worthy of the mark allotted, e.g. it should not lift expressions/ideas literally from text or be trivial, etc.
- 6) Regarding the **difficulty level** of the questions: You can code each question as asking for higher-level or lower-level ideas from the text. Consider the following types of questions:
 - a. **Literal Questions**, like ‘How many people were in the boat?’: These ask for the direct literal meaning of a word, sentence or idea in context. They may ask for details (locating or identifying facts), main ideas, sequence (order of incidents or actions) and recognition of character traits.
 - b. **Interpretive Questions**, like ‘Do you think the people will be safe in the boat?’: These probe for greater depth than literal comprehension, asking for meanings not directly stated in the text. They include questions that ask for generalizations, cause and effect, anticipation of endings and the sensing of motives.
 - c. **Critical Reading Questions**, like ‘Do you think it was a good idea to go out in that boat?’: These ask for evaluation and personal judgment. They may also be concerned with underlying assumptions in the text. ‘Why do you think the author has chosen to write about girls (and not boys) sailing the boat?’
 - d. **Creative Reading questions**, like ‘What would you do if you were in the boat?’: These ask the reader to go beyond the author’s text to obtain or express new ideas.

Also, consider the questions taxonomy below, suggested by Diana Freeman, divided into three categories: they are the types of questions that require the student to understand the **Content**, the types of questions that require the student to carry out **Language**-related tasks, and the types of questions that address student **Affect** regarding the text.

Annex 6: Taxonomy of Reading Comprehension Questions¹⁰

Categories	Comprehension question types	Description
Content questions	1) Textually Explicit	The answer to the question can be found stated directly in the text. There is word-matching between the question and the text. The information required is in sequential sentences.
	2) Textually Implicit	The answer to the question is stated directly in the text but is not expressed in the same language as the question (no word-matching). The information is not all in the same order. It is separated by at least one sentence.
	3) Inferential Comprehension	The answer to the question is not stated explicitly in the text but rather alluded to. The student has to combine their background knowledge with the information in the text and make the necessary connections.
Language questions	4) Reorganization	This type requires the student to reorder, rearrange or transfer information in the text. –Putting sequences in chronological order –Transferring data into parallel forms (e.g. label pictures / maps, complete a table, translate)
	5) Lexical	This type requires the student to focus specifically on <i>vocabulary</i> , not information. Included in this category are exercises where the student – guesses the meaning of a word or phrase from the context – matches definition A with word/phrase B – uses a dictionary Word attack and text attack strategies are included in this level.
	6) Form	This type requires the student to focus specifically on <i>grammar</i> or <i>form</i> , not information. Examples of form questions include exercises where the student – changes a sentence from the affirmative to the negative – forms the question that goes with a given answer – explains the use of one tense rather than another (e.g. present perfect not past simple)
Affect questions	7) Personal Response	This type requires the student to offer their personal reaction to the text in terms of likes/dislikes, what they found funny, surprising etc. The student can be asked to transfer the situation in the text to their own cultural context and comment. Highly subjective, there is no 'right' answer.
	8) Evaluation	This type requires the student to make a judgement or assessment of the text/information according to some understood criteria. These criteria can be – formally recognized independent sources – teacher provided – student-set standards The student is also expected to provide a rationale or justification for their view.

¹⁰ Source: Reading Comprehension Questions: The Distribution of Different Types in Global EFL Textbooks pp72-110, by Diana Freeman; in *English Language Teaching Textbooks: Content, Consumption, Production*; Nigel Harwood, Ed.

C. Assessing and Developing Reading Comprehension Items

(1) Practice activities: Examining Texts

- a. Look at each text below and determine whether you would select or reject it. Use the suggested checklist below. Then complete the table for each examined text.

➤ Quality review of the text

- 1 Is the content interesting, useful, meaningful, and suitable?¹¹ Are the issues up-to-date?
- 2 Does the text represent high quality writing? Is the source acknowledged?
- 3 If the text is adapted, is it accessible for all students appropriately?
- 4 Theme relation to syllabus and topic familiarity?¹²
- 5 Genre familiarity?
- 6 Type familiarity?
- 7 Length appropriateness?
- 8 Is there a match between text and students' reading skills and cognitive capabilities?
- 9 Is there a match between text and students' prior knowledge, experience, and motivation?
- 10 Is the text appropriate for assessing a range of reading skills?
- 11 Is the text suitable for a good exploitation?
- 12 Is the complexity level of the text acceptable?¹³

Target grade level:	Suitable for term n°:
Reasons for selection:	Reasons for rejection:
<i>What aspects of the text will likely pose the most challenge for my students?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Content or theme concerns or challenges?○ Text structure challenges?○ Language feature challenges?○ Knowledge and experience demands?○ Motivation for and interest in the text?	
Other possible challenges for students:	
Overall appropriateness and quality of the passage: / 10	

¹¹ Upsetting issues – war, death, suicide, etc. are avoided.

¹² See [Appendices](#) for themes/topics included in Tunisian textbooks (Basic and Secondary Education).

¹³ Helpful hints: • Simple/concrete IDEAS (vs. complex/abstract) + single layer of MEANING (vs. multiple levels) + obvious THEME (vs. implicit) • Simple text FORMAT with an explicit purpose/main idea and details (vs. implicit / intricate) • Simple, explicit ORGANIZATION (e.g. chronological) (vs. complex/implicit) • Accessible LANGUAGE STYLE (literal, conversational vs. complex, unfamiliar), VOCABULARY (clear, contemporary vs. figurative, academic), and SENTENCE STRUCTURE (simple + compound vs. complex) • Moderate KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS (vs. extensive).

- b. Select a text and highlight “juicy” sentences to exploit for literal questions and “juicy” sentences to exploit for inferential questions. Ensure you identify the core understandings and key ideas of the text—keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions.
- c. Identify the sections of the text that will present the greatest challenge (sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences) and locate the most powerful words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings. Think of questions that draw students’ attention to these specifics so they can become aware of these connections. Vocabulary selected for focus should be academic words that are likely to be encountered in future reading and studies.

Text n°1: Writing a story

Today our teacher asked us to write a story. She said we could draw pictures to go with it. I decided to write my life story. I started with the night I was born. I drew a picture of me as a tiny baby. I wrote about what my first words were and how I liked to play.

When I was little I was always making tall towers. My grandfather thought I would build hotels when I grew up. I also liked to ride my scooter and swing on the swings in the park. The next picture is of me licking an ice cream cone and getting it all over me. I still love chocolate ice cream.

Then I wrote about my first day at school. I wrote about how I cried and cried because I didn’t want my mother to leave me. I made a drawing of me with a sad face. The last page is about my last birthday party. I drew of picture of me blowing out the candles on my birthday cake.

<https://www.fusd1.org> (176 words)

Text n°2: A rock star

I’m Kate. I’m fourteen, and I live in Yorkshire with my parents and my three sisters. And I’m bored! I go to school all day, and I do homework all night. At the weekends, I can’t go out with my friends, because I have to do more homework. My parents want me to go to university and be a doctor when I grow up. I want to play in a band. I’m a rock star, not a doctor! My parents don’t understand me. I don’t understand them.

Music is the love of my life. When I’m not doing my homework, I listen to music. (Sometimes when I am doing my homework I also listen to music – but my mum comes to my bedroom and switches it off.) I’m listening to music now. Yes, it’s loud, but I like it. Mum doesn’t like it. I hope she’s still at the supermarket.

Oh no! Mum’s banging at my door! She’s shouting ‘Switch it off, Kate!’. Clearly, my mum doesn’t want me to be a rock star!

<http://oup.com/elt> (174 words)

Text n°3: Our birthdays

Great-Grandma and I shared the same name and the same birthday. When my 18th coincided with her 90th, I couldn't understand why my parents decided to have one big party for both of us. She was a short woman and liked to wear black blouses. Her rigid face often frightened me. When I was a teenager, she made my life horrible with her observations. "Trousers aren't suitable for the female form," she said once. When we disagreed on anything, I was near to tears. I complained to my parents, but it had little effect. They said she was an old lady, and we had to make excuses for her.

Finally, we agreed on something for the first time – the double party. We both hated the idea. But my friends and I arranged to meet at a club the following night. On the day of the party, I was unhappy until Great-Grandma called me to her room. She smiled as she gave me a cheque for £250 and said, "You could buy new jeans for your party with your friends tomorrow night". She also gave me a birthday cake, "ordered especially for you and your friends". I was very surprised and happy. When we came down the stairs together arm-in-arm, I couldn't help but notice the looks on my parents' faces.

Woman, 30 March 1998 (adapted) (220 words)

Text n°4: Sarah Cawood

Sarah Cawood is a British TV presenter. She has presented *The Girlie Show*, *Top of the Pops* and *Live & Kicking*. "Ballet was my life when I was at school," she says about her school experience. "I used to dance very often and fit in my school work around it. I was lucky because my school was supportive. Although I knew from an early age that I was going to be a ballet dancer, I still loved school. My dad asked me if I wanted to go to a specialist ballet school when I was 11, and I said, 'I'll go when I'm 16.'"

I was excited every day to go to school. I remember the headmaster telling us that we could do anything we wanted to do. Because it was a girls' school, I liked all the gossiping about boys. I liked History and Latin, but my favourite lesson was French. Working in languages appealed to me, so it seemed like a good plan.

I got into the Royal Ballet School when I was 16. It was one of the worst experiences of my life; your character is not really encouraged. I got kicked out at the end of my first year. I felt like such a failure then. But now I can see that it set me on the path to where I am now."

The Guardian; 18 January 2005 (adapted) (227 words)

Text n°5: Dindim the penguin

In 2011 on a beach in Brazil, fisherman Joao de Souza, 71, found a little penguin covered in oil and close to death. He took him home. He cleaned his feathers and fed him, naming him Dindim. When he was healthy again, he released him back into the sea. He never expected to see his new friend again.

The penguin liked his new friend so much that he decided to stay for another eleven months! Dindim eventually returned to his home in Argentina. But he soon came back a few months later to see his old friend once more. Souza was walking on the beach one day when he saw his friend wagging his tail and honking with delight. By now it was apparent that Dindim would see this as a home from home. Each year for the past few years, the penguin has spent most of the year living with Souza before returning to his place during the mating season.

It is estimated that Dindim swims up to 8000 kilometres each year to be reunited with his friend. Each year he seems to be happier than ever at their reunion. He is content to sit on Souza's lap and pecks at anyone else who tries to get close to the pair. "I love the penguin like it's my own child," said Souza, "and I believe he loves me."

www.dailymail.co.uk; 8 March 2016 (adapted) (230 words)

Text n°6: Video games

1. Playing video games can be a fun way to unwind or spend time with friends. In schools, teachers use games like Minecraft to encourage teamwork and critical thinking. But for some players, gaming is an unhealthy habit. At night, they are glued to a screen. Schoolwork suffers. The video-game world seems a friendlier place than the real one. Mental health experts have taken notice. In June, the World Health Organization (WHO) added gaming disorder to its list of diseases and health conditions. A person may have the disorder if gaming has damaged his or her relationships with family and friends, and if it has affected his or her daily activities.

2. Not all experts agree that excessive gaming should be called a disorder. They say people hooked on video games may be suffering from other mental health problems. These should be treated first. Others think WHO made the right call. Psychiatrist Clifford Sussman treats gaming addiction. He says kids often have feelings of anxiety. They get angry when a parent pries them from a device. "It becomes a self-destructive activity," Sussman told *TIME*.

3. What makes video games addictive? Playing excites the brain's reward centre. After a while, the brain becomes numb to pleasure. You feel bored without a controller in your hand. So you play even more. Sussman advises tracking how long you play. He says you should take at least an hour-long break after every hour of play. The brain needs time to recover. Young gamers who think they might have a problem should ask an adult for help. Sussman suggests you first answer a simple question: "Are you in control, or is the game in control?"

www.timeforkids.com/g34/hooked-on-games/ Brian S. McGrath. September 14, 2018 (280 words)

Text n°7: Claudia Schiffer

1. Claudia Schiffer is a famous supermodel. She first gained worldwide recognition by appearing in advertisements in early 1989.

2. Born on August 25th, 1970, Claudia was raised in Düsseldorf. Her mother was a homemaker and her father was a lawyer. As a child, she had no plans to be a model; in fact, she wanted to be a lawyer in her father's law firm. Claudia's ambition to become a lawyer changed one night when she went to a nightclub in October 1987. A modelling agent, Michel Levaton, saw Claudia and was impressed with her. Claudia flew off to Paris for her first test shoot and a star was born.

3. Claudia's first big success came from the popular cover shot for *Elle* magazine. After that, magazines all over Europe wanted Claudia on their front covers. *Guess?* Magazine made Claudia their *Guess?* girl in a huge advertising campaign.

4. She has been on TV many times throughout her career on shows such as Larry King Live, The Tonight Show and The Late Show. Besides her television appearances, Claudia has also starred in a number of feature films dating back to 1994. Her most recent role was in the film *Black & White*.

5. Claudia is also a businesswoman. She is one of the founders of the trendy restaurant chain, Fashion Café. She opened the restaurant with her fellow modelling friends in 1995. As for her hobbies, Claudia likes riding horses, painting, playing tennis, reading, skiing and dancing. Claudia speaks many languages including German, French and English.

6. Claudia is still one of the top supermodels in today's modelling industry. She says that in the future she wants to do more acting and she would like to have a large family.

www.askmen.com (290 words)

Text n°8: LeBron James

1. There's a new public school in Akron, Ohio. Teachers greeted students on opening day with cheers and big smiles. But no one had a bigger grin than basketball hero LeBron James. "This is a huge moment in my life," he said at the July 30 opening. The I Promise School is his parting gift to Ohio. He recently announced he was leaving the Cleveland Cavaliers. Now he plays for the Los Angeles Lakers.

2. IPS opened with 240 students in grades 3 and 4. Students receive free uniforms and bikes. When IPS students graduate from high school, they will get a full scholarship to the University of Akron. Many IPS students struggle with assignments. Some have had behaviour problems. Others are distracted by worries at home. IPS works to help them overcome these challenges. "LeBron was a public school kid," said a director at the LeBron James Family Foundation. The group developed IPS with Akron Public Schools. She adds, "Helping kids just like him is very important to him."

3. James grew up poor in Akron. He moved a lot; he missed 83 days of school in fourth grade. Support from the community helped him get back on track. The school wants to support kids in the same way. Every day, the school begins with an "I Promise circle." There, kids talk through what is bothering them. It also has a food pantry. "All of these things combined create an atmosphere where students feel loved and valued at school," said Nicole Hassan. She works with Akron Public Schools and IPS. One student says she is already happier at I Promise. "I feel thankful. This school helps me be a better person." IPS has one more feature that seen as being especially cool: "It has all of LeBron's game shoes."

<https://www.timeforkids.com/g34/g3lebron/> - October 19, 2018 (295 words)

Text n°9: Wilma Rudolph

More than sixty years ago, Wilma Rudolph was born into a hard-working family with little money. She was one of twenty-two children. Wilma had been small and weak at birth. Because of this, she suffered one illness after another. Her family could not afford a doctor; her mother cared for her as best she could. When she was six years old, she fell ill with polio. The disease left her legs weak, and doctors said she would never be able to walk. Mrs. Rudolph finally found a hospital willing to help Wilma. The workers there helped Wilma gain strength in her legs. At home, her brothers and sisters helped with the treatments, too. By the time she was twelve, Wilma was walking without help.

Wilma not only walked, she ran, and ran quickly. She decided to become an athlete. At first, she played basketball. Soon she became a star, leading her team to a state championship. She also developed her track skills. By age sixteen, she had won a bronze medal in a relay race at the Olympic games. She went on to become the first American woman to win three gold medals at the Olympics. She won three different races, two sprints of different distances and one relay race. Using her fame as an athlete, she reached out to others. She coached students in high schools and colleges. She made regular appearances on TV and radio shows. She also set up a group to help bring sports into poor neighbourhoods.

Wilma was African American. At the time she was born, many opportunities were not equally available for all people. It would be many years before the laws and opportunities of the country were applied equally to all people. Her successes were all the more meaningful because of the many challenges she faced. Today, women and men from all backgrounds remember Wilma Rudolph with pride and respect.

<http://wilsonteacher.weebly.com/professional-resources.html> (320 words)

Text n°10: Alternative education

In the past few years, more young people than ever have been studying beyond the age of 16. In 2009-10, 70.6% of 16- to 18-year-olds were in full-time education while 47% of 17- to 30-year-olds went into higher education. But will this continue to be the case? Chairman of Whole Education says: "Whether to go to university has become both an educational and an economic question. For an increasing number, the answer will be 'no'." So what might happen in the future, particularly for those who decide not to go to university? The chairman predicts that more young people will try setting up their own business or working for companies that offer training or a degree alongside the job. Others who did not enjoy school might look beyond the classroom for different ways of learning.

Mentoring – where experienced individuals offer guidance to others starting out on the same path – is an increasingly important part of a broader education. Young people need motivation to realise their potential and mentoring can be key to this. The Prince's Trust, for instance, runs an enterprise programme for unemployed young people who want to start business and offers start-up services including grants and business mentoring. Sue Taylor, 25, from Doncaster is an award-winning entrepreneur whose chain of beauty salons will make £260,000 this year. But her teenage years did not point to such success. "I was rebellious at school," she says. "I dropped out at 15, so I did not sit my GCSEs."

Taylor had a variety of jobs, including working in a department store, but was unemployed when she became pregnant. At a drop-in centre for single mums, she said she wanted to become self-employed so that she could work while caring for her son. In September 2008, the centre introduced her to the Trust. She had earned a diploma in beauty and spotted a gap

in the market for an eyelash and hair extension salon. It gave her a £3,000 loan and a £500 grant to pay for training and marketing. In September 2009, at 23 she became the youngest person to rent places in her local shopping centre when she opened the Original Lash and Nail Bar. In August, she opened another branch in Leeds. She advises potential entrepreneurs to have great perseverance and seize the abundant opportunities.

The Guardian, 19 November 2011 (Adapted) (386 words)

Comparing two versions of a text

I have a dream (Original)	
1. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Baptist minister. He lived in the 1950s and noticed that equality among people did not exist. People of colour were discriminated against and treated very poorly. During this time period, the Supreme Court ruled on the case <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> . This case was about ending segregation in public schools.	
2. King fought for civil rights for all people. He made many speeches and marched in protests. He was trying to get the government to allow freedom to all people. King was eventually arrested and thrown in jail.	
3. When he got out, he organized a march in Washington, D.C. On the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, he delivered his most famous speech. This speech talked about his dream that one day all children could sit and work together regardless of the colour of their skin. His speech also talked about all Americans deserving the same rights.	
4. Thousands of people heard this speech. This speech helped lead to laws like the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was, and still is, an inspiration to many.	
I have a dream (Simplified)	
1. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. worked for a church. He lived in the 1950s. He saw that equality between people did not exist. White people treated black people very poorly. The Supreme Court made a decision on the <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> case in the 1950s. The case was about black children and white children going to public school together.	
2. King fought for freedom for all people. He gave speeches. He marched in protests. He wanted the government to give freedom to all people. King was arrested. He was put in jail.	
3. When he got out, he planned a march in Washington, D.C. He gave a famous speech. The speech talked about his dream. He wanted all children to be able to sit and work together. His speech also talked about all Americans having the same rights.	
4. Lots of people listened to this speech. This speech helped make new laws. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was, and still is, an inspiration to people.	

Breakdown of the Implemented Modifications

Modification		Additional information		
Low frequency word replaced with high frequency word	15		Original	Simplif.
Definition of synonym added	-	Number of sentences	15	20
Verb tense changed (passive to active)	1			
Deletion of unnecessary information	3	Total number of words in text	193	172
Pronoun replaced by name of noun	1	Average number of words per sentence	12.3	8.2
Compound sentence broken into two simple sentences	3			
Topic is fronted	1			

Source: *The effects of two types of text modification on English language learners' reading comprehension: simplification versus elaboration*, by S. Maxwell (Master of Arts capstone; March 2011)

(2) Practice activities: Examining and writing comprehension questions

Review the quality of the comprehension questions below developed by groups of teachers for some of the texts suggested above.

➤ Checking the relevance and quality of the comprehension questions and key

- 1 Are the questions accessible to the average student?
- 2 Is the used language accurate, simple, clear and familiar?
- 3 Do the questions avoid focusing on one or two paragraphs?
- 4 Do the questions have answers within the text?
- 5 Are the questions free of clues within and among them? Free of overlapping?
- 6 Is the number of questions as recommended? (Basic Ed.: 5; Secondary Ed.: 6–7)
- 7 Are the questions types varied? Are they familiar?
- 8 Are the questions levels varied (Balance of literal and higher-order Qs)? Are they familiar?
- 9 Are the instructions clear, adequate and in conformity with the recommendations?
- 10 Multiple-Choice Items → • Tick the 'most appropriate' option. • Most information is in the stem, without unnecessary material. • Alternatives are the same length, parallel and brief, without repeated material. • Distractors are plausible.
- 11 Paragraph completion (Instruction: Complete the paragraph with words from paragraph(s) X (and Y) without making any changes to them. One word per blank.)
- 12 'Select the words that apply to...' → Identify two items that describe or apply to X? (NB All items have to be familiar to testees. (Refer to textbook word lists.))
- 13 False/Justify (Instruction: For each of the following statements, pick out one detail from paragraph X showing that it is false.)
- 14 True-False → • Circle/Tick 'True or False' (not 'Write'). • The statement is not lifted from text and slightly modified. • The statement is worded so carefully that it can be judged clearly true or false. • The statement is relatively short, without unnecessary material, and positively stated.
- 15 Are items requiring several possible answers avoided? (Except reaction to text)
- 16 Do the responses make minimal demands on writing ability?
- 17 **Scoring criteria and answer key:** Are they adequate? → • All correct and possible answers / responses are included. • The mark scheme is indicated on the test paper.
- 18 **Task revision:** Has the task been revised for content validity and language accuracy and appropriacy according to guidelines? (Self / Peer review)

(Where applicable. *Presentation and layout:* Are they appropriate? (Items are well laid, legible, and spaced so that they can be read, answered, and scored without difficulty.)

Comprehension Questions for Text n°2: A rock star

1. Tick the most appropriate alternative. (1 mark)

The text is mainly about Kate's

- a) daily routine
b) strict parents
c) school day

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

2. Are the following statements true or false? Tick (✓) the correct box. (2 marks)

Statements	True	False
a) Kate enjoys her studies at school.		
b) Music is Kate's favourite hobby.		

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

3. Answer the following question with reference to the text. (1 mark)

How does Kate feel?

.....

.....

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

4. What does the underlined word in the text refer to? (1 mark)

'it' (para. 2) refers to:

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

5. Give a personal justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

Do you share the mother's opinion about music?

.....

.....

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

Answer key

- b ☒
- a) False. b) True
- She feels bored / fed up / annoyed.
- music
- Yes, because music is a waste of time.
Or: No, because music is a means of entertainment.

Criteria + ratings:

C1 ; C2 ; C3 ; C4 ; C5 ; C6 ; C7 ; C8 ; C9 ; C10 ; C11 ; C12 ; C13 ; C14 ; C15 ; C16 ; C17 ; C18

Comprehension Questions for Text n°5: Dindim the Penguin

1. Tick the most appropriate option. (1 mark)

The text is mainly about

- ☐ a) a fisherman who saved a penguin.
☐ b) a fisherman and a penguin friendship.
☐ c) the death of a penguin on the beach.

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

2. Are the following statements true or false? Tick (✓) the correct box. (2 marks)

Statements	True	False
a) Joao de Souza and the penguin agreed to meet again.		
b) The penguin goes back to the sea at all times in the year.		

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

3. Read paragraph one and answer the question below. (1 mark)

How was the penguin when the fisherman first found it?

.....

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

4. What does the underlined word in the text refer to? (1 mark)

'His place' (para. 2) refers to:

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

5. Circle the adjective that best describes the bird. (1 mark)

aggressive / funny / desperate / loyal

→ **Answer:** stated or implied? | **Ideas:** low level or high level?

Answer key

1. b ☒
2. a) False. b) False.
3. It was covered with oil and close to death. Or: It was sick. Or: It was dirty.
4. Argentina / his home in Argentina
5. loyal

Criteria + ratings:

C1 ; C2 ; C3 ; C4 ; C5 ; C6 ; C7 ; C8 ; C9 ; C10 ; C11 ; C12 ; C13 ; C14 ; C15 ; C16 ; C17 ; C18

Comprehension Questions for Text n°7: Claudia Schiffer

1. Tick the right option. (1 mark)

The text is:

- a) a biography ☐
- b) an autobiography. ☐
- c) a diary. ☐

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

2. Complete the table with information from the paragraph. (3 marks)

a) Name:	Claudia Schiffer
b) Dream:
c) Her career:
d) Future plans:

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

3. For each of the following statements, pick out one detail from the text showing that it is false. (3 marks)

- a) Claudia Schiffer was raised in a poor family. (para. 2) → Low-level or high-level ideas?

.....

- b) Claudia failed to attract international attention. (para. 3) → Low-level or high-level ideas?

.....

- c) Claudia had her own restaurant chain. (para. 5) → Low-level or high-level ideas?

.....

4. Complete the text summary with three words from paragraph 4. (3 marks)

Claudia Schiffer has reached celebrity. Her didn't stop in the level of fashion. She played a in **Black & White** film in addition to other participations in other feature films. Not only that, but also in TV enabled the superstar to climb the ladder of fame.

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

5. What do the underlined words in the text refer to? (2 marks)

- a) 'her' (para. 2) refers to
- b) 'their' (para. 3) refers to

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

6. Find the synonyms of the following words in the text. (3 marks)

a) well-known (para.1) =

b) fascinated (para.2) =

c) fashionable (para.5) =

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

7. Give a personal justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

If you were in Claudia's place, would you do the same thing?

.....
.....

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

Answer Key

1. a ☒

2. b) a lawyer. c) a model / a businesswoman. d) To do more acting and to have a large family

3. a) "Claudia Schiffer's mother was a house maker and her father was a lawyer."

OR: "She wanted ... firm" OR: "her father ...a lawyer."

b) "Claudia's first big success came from the popular cover shot for Elle magazine."

c) "She is one of the founders of the trendy restaurant chain, Fashion Café."

OR: "She opened the restaurant with her fellow modelling friends in 1995."

4. career – role – appearances

5. a) Claudia. b) magazines

6. a) famous. b) impressed. c) trendy

7. Accept any plausible answer.

Criteria + ratings:

C1 ; C2 ; C3 ; C4 ; C5 ; C6 ; C7 ; C8 ; C9 ; C10 ; C11 ; C12 ; C13 ; C14 ; C15 ; C16 ; C17 ; C18

Comprehension Questions for Text n°9: Wilma Rudolph

1. Tick the most appropriate alternative. (2 marks)

a) The text is mainly about

- i. A success story ☐
- ii. An athlete's career ☐
- iii. An African-American activist ☐

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

b) The most appropriate title for the text would be: (1 mark)

- i. Hope for the best, prepare for the worst. ☐
- ii. Problems are not stop signs, they are guidelines. ☐
- iii. Opportunity did not knock until I built a door. ☐

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

2. Complete the following table with information about Wilma. (4 marks)

a) Occupation	b) Awards	c) Social accomplishment
.....	i. ii.

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

3. For each statement below, pick out one detail showing that it is false. (2 marks)

a) Doctors expected Wilma's recovery. (par. 1) (1 mark) → Low-level or high-level ideas?

.....
.....

b) After going to the hospital Wilma had no noticeable improvement. (par. 2) (1 mark)

.....
.....

4. Answer the following questions with reference to the text. (2 marks)

a) Apart from poverty and sickness, what was the other obstacle that black people in America faced? (1 mark)

.....
.....

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

b) How did Wilma use her name as a famous athlete? (Focus on par. 2.) (1 mark)

.....
.....

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

5. What do the underlined words refer to? (2 marks)

a) 'there' (par. 1) refers to:

b) 'Her' (par. 3) refers to:

→ **Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?**

6. Find out words meaning nearly the same as: (2 marks)

a) To have enough money to be able to do something (par. 1) =

b) Taught or trained someone (par. 2) =

→ **Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?**

7. Give a personal and justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

Do you think that Wilma Rudolph is an inspiring woman? Why? Why not?

.....
.....

→ **Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?**

Answer Key

1. a) i. ☒. b) ii. ☒

2. a) coach.

b) i. (first American woman to win) (three) gold medals at the Olympics. ii. bronze medal.

c) Setting up a group to help bring sports into poor neighbourhoods

3. a) "Doctors said she would never be ..."

b) "Wilma not only walked, she ran, and ran quickly."

4. a) They suffered from inequality. / Racism. / Racial discrimination. / Segregation.

b) She reached out to others. / She coached ... / She made regular...

5. a) Hospital. b) Wilma (Rudolf)

6. a) Afford. b) Coached

7. Accept any plausible answer.

Criteria + ratings:

C1 ; C2 ; C3 ; C4 ; C5 ; C6 ; C7 ; C8 ; C9 ; C10 ; C11 ; C12 ; C13 ; C14 ; C15 ; C16 ; C17 ; C18

Comprehension Questions for Text n°10: Alternative education

Comprehension questions (A) (Developed by one group)

1. Tick the most appropriate option from the text. (1 mark)

- a) School success ☐
- b) A success story ☐
- c) Self-employment ☐

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

2. Fill in the table with information from the text. (2 marks)

a) Name	b) Age	c) Marital status
Sue Taylor

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

3. For each statement below, pick out one detail showing that it is false. (3 marks)

a) There are no alternatives for those who did not like school. (par. 1) → Low-/high-level ideas?

.....

b) She continued working while on pregnancy. (par. 3) → Low-level or high-level ideas?

.....

c) Taylor was denied a grant to start her business. (par. 3) → Low-level or high-level ideas?

.....

4. Answer the following question with reference to the text. (1 mark)

What do young people need to achieve their potential?

.....

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

5. Pick out 2 details from paragraph 2 to show what the enterprise program offer to young people. (2 marks)

- a)
- b)

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

6. Find words in the text meaning nearly the same as: (3 marks)

a) Estimate something will happen in the future (par. 1) =

b) Showing / guiding (par. 2) =

c) In great quantity (par. 3) =

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

7. What do the underlined words in the text refer to: (2 marks)

a) 'their' (par. 1) =

b) 'it' (par. 3) =

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

8. Is success in life only associated with success in education? Why or Why not? (1 mark)

.....
.....

→ Answer: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

Answer Key

Comprehension questions (A)

1. b ☒

2. b) Age: 25. c) single mum (not married/unmarried/without a spouse)

3. a) might look beyond the classroom for different ways of learning (others who did not enjoy school might look beyond the classroom..ways of learning)

b) was unemployed when she was pregnant.

c) It gave her a 3000 loan and 500 grant.

4. young people need motivation to realize their potential

5. a) start up services including grants.

b) business mentoring

6. a) predict. b) mentoring. c) abundant

7. a) young people. b) the Trust

8. Accept any plausible answer.

Criteria + ratings:

C1 ; C2 ; C3 ; C4 ; C5 ; C6 ; C7 ; C8 ; C9 ; C10 ; C11 ; C12 ; C13 ; C14 ; C15 ; C16 ; C17 ; C18

Comprehension questions (B) (Developed by a second group)

1. Tick the most appropriate option. (2 marks)

a) The text is mainly about

- i. school attendance ☐
- ii. a business failure ☐
- iii. a success story ☐

b) The purpose of the text is

- i. to inform people of the importance of education ☐
- ii. to encourage people to look for new ways of learning ☐
- iii. to persuade people to start their own projects ☐

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

2. Complete the table with information from the text. (3 marks)

a) Name	b) Social status	c) Qualification	d) Occupation
Sue Taylor

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

3. For each statement below, pick out one detail showing that it is false. (2 marks)

a) Going to universities is the only way to guarantee young people's future. (par. 1) → Ideas?

.....
.....

b) Sue was eager to be an employee in a beauty salon. (par. 3) → Low/high-level ideas?

.....
.....

4. Write short answers to the following questions. (2 marks)

a) What is the Prince Trust's role?

.....
.....

b) What's Sue's advice for unemployed people?

.....
.....

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

5. What do the underlined words in the text refer to? (2 marks)

a) Their (par. 2):

b) It (par. 3):

→ Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?

6. Find synonyms of the following words. (3 marks)

- a)** someone who starts his or her own business (par. 2) =
b) persistence in doing something despite difficulties (par. 3) =
c) a sum of money given by a bank (par. 3) =

→ **Answers: stated or implied? | Ideas: low level or high level?**

7. Give a personal justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

Would you like to work for other people or start your own project?

.....
.....

Answer Key

1. a) iii. ☒. **b)** ii. ☒

2. b) a single mum / an unmarried woman. **c)** a diploma in beauty. **d)** a business owner

3. a) Young people might look beyond the classroom for different ways of learning

Or: Setting their own business or working for companies that offer training or a degree alongside the job

b) She wanted to become self employed

4. a) It offers grants and business mentoring.

b) To have great perseverance. / To seize the abundant opportunities.

5. a) young people. **b)** the trust enterprise

6. a) entrepreneur. **b)** perseverance. **c)** a loan

7. Accept any plausible, personal and justified answer.

Criteria + ratings:

C1 ; C2 ; C3 ; C4 ; C5 ; C6 ; C7 ; C8 ; C9 ; C10 ; C11 ; C12 ; C13 ; C14 ; C15 ; C16 ; C17 ; C18

More comprehension items to assess

Check whether each item below is appropriate/correct or needs improvement. What category of question is it?

Reminder:

1. Content category:

- Literal comprehension (LOTS): answer explicitly there OR answer implicitly there
- Inferential comprehension (HOTS): answer has to be inferred

2. Affect category (HOTS): Response to text OR Evaluation

3. Language category (LOTS): Guessing word meaning from context

Notes related to (2) Affect category

a) Personal Response: requires responses on a purely personal level, with no ‘correct’ answers, whereas in the second question type in this category the response is on a deeper, evaluative level. This is the ‘lower’ of these two levels; it covers all questions which call for the student ‘simply to record his reaction to the text’ (Nuttall, 1996: 189) in terms of like/dislike, surprise, amusement, etc. The frequent ‘What do you think?’ textbook reading questions are an example of this question type.

b) Evaluation question types: This is the ‘higher’ level; they require a considered and possibly reflective response with a reasoned justification based on evidence presented in the text and/or background knowledge or experience.

Examples:

1 When did Harry *meet* Sally? → Textually explicit

Text reads: Harry *met* Sally in 1995 or Harry *met* Sally 15 years ago.

2 When did Harry *meet* Sally? → Textually implicit

Text reads: Sally and Harry first *came across each other* in 1995.

3 Read the sentence from the passage.

“Once when he sat down to chat, he told us that in the immigrant car ahead there was a family from ‘across the water’ whose destination was the same as ours.”

Question: Which emotion is conveyed through the use of the word chat?

A. friendliness B. contemplation C. indifference D. embarrassment

→ Students are asked to draw conclusions about the connotation of the word “chat.”

Students should use the context to determine the emotion associated with the use of the word.

Option A is the correct answer. “Friendliness” is the emotion conveyed with the word “chat.”

The conductor is starting a conversation with the main characters, showing that he is friendly.

Options B, C, and D are incorrect connotations for “chat.” Students may choose these incorrect options if they do not understand what the author is suggesting through the use of the word “chat.”

4 Which facts in Pizza Trivia do you find most interesting? → Personal Response

5 In the context of the 20th century and its two world wars, what message is the writer trying to make about nature and the importance of individual human beings? → Evaluation

1) Say whether you agree or disagree with the following statement about the childcare program.

I feel welcomed by staff and other youth at the centre.

the centre.
• **Correction:** ~I feel welcomed by staff at the centre. / ~I feel welcomed by other youth at
elements to be answered: (1) staff and (2) other youth.
• **Justification:** This is a 'double barreled question' – a question which includes two
• **Assessment:** Incorrect

2) Answer the following question. Circle Yes or No.

More people have attended the movie, *Gone with the Wind*, than any other motion picture produced this century. Have you seen this movie? (Yes / No)

• **Correction:** ~Have you seen the movie *Gone with the Wind*? (Yes / No)
may bias the results.
clues to the answer that you want; since such questions suggest a certain answer, they
• **Justification:** This is a 'biased/leading question' – a question which gives students
• **Assessment:** Incorrect

3) Tick the right alternative.

a. The text is mainly about: (*Year 9 Diploma Exam*)

-Raising children -Doing housework -Sharing it all

b. Did they first hear about the incident:

-from a friend or relative -at work
-from a newspaper -from the television or radio or other electronic media?

c. The text is mainly about a man who lost and recovered his voice and (*BAC Exam*)

-gained money -gained experience -gained fame

d. In the story, the merchant was unhappy because it

A rained.

B was windy.

C was windy and rainy and he had forgotten his overcoat.

4) Had you been a student in Anna's school, would you have supported her? Why or Why not?
(*BAC Exam*)

5) True / false Statement: Rowan Atkinson has two brothers.

Text reads: Everyone knows Rowan Atkinson, or Mr. Bean. He is the youngest of three boys born into a wealthy family in the north-east of England.

6) The Fisher and the Little Fish; by Aesop

It happened that a Fisher, after fishing all day, caught only a little fish. "Pray, let me go, master," said the Fish. "I am much too small for your eating just now. If you put me back into the river I shall soon grow, then you can make a fine meal off me." "Nay, nay, my little Fish," said the Fisher, "I have you now. I may not catch you hereafter."

A little thing in hand is worth more than a great thing in prospect.

Checking for understanding

- What was the fish trying to do in this text?
- What does the moral of the story mean? How else could you word it?

Developing Reading Comprehension Questions

Top tip: Why understanding the comprehension questions is vital for students

In a Reading test, the students will concentrate on the questions and answer choices (if any) because that's where the **points** are. The passage is just a place for the test writers to stash facts and details. Students will find them when they need to. Therefore, writing 'good' questions requires a lot of care and craft.

- Select a number of texts.
- Select the appropriate question types in order to test different reading abilities and different levels of comprehension.
- Craft appropriate comprehension questions.
- Remember to write the expected answers as you write the questions, anticipating (all) possible answers and responses. Revise and ask others to revise.
- Identify the questions whose answers are stated (LOTS questions).
- Identify the questions whose answers are implied (HOTS questions).

3. Guidance on Writing Tasks¹

1. Requirements for the selection of a topic and tasks include the following characteristics:

- | |
|--|
| • A topic that is meaningful, relevant, and motivating to written communication |
| • A task that is authentic and conducive to academic writing |
| • A task that requires comprehension of and/or response to a specific assigned topic |
| • A task that requires the integration of rhetorical strategies common in academic writing |

2. Tasks should be developed with the target test takers in mind, without favouring or discriminating against test takers who have certain characteristics.

3. The key questions to ask about a rubric are as follows.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ How clear is it? (Is it possible to misinterpret the nature of the task?)○ How easy to understand is it? (Is the language used at an appropriate level? This is particularly important in language testing at the lower levels.)○ How adequate is it? (Is all the necessary information given?)○ How relevant is it? (Is only necessary information given?) |
|--|

4. A well-written task will have well-written evaluation criteria² clearly understood by the students. At the same time you're writing the task, specify what would constitute completion of the task and what to include in order to achieve full marks, and provide a description of the response elicited by the prompt and a model response / outline. This should help minimize the subjective effects of grading. Consider the following samples.

Sample 1

The writing prompt:

If you were planning a trip, either in Tunisia or abroad, do you think you would find social media (such as travel blogs, Facebook, etc.) useful when planning and organising your trip? Explain your answer in a twelve-line article for your school magazine.

Marking guidelines:

- Students should explain whether they would find any form or aspect of social media useful when planning and organising a trip away, either in Tunisia or abroad.
- Students are free to agree or disagree (or both) that they would find social media useful in the circumstances. Consideration should be given to the quality of all aspects of the response.

Indicative material:

- **Social media useful** – a great research tool; source of advice; travel tips and experience from fellow travellers; revealing reviews of accommodation, restaurants; a cheap, readily available source of information, etc.

¹ More guidance on developing/assessing writing tasks is provided here because this area requires much attention due to the poor writing scores our students get on tests. Beware of two particular issues: • **Validity** – Am I measuring what I intend to measure? • **Reliability** – Subjective judgments will always be made (lower reliability) but reliability can be improved by following guidelines.

² The mark scheme has to indicate the point at which a response which is not entirely correct may be considered acceptable or not in order to avoid problems of this kind which make the process of assessment more subjective (Response accuracy).

- **Social media not useful** – can be misleading; not all posts on social media are honest / accurate; better sources of advice / information available in guidebooks, etc.

Sample 2

The writing prompt:

A travel company is running a competition for BAC students. The prize is a post-examination holiday to a destination chosen by the winner. Entrants are required to outline where they would like to go, give reasons why they would like to travel there, and explain why they deserve to win the holiday. Write the **competition entry** you would submit.

Marking guidelines:

Students should write a piece suitable as an entry for the competition outlined above. All elements of the task should be attempted; giving an outline of where they would like to go, why they would like to travel there, and why they deserve to win the holiday. Consideration should be given to the quality of all aspects of the response.

***Use of Codes.** To assist with forming a judgement when scoring the student's response, it will be helpful to place an accurate tick at the points identified in the answer.³*

- Questions regarding a **student's opinion** on a certain issue should focus not on the opinion but on **the way it is presented and argued**.
- Consider providing students with a few helpful directions of the kind:
 - Your essay will be judged on how clearly you express your ideas. Use the appropriate format for a letter / article, etc.
 - Write your essay inside the box ONLY. What you write outside the box will NOT be scored.
 - Extra sheets of paper or scratch paper will not be scored.
 - You will not be graded on the appearance of your paper, but your handwriting must be readable.
- After the task or prompt has been written, try responding to it yourself** — or have a colleague try it — to find out whether it will really get the kind of results you desire.
- Length⁴** – Writing **well below the word count** is generally an indication of ideas not being fully developed and of poor control over text organization. Writing **well above the word count** is generally an indication of poor planning and poor control over text organization. (**Some** extra amount of writing is tolerable.)
- After the test has been administered, **analyze the kind of responses** it produced. If it didn't elicit what you consider valuable outcomes, you might need to rewrite the task before using it again — don't automatically assume the students did not learn or that the performance assessment is useless.
- When marking, use the **full range of marks** available.
- Example of a scoring rubric:

³ When marking for mechanical accuracy, you should decide how many errors to tolerate.

⁴ **For over-lengthy answers:** the whole answer is assessed at first reading. At the second reading, a line is drawn across the page at the approximate place where the correct length is reached and close assessment is confined to what comes above this line.

Criterion	Description
1. Content and organisation Extent to which the response is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focused on task, purpose, and audience • supported by relevant and elaborated details • clearly and logically ordered 	1. Opening and closing 2. Single, clear focus 3. Sense of unity; completeness 4. Even development of key ideas 5. Logical progression of ideas 6. Appropriate and varied details 7. Clear transitions 8. Coherence and fluency
2. Language - Extent to which the response is written in standard written English - Extent to which the response includes complete and controlled sentences	10. Correct tense formation 11. Subject-verb agreement 12. Correct pronoun usage and agreement 13. Effective and varied word choice 14. Use of proper modifiers 15. Correct sentence construction (syntax) 16. Variety in length and structure 17. Controlled use of words and phrasing
3. Mechanics Extent to which the response is technically correct	18. Few errors in spelling 19. Few errors in capitalization 20. Few errors in punctuation

Quality Review of Writing Tasks

(1) Free Writing Checklist

- 1 Is the item format correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- 2 Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of difficulty and time?
- 3 Is it clear and focused, sufficiently narrow/broad for the time available?
- 4 Does it cater for the conventions of a communicative task? → • Communicative situation
• Purpose • Audience • Genre • Type
- 5 Is the topic syllabus related?
- 6 Does it consider the educational level and background of the students?
- 7 Does it interest and motivate them to write a personal, creative essay, without memorization?
- 8 Is it free of tricks/trivia? Free of scaffolding?
- 9 Is language simple, accurate, and suitable for the students' reading level?
- 10 Is the response length clearly specified?
- 11 If quotes are used, are they relevant and appropriate?
- 12 Are the evaluation criteria/mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- 13 Is there in the answer key a model response or an outline of the major points to include?
- 14 Is the task well laid out, with adequate space for the response, on the same page?
- 15 Have you left wide enough margins for your comments, points, etc.?
- 16 Has the task been revised and proofread?

(2) Guided Writing Checklists

a. Information transfer

- 1 Is the item **format** correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- 2 Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of **difficulty** and **time**? Is it free of **tricks and trivia**?
- 3 Is the examinee's task clearly defined?
- 4 Is the data provided relevant and appropriate?
- 5 Is overloading tables/biography data with many details/notes avoided? (Suggest a reasonable amount of information to be developed in a paragraph written in the specified and provided number of lines.)
- 6 Is language simple, accurate, and suitable for the students' reading level?
- 7 Is there a written model/sample response included in the answer key?
- 8 Is the mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- 9 Is the task well laid out, with adequate space for answers, and on the same page?
- 10 Has the task been **revised** and **proofread**?

b. Developing notes into sentences

- 1 Is the item **format** correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- 2 Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of **difficulty** and **time**? Is it free of **tricks and trivia**?
- 3 Are the instructions appropriate and clear? (Develop full sentences from the following notes to get a coherent paragraph; supply the correct grammatical form, including changes in word form and addition of such elements as prepositions, articles, auxiliary verbs, etc.)
- 4 Are the notes made up of chunks/series of words rather than single words?
- 5 Are the notes in the right order?
- 6 Are there slashes that indicate where an addition or change should be made?
- 7 Is language simple, accurate, and suitable for the students' reading level?
- 8 Is the task material authentic? Is the task contextualized?
- 9 Is there a written model/sample response included in the answer key?
- 10 Is the mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- 11 Is the task well laid out, with adequate spaces for answers, on the same page?
- 12 Has the task been **revised** and **proofread**?

Practice activities: Assessing Writing Tasks

- 1) • **Writing situation:** Topic: meeting a person who has had a positive impact
- **Writing directions:** Describe for your readers how the meeting went and how that person has positively impacted your life today.

Assessment: Poorly constructed task

Justification:

- The format for the response and the specific audience are missing from this directive. It is necessary to identify a specific format for the students; they need to know to whom they are writing.
- “Describe” is too vague.
- “Impacted” may be unfamiliar to many students. A more accessible word such as “affected” would be more appropriate.

Revision:

Write a speech to present to your classmates about this person and how he/she has affected your life today.

- 2) This is part of a letter you receive from your English penfriend.

Help! It's my brother's 14th birthday next month and I can't think of a present to give him. What do teenage boys like getting as presents in your country?

Now write a letter answering your penfriend's question.

Assessment: Acceptable/Good task.

Justification:

- This is a writing task with detailed input, a more situationally authentic task, where the students are provided with input (in the form of letters or other documentation) requiring a response directed towards a specific reader, with a register determined by the input.
- Detailed input produces a more uniform set of responses from the students, which makes marking quicker, easier and more reliable.
- It also means that reading as well as writing skills are being tested, which may detract from the objectives and raise questions about the validity of the task as a test of writing.

- 3) A British TV company is thinking of making a film about life in your area and has asked you to give them some information. Write **a report** describing the advantages of living in your area and saying how the area might change in the future. (200 words)

The marker will use the mark scheme below drawn up specifically for this writing task.

Content	Report should describe advantages of living in writer's area and possible changes in the future.
Range	Language of description, opinion & explanation. Vocabulary related to towns/countryside, housing etc
Organisation & Cohesion	Clearly organised with introduction & conclusion. Sub-headings an advantage.
Register & Format	Consistent register (neutral / formal). Formal report layout not essential.
Target Reader	Would be informed about writer's area.

Assessment: High quality task

Justification:

- The task gives detailed input (more than a short essay question), and includes the text-type to write, a reason for writing and sense of who the target reader will be.
- The students are able to express personal ideas and to some extent to adapt the topic to their own interests.
- The response is more controlled than is possible if only a title is set.
- The mark scheme outlines the likely content, together with criteria for assessing linguistic performance.

4) Your school is planning to start an English language school magazine and has asked students to write articles with the title “Thoughts about my school”. You have decided to write an article in which you describe what you like and dislike about your school and explain your reasons. (150 words)

Assessment: High quality task

Justification:

This is an example of a framed prompt.

Strengths: rich context; usually describes a situation from which the students can understand who they are, why they are writing, what they are writing about, and who will read their texts. The contexts described in such prompts present contexts familiar to test takers or contexts that they can imagine themselves in. They are therefore modelled on real-life situations and are much preferred by task designers since life is an inexhaustible source of authentic situations in which writing occurs.

5) Do you agree or disagree with the opinion that men make poorer teachers than women? Why?

Assessment: Poorly constructed task

Justification:

This is an example of a base prompt.

Weaknesses: Does not provide information about the writing context and the exact content to be developed. It most resembles writing tasks set by language teachers who want to check whether their students can apply their knowledge about a particular grammar point in practice or whether they have learnt certain vocabulary items.

6) You must see your friend, Samir(a), before tomorrow evening.

Write a note to Samir(a).

Say:

- Why you want to see him/her.
- Where and when to meet you.

Write 30-40 words.

7) Write a short paragraph about your favourite subjects. Why do you like them more than any other subjects? How important are they for your future?

These hints might help you:

Maths, History, English, Physical Education, important, like, love, fun, entertaining, good, bad.

8) Rose is your penfriend. She is American. She is coming to Tunisia this summer to spend the holidays with you. Write her a letter to tell her about your plans for this vacation. (6 lines):

- the places that you and Rose are going to visit: Ain Drahem, Hamamet, Sousse...
- the activities that you and Rose are going to do: swimming, riding camels, going to parties, shopping, making new friends ...

You must use:

- *The simple future tense (will + verb) or (be + going to + verb)*
- *Sequential adverbs: first, second, third ...*

9) Like all teenagers, you have many problems with your parents about money, clothes, friends, school results... Write a letter to your friend to tell him/her about these problems and ask him / her for advice. (*Year 9 Test*)

10) Your parents organized a party to celebrate your success in the national exam. At the end of the party, you decided to show how grateful you feel towards them for every good thing they did to you. Write your speech below. (*Year 9 Diploma Examination*)

Dear Mum and Dad,

.....

Your loving son / daughter

11) Version (A):

Think about what you believe high schools should teach in order to prepare students for adult life. Write an editorial for a newspaper about the extent job-related skills should be taught in high school.

Version (B):

What should high schools teach to prepare students for jobs and careers? Write an editorial for your community newspaper stating your position and reasons for it.

12) The Ministry of Education has created a Facebook page on which people share ideas about educational matters .Write a 12-line post in which you suggest ways to improve education in your country. (10 marks) (*BAC Examination*)

13) You have read the following statement in an e-magazine: “Scientific inventions are meant to serve humans.” Write a 12-line article for your school e-magazine to explain the statement. Support your explanation with concrete examples. (8 marks) (*BAC Examination*)

14) As tourism in Tunisia is going through hard times, you have decided to write a ten-line advertisement, to post on your Facebook page, in which you encourage tourists to visit your country.

15) Your teacher asked you to write an article for the school magazine, in which you list the causes and effects of pollution.

16) Write an article for your school magazine where you talk about pollution; you may talk about the types, causes and effects of pollution and suggest some solutions to the problem.

17) You booked a vacation through a travel agency. However, when you arrived at the hotel you were surprised that the reality was really different from what you saw in the brochure. When you returned back home, you decided to write a short precise email to your travel agent in which you talk about the horrible conditions and the trip you had. Don't forget to mention examples about the bad experience you lived.

18) You recently took part in a class discussion about choosing an interesting job. Your teacher has now asked you to write a composition, answering the following question and giving reasons for your choice.

Would you rather be a politician, a teacher or a musician?

19) Your friend has serious financial problems. He decided to leave school and start working in order to support his family.

Write him a 10-line-letter in which you try to convince him not to leave school at an early age and remind him about the importance of studying at the university and getting better qualifications.

The writing tasks below, with suggested outlines, have been written by groups of teachers. Assess their quality and then try to write quality tasks, including outlines.

1. In his last letter, your penfriend asked you to describe your favourite room in your house. Write your reply in an eight-line email.

Outline:

- Hi (name of your friend);

Para. 1:

- Naming your favourite room (living room, bedroom, dining room...)
- Locating it: using the prepositions (in, on, on the right, on the left, in the middle, under, between...)
- Describing it (nice/ small/ big/ large/ has a nice view...)
- Expressing your feeling when sitting in this room and the different activities that you do there (listening to music, playing video games, watching T.V, eating...)

Para. 2:

- Naming, describing and locating the furniture (carpet / sofa/ bed/ curtains/ wardrobe, table, chairs, traditional, antique, comfortable, modern, colourful...)

2. You received the following letter:

Dear reader,
I am a heavy smoker and I become addicted to smoking. I want to give it up.
Please help me.
Peter

Write back a ten-line letter to Peter to warn him about the harmful effects of smoking and what he should do to stop this nasty habit.

Outline

Pupils are supposed to write a letter to Peter:

- No more than 10 lines.
- Warn him about the harmful effects of smoking: lung cancer, heart disease, asthma, addiction ...
- Tell him what he should do to stop it: reduce the number of cigarettes a day, not sit near someone who smokes, practise sport, take part in campaigns against smoking ...

3. Nowadays, rainforests are really endangered because of Man's irresponsible behaviour. Write a 12-line post for your school forum to suggest some practical solutions to preserve them.

Outline

- 1) Introduction: Introducing the problem.
- 2) Body of the post: Suggesting solutions, such as
 - Punishing offenders.
 - Setting up natural reserves to protect the endangered animals.
 - Planting trees.
 - Teaching children to respect nature.
 - Launching campaigns to sensitize people.
 - Sticking posters and distributing leaflets.
 - Delivering speeches.
- 3) Conclusion: Expressing opinion/ encouraging others to be more positive.....

4. On the occasion of Earth Day, you wrote an article for your school magazine to warn peer schoolmates about the impact of pollution. Write your article below.

Outline:

1) Introduction: Types of pollution: air / land / water / noise.

Transitional line: pollution can be visible or invisible.

2) Body:

Part 1:

Man is responsible for pollution

Man builds factories which release fumes containing particles; it's the main cause for air pollution and could be the cause for diseases such as asthma, lung cancer, and other

breathing difficulties. / Logging and building fire in forests is another cause added to many other causes for air pollution.

Man throws rubbish everywhere and pollutes the environment around him, and at his best he collects trash to unload it in landfills. (Landfills release gases which pollute the air).

Ships spill oil into the sea and kill sea life.

Noise is another type of pollution since it may lead to earaches and even to deafness.

Part 2:

Advice: to stop pollution and protect the environment by planting trees, reduce, reuse and recycle trash.

3) Conclusion:

Let everyday be an Earth Day because if Earth is destroyed, there will be no other planet to live on.

5. In his last letter, your American pen friend Noah informed you that he failed in quitting smoking and asked your help. Write him a 12-line-letter to help him achieve his goal with some practical tips.

Outline:

The test taker is required to help with practical tips and avoid dealing with the dangers of smoking. (irrelevant)

1) Sender's address + 2) Date + 3) Salutation + 4) Opening phrase

5) Body:

a. Opening remarks: e.g. Congrats for taking this important decision !

b. Practical tips to quit smoking, e.g.:

- Keep reminding yourself of smoking dangers.
- Visit a doctor to get an expert's help
- Join a support group.
- Practice a hobby to keep yourself busy.
- Drink a lot of water.
- Avoid stressful situations/staying with smokers /going to smoking areas...etc

c. Closing remarks

6) Closing phrase + 7) Signature

➤ Assessing guided writing tasks

1) Use the notes in the table below to write a 5-line paragraph about the 2015 United Nations Climate Conference. (5 marks) (BAC Examination)

Date	30 November – 12 December, 2015
Location	Le Bourget in the suburb of Paris, France
Participants	195 nations / all continents
Expected outcome	Signs /agreement/reduce global warming / keep it below 2°celsius

2) Use the information in the table below to present Hbibha Ghribi in a 5-line paragraph. (4 marks) (BAC Examination)

Nationality	Tunisian
Date of birth	19/04/1984
Sport	Long distance runner
Achievements	2009 Best sportswoman (<i>Assahafa</i> newspaper) 2012 Summer Olympics gold medal winner

3) Use the notes to develop a four-line paragraph about parents and kids. (BAC Examination)

Parents: - no basic literacy - little interest in learning
Kids: - poor reading and writing - no parents' help with homework

4) Use the notes below to develop a four-line paragraph about bullying. (BAC Examination)

Bullying: conscious – repeated hostile practice.
Characteristics: imbalance – power – threat of aggression.
Effect on victim: feeling of terror.

5) Develop full sentences from the notes below – given in the right order – to get a coherent paragraph. Add any missing words and put the verbs in the right tense or form. (BAC Examinations)

- a. It – to be – said – computers – to transform – classrooms – in the future.
- b. They – to offer – pupils – exciting opportunities – to personalize – learning.
- c. At – same time – teachers – be liberated – their traditional role.

Key:

- a. It is said (that) computers will transform classrooms in the future.
- b. They will offer pupils exciting opportunities to personalize learning.
- c. At the same time, teachers will be liberated from their traditional role.

- a. We - often - to take - presence - clean water - granted.
- b. Unfortunately - laws and technology - to protect - vital resources - to remain - insufficient - so far.
- c. Increasingly - human activities - to threaten - water resources - which - we all - to depend.

- a. Doris Lessing / award / Nobel Prize / literature / 2007.
- b. At 88, Lessing is / old person and only / 11th woman / win the award since it / start in 1901.
- c. In a career / more than 50 years, she / touch generations / readers / her stories of colonial Africa, feminism and politics.
- d. Her / famous book, The Golden Book, / become / iconic text / the Women's Movement.

- Text messages disturb young people - sleep - German health newsletter - report.
- 2,500 youngsters - be asked - how often they were awakened - incoming text messages through cellular phones.
- Ten per cent of the youngsters awakened by messages - least once - week.
- The findings suggest - mobile telephones may be having a major impact - the quality of sleep of a growing number of adolescents.
- Parents should - sure that - child's mobile phone is switched off at night.

6) Complete the conversation with an artist working at home.

A: 1. _____?

B: I normally work about eight hours a day. Sometimes I work longer hours, in the evenings or at weekends, when I'm in a hurry to finish a picture.

A: 2. _____?

B: I earn from about £250 to £3,000 for a picture. Sometimes I have a lot of work, but sometimes I don't. That's a problem. And I don't have paid holidays.

A: 3. _____?

B: Yes. I love it, because every day is different, and I like using my imagination.

A: 4. _____?

B: It's stressful at times. Especially when I need to work fast and the ideas don't come. And sometimes it's lonely when you don't work with other people.

Key

1. How many hours do you work?
2. How much money do you earn?
3. Do you like your job?
4. What don't you like about your job?

7) Complete the conversation with suitable utterances. (BAC Examination)

Man: _____

Woman: Well, let's look at this city guide here. Here's something interesting. Why don't we first visit the art museum in the morning?

Man: _____

Woman: How about going to an Indian restaurant? The guide recommends one downtown a few blocks from the museum.

Man: _____

Woman: Well, to tell the truth, I'm not really interested in going there. Why don't we go shopping instead? There are supposed to be some really nice places to pick up souvenirs.

Man: _____

Woman: No problem. We can use YOUR credit card to pay MY new clothes.

4. Assessing the Assessments

Checklist 1: Quality review of the whole test¹

- 1 Is the test acceptable societally, institutionally, and in the eyes of teachers, parents, and administrators?
- 2 To what extent does the test measure what it is intended to measure and provide useful, accurate results? (Validity)
- 3 Does the test measure student performance accurately and consistently? (Reliability)
- 4 Is the test reasonable and practicable in terms of time and resources? (Manageability)
- 5 Are the materials and tasks authentic, meaningful and bias free? (Authenticity and Fairness)
- 6 Does the test match the test specifications—text length, questions number, etc.? (Alignment with Specs)
- 7 Does the test content match the syllabus content—vocabulary, grammar, writing, etc.? (Alignment with Syllabus)
- 8 Is the test appropriate to the overall abilities of the test takers? Does it measure what they *know* and *can do*?
- 9 Does the test assess what has been *taught* and *learned* effectively?
- 10 Are the suggested materials and tasks accessible to the average students? Is the difficulty of the items appropriate for them? (Accessibility)
- 11 Do the tasks avoid tricks (trapping testees) and trivia (assessing unimportant information)?
- 12 Is there variety of themes in the Reading, Language, and Writing tasks? (Theme variety)
- 13 Are test takers familiar with the topics suggested? (Topic familiarity)
- 14 Are knowledge demands minimised and upsetting themes avoided in the test materials?
- 15 Are the test items written according to rules of construction for the type(s) chosen?
- 16 Does the test involve a balance between knowledge, skills, and attitudes/values?
- 17 Are the instructions clear, adequate, and concise? (Instructions clarity)
- 18 Is language simple, suitable for the students' reading level, and familiar? (Language clarity and familiarity)
- 19 Are test takers familiar with the question types used? (Question familiarity)
- 20 Are the test items, as a group, free of overlapping and of clues within and among them?
- 21 Is there a clear objective for each item (task/question)? Is each item format correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- 22 Has a marking scheme covering all the test items been provided, with all correct and possible answers/responses?
- 23 Does the marking scheme provide adequate detail and direction for another examiner to mark the exam? Is the scale for each task/item indicated on the test paper?
- 24 Is the test well laid out and legible? Are the items spaced so that they can be read, answered, and scored with the least amount of difficulty? Is the formatting consistent? (Presentation and layout)
- 25 Has the test been revised for content validity and language accuracy and appropriacy according to guidelines? (Self / Peer review)

¹ Two additional test checklists are provided in the appendices.

Checklist 2: Quality review of the reading comprehension component

- 1 Is the content interesting, useful, meaningful, and suitable? Are the issues up-to-date?
 - 2 Does the text represent high quality writing? Is the source acknowledged?
 - 3 If the text is adapted, is it accessible for all students appropriately?
 - 4 Theme relation to syllabus and topic familiarity?
 - 5 Genre familiarity?
 - 6 Type familiarity?
 - 7 Length appropriateness?
 - 8 Is there a match between text and students' reading skills and cognitive capabilities?
 - 9 Is there a match between text and students' prior knowledge, experience, and motivation?
 - 10 Is the text appropriate for assessing a range of reading skills?
 - 11 Is the text suitable for a good exploitation?
 - 12 Is the complexity level of the text acceptable?
 - 13 Are the questions accessible to the average student?
 - 14 Is the used language accurate, simple, clear and familiar?
 - 15 Do the questions avoid focusing on one or two paragraphs?
 - 16 Do the questions have answers within the text?
 - 17 Are the questions free of clues within and among them? Free of overlapping?
 - 18 Is the number of questions as recommended? (Basic Ed.: 5; Secondary Ed.: 6–7)
 - 19 Are the questions types varied? Are they familiar?
 - 20 Are the questions levels varied (Balance of literal and higher-order Qs)? Are they familiar?
 - 21 Are the instructions clear, adequate and in conformity with the recommendations?
 - 22 Multiple-Choice Items → • Tick the 'most appropriate' option. • Most information is in the stem, without unnecessary material. • Alternatives are the same length, parallel and brief, without repeated material. • Distractors are plausible.
 - 23 Paragraph completion (Instruction: Complete the paragraph with words from paragraph(s) X (and Y) without making any changes to them. One word per blank.)
 - 24 'Select the words that apply to...' → Identify two items that describe or apply to X? (NB All items have to be familiar to testees. (Refer to textbook word lists.))
 - 25 False/Justify (Instruction: For each of the following statements, pick out one detail from paragraph X showing that it is false.)
 - 26 True-False → • Circle/Tick 'True or False' (not 'Write'). • The statement is not lifted from text and slightly modified. • The statement is worded so carefully that it can be judged clearly true or false. • The statement is relatively short, without unnecessary material, & positively stated.
 - 27 Are items requiring several possible answers avoided? (Except reaction to text)
 - 28 Do the responses make minimal demands on writing ability?
 - 29 **Scoring criteria and answer key:** Are the adequate? → • All correct and possible answers / responses are included. • The mark scheme is indicated on the test paper.
 - 30 **Task revision:** Has the task been revised for content validity and language accuracy and appropriacy according to guidelines? (Self / Peer review)
- (Where applicable. Presentation and layout:** Are they appropriate? (Items are well laid, legible, and spaced so that they can be read, answered, and scored without difficulty.)

Checklists 3: Quality review of the language component

General guidelines for most language tasks

- a) Is the item format correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- b) Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of difficulty and time? Free of tricks/trivia?
- c) Is language simple and clear—accessible to students?
- d) Is the task material authentic? Is the task contextualized?
- e) Is the first sentence of the paragraph integral, providing enough context?
- f) Are the items well spaced out (evenly spread)?
- g) Are the items free of clues within and among them?
- h) Is there only one key for each item?
- i) Is the mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- j) Is the task well laid out, with adequate spaces for answers, on the same page?
- k) Has the task been revised and proofread?

(a) Fill in Task

- 1 Do the blanks include a balance of content words and function words?
- 2 Do the options include a balance of content words and function words?
- 3 Do the options include two plausible distractors?
- 4 Do the options appear in the textbook word list?
- 5 Do the options precede the gapped paragraph, in a box, separated by slashes?
- 6 Are lines (___) (not dots) of equal length used for the blanks? Are these numbered?

(b) Tense/Form Task

- 1 Is the instruction precise? (Put the bracketed words in the appropriate tense/form.)
- 2 Are the bracketed words supplied in the base form, in **bold** type?
- 3 Are students familiar with the bracketed words?
- 4 Are students familiar with the tenses/forms required?
- 5 Is there a balance between tense and form in the task?
- 6 Are items requiring a double task, e.g. adding a prefix & suffix (able → disabled), avoided?
- 7 Are lines (___) used for the blanks? Are these numbered?

(c) Multiple-Choice Task

- 1 Is the instruction precise? (Circle the **correct** option.)
- 2 Do options in the same item share the same part of speech – 3 adjectives, 3 adverbs, etc.?
- 3 Does the item test one thing at a time—e.g. tense OR form?
- 4 Is there a balance between content words and function words?
- 5 Are distractors plausible but clearly incorrect?
- 6 Do distractors include only correct forms and vocabulary?
- 7 Are all the bracketed options in **bold** type?

(d) Matching Task

- 1 Are premises and options rather short in order to reduce the amount of reading?
- 2 Are premises longer than options?
- 3 Are the premises in the right order?
- 4 Are the options and premises related to one central theme, familiar to testees?
- 5 Are there more response options than premises?
- 6 Have the task sentences been divided into sentence parts only once?
- 7 Are the premises numbered (1, 2, 3...) and the options identified by letters (a, b, c...)?
- 8 Are the instructions appropriate?

Checklists 4: Quality review of the writing component

(1) Free Writing Checklist

- 1 Is the item format correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- 2 Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of difficulty and time?
- 3 Is it clear and focused, sufficiently narrow/broad for the time available?
- 4 Does it cater for the conventions of a communicative task? → • Communicative situation
• Purpose • Audience • Genre • Type
- 5 Is the topic syllabus related?
- 6 Does it consider the educational level and background of the students?
- 7 Does it interest and motivate them to write a personal, creative essay, without memorization?
- 8 Is it free of tricks/trivia? Free of scaffolding?
- 9 Is language simple, accurate, and suitable for the students' reading level?
- 10 Is the response length clearly specified?
- 11 If quotes are used, are they relevant and appropriate?
- 12 Are the evaluation criteria/mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- 13 Is there in the answer key a model response or an outline of the major points to include?
- 14 Is the task well laid out, with adequate space for the response, on the same page?
- 15 Have you left wide enough margins for your comments, points, etc.?
- 16 Has the task been revised and proofread?

(2) Guided Writing Checklists

a. Information transfer

- 1 Is the item **format** correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- 2 Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of **difficulty** and **time**? Is it free of **tricks and trivia**?
- 3 Is the examinee's task clearly defined?
- 4 Is the data provided relevant and appropriate?

- 5 Is overloading tables/biography data with many details/notes avoided? (Suggest a reasonable amount of information to be developed in a paragraph written in the specified and provided number of lines.)
- 6 Is language simple, accurate, and suitable for the students' reading level?
- 7 Is there a written model/sample response included in the answer key?
- 8 Is the mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- 9 Is the task well laid out, with adequate space for answers, and on the same page?
- 10 Has the task been revised and proofread?

b. Developing notes into sentences

- 1 Is the item format correctly matched to the purpose and content of the item?
- 2 Is the task manageable and appropriate in terms of difficulty and time? Is it free of tricks and trivia?
- 3 Are the instructions appropriate and clear? (Develop full sentences from the following notes to get a coherent paragraph; supply the correct grammatical form, including changes in word form and addition of such elements as prepositions, articles, auxiliary verbs, etc.)
- 4 Are the notes made up of chunks/series of words rather than single words?
- 5 Are the notes in the right order?
- 6 Are there slashes that indicate where an addition or change should be made?
- 7 Is language simple, accurate, and suitable for the students' reading level?
- 8 Is the task material authentic? Is the task contextualized?
- 9 Is there a written model/sample response included in the answer key?
- 10 Is the mark scheme indicated on the test paper?
- 11 Is the task well laid out, with adequate spaces for answers, on the same page?
- 12 Has the task been revised and proofread?

Overall quality review of each examination

➤ Test strengths:

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➤ Test weaknesses and possible improvements:

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➤ Comparing the adapted version and the original version (where applicable):

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A. Assessing the 9th Year Diploma Examination of 2018

Examen du Diplôme de Fin de l'Enseignement de Base Général *Session 2018*	Durée : 1 heure Coefficient : 1
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I. READING COMPREHENSION **6 marks**

Read the text and answer the questions.

The text²

(1) I'll never forget the day when one of my ten-year-old students shyly raised his hand and said that he had never received a gift. We were discussing a reading story about a boy who was not going to get anything for his birthday. Jace's honesty surprised the whole class. Was he exaggerating? He was not the type. Then I remembered that Jace was from a poor family and that his father didn't have a permanent job.

(2) A couple of weeks later, Jace was absent from school. This happened to be the period of the classroom gift exchange. Traditionally, each pupil had to bring a gift for another pupil. As we were talking about the event, one of the pupils suggested that we buy gifts for Jace instead.

(3) With great excitement, the gifts began to come in. I remember being so proud of my thoughtful, selfless and helpful students. After several days of absences, we learned that Jace moved away because his father lost his job! I decided to call Jace and I explained the story to him. Then I drove to his house and together, we filled the room with all the wrapped gifts. He was so surprised and grateful.

(4) As I went to sleep that night, I thought about my thoughtful students and I was thankful to be a part of one of the most important "lessons" of their lives.

Adapted from *Chicken Soup for the Soul*
Jack Canfield

² The original version of the proposed text is provided after the answer key of this exam.

Comprehension Questions

1. Tick (✓) the right alternative. (1 mark)

The text is mainly about Jace's

- a) frequent absences ☐
- b) classmates' solidarity ☐
- c) birthday presents ☐

2. Fill in each blank with only one word from paragraph 1. (1 x 2 = 2 marks)

Although he was a shy student, Jace dared tell the whole class about the birthday This unexpected truth showed his

3. Answer the following question with reference to paragraph 3? (1 mark)

How did the teacher feel about her students' act?

.....

4. What does the underlined word in the text refer to? (1 mark)

'event' in paragraph 2 refers to :

5. Give a personal and justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

What do you think of the teacher's behaviour towards Jace? Why?

I think
..... because
.....

II. LANGUAGE 8 marks

1. Fill in the blanks with six words from the list below. (0.5 x 6 = 3 marks)

events – off – globe – alive – for – live – forgotten – protect

Earth day is celebrated every year. It was meant to encourage respect life on earth and highlight growing concern about different kinds of pollution. It seems we have what a beautiful gift planet Earth is. It is our home that we need to in order to stay healthy and Over 20 million people participated in to mark the first Earth Day. It turned out to be so contagious that today, over a billion people all over the celebrate Earth Day.

2. Match the sentence parts in column A with those in column B to get a coherent paragraph. There is one extra part in column B. Write your answers in the space provided. (0.5 x 4 = 2 marks)

A	B
1. More elephants are killed every day	a. an elephant is.
2. Their biggest threat is humans	b. than are born.
3. If such behaviour continues, future generations will never know what	c. take action against illegal hunting.
4. Governments and organizations ought to	d. to save them from extinction.
	e. who hunt them for ivory.

Answers:

1 +	2 +	3 +	4 +
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3. Circle the right option. (0.5 x 6 = 3 marks)

I can remember my first day of school like it was yesterday. I didn't need (**wake / to wake / waking**) up to my alarm clock. I was (**too / enough / so**) excited that I couldn't wait to meet my new teacher. My mom dropped me off at school making sure that everything was all right. I was very quiet at school. I was (**safe / shy / indifferent**) and didn't know who to talk to. My school year went by fast; and here ten years later, I (**wish / imagine / want**) I could go back to those days and not have a care in the world. I (**advice / advise / advised**) everyone to cherish those days because if you don't, then you (**will regret / are regretting / regretted**) it.

III. WRITING **6 marks**

You believe that success is the result of hard work while some of your classmates think that they can achieve it through cheating.

Write a ten-line post in your school forum to explain that cheating does not help learning and to suggest some solutions to stop this nasty habit.

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME OR YOUR SCHOOL NAME.

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Answer Keys

Eléments de réponse					Barème
I- Reading					6 marks
1	b				1 mark
2	gift (accept 'story' too) – honesty				1 x 2 = 2 marks
3	(so) proud				1 mark
4	(classroom) gift exchange / each pupil had to bring a gift for another pupil				1 mark
5	(Accept any personal justified, plausible answer.)				1 mark
II- Language					8 marks
1	for – forgotten – protect – alive – events – globe				0,5 x 6 = 3 marks
2	1 + b	2 + e	3 + a	4 + c	0,5 x 4 = 2 marks
3	to wake – so – shy – wish – advise – will regret				0,5 x 6 = 3 marks
III- Writing					6 marks
• Adherence to task and content adequacy					3 marks
• Grammatical accuracy and lexical appropriacy					2 marks
• Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, spelling, and capitalization)					1 mark

The original version of the reading passage

Gifts for Jace

The giving of love is an education in itself. ~Eleanor Roosevelt

I'll never forget the day that one of my students shyly raised his hand and said that he had never received a gift. My shocked fifth-graders were discussing a reading story about a boy who was not going to be getting anything for his birthday because money was tight that year. Even though this class was very open during reading discussions, Jace's honesty surprised even me. What was even more eye-opening was the fact that this sweet, fifth-grade boy had gone ten years and never experienced the joy and surprise of receiving a present.

I searched my internal data bank for a reason that he might be saying this. Did he want attention from his peers? No, that was definitely not his style. Was he exaggerating? Again, he was not the type. Then I remembered his story. His mother was out of the picture and he lived alone with his dad. His father had a hard time holding down a job, and come to think of it, I didn't see his father at enrolment or parent-teacher conferences. Even though on the outside Jace was a bit dishevelled, he always came to school with a smile and sincere enthusiasm for learning.

A couple of weeks after Jace's comment, he was absent from school. This happened to be the day I was sending home the annual note about the classroom Christmas gift exchange. Traditionally, each boy was to bring a gift for a boy in the three-dollar range and the same was true for each girl.

As we were discussing the specifics, a girl raised her hand and matter-of-factly suggested that we do away with our traditional policy, and each buy a gift for Jace instead. The enthusiasm grew as the students discussed the kinds of things they knew Jace would like, such as art supplies and Star Wars figurines. We took a quick vote and unanimously agreed to go ahead with this wonderful idea.

With great excitement, the gifts began to come in. Students with bright eyes would eagerly tell me how they found the "perfect gift" and how their parents spent more than three dollars on Jace's gift! One student bought a complete art set, knowing that Jace loved to draw. Another student found toy aliens for him, remembering a paper Jace had recently written about aliens where he surprised us all with a paper plate spaceship prop he had made. As the gifts poured in, I remember being so proud of my thoughtful, selfless students who were truly demonstrating the spirit of Christmas.

After several days of absences, you can imagine our disappointment when we learned that Jace's absences were due to the fact that he had moved away! I was sure of one thing. I couldn't let my students or Jace down.

I found my information sheet and called every number listed. Apparently, Jace's father had lost his job, causing them to relocate. No one knew where they were, and the cell phone number I had would ring with no response despite my continuous efforts. Even into our Christmas vacation, I constantly gave the phone number a shot. Finally, at 9:30 PM on Christmas Eve, I decided to try one last time. By then, I really didn't worry about calling at a late hour. I was so used to no answer that I was startled to hear a response. Amazingly, Jace answered the phone!

I explained the story to Jace and told him how his classmates really wanted to do this for him. I spoke with his father and the next thing I knew, I was driving to Jace's home.

As I drove down his road, I saw the porch light of his trailer flicking on and off signalling which home was his. I was thrilled to see Jace. It took several trips back and forth to my car to get all of the gifts inside. We filled the room with all of the carefully wrapped gifts that were especially for him. He was so surprised and grateful. I was glad that I had an unopened box of chocolates that I could give to his dad. Jace's joyful smile that evening lit up the sky like a strand of twinkle lights.

I went to sleep that night thinking about Jace and all of the fun he was going to have playing with all of his new presents during Christmas break. I thought about my thoughtful students and how excited I was to tell them all about finding Jace. With a smile of my own, I was thankful to be a part of one of the most important "lessons" of their lives.

~Angela N. Abbott

• Assessment of the 9th Year Diploma Examination of 2017

Examen du Diplôme de Fin de l'Enseignement de Base Général
Session 2017

Durée : 1 heure
Coefficient : 1

I. READING COMPREHENSION **6 marks**

Read the text and answer the questions.

THE TEXT

1. On her first day back to work after a four-month maternity leave, Amy Vachon woke up early to nurse her daughter, Maia. Then, she fixed herself a healthful breakfast, prepared a bottle of milk for the girl to drink later, kissed her goodbye and headed for the door. But before she left, she reached over to her husband, Marc, who would not be going to work that day in order to be home with Maia. She handed him a list on which she scribbled the 'how much', 'how long', and 'when' of Maia's napping and eating.

2. The Vachons would not be the kind of parents theirs had been. Instead, they would create their own model, one in which they were parenting partners. After Maia was born, Amy and Marc negotiated part-time schedules: how often should the dishes be done? What constitutes "doing the laundry"? Washing it, folding it or ironing it?

3. Slowly, an agreement has emerged. The cooking is done by whoever is home that day. The laundry is done in the same way. Gender should not determine the division of work at home. The point they say, is to think over the chores you are doing with "no nagging", "no arguing" but mutual understanding.

Adapted from
The New York Times Magazine
June 15, 2008

Comprehension Questions

1. Tick (✓) the right alternative. (1 mark)

The text is mainly about:

- a- Raising children
- b- Doing housework
- c- Sharing it all

2. Fill in each blank in the following paragraph with only one word from paragraphs 2 and 3. (1 x 2 = 2 marks)

Unlike their parents, Amy and Marc their roles at home and reached an based on mutual understanding.

3. Read paragraph 3 and find an expression which has the same meaning as: (1 mark)

Being a man or a woman =

4. What does the underlined word in the text refer to? (1 mark)

'the girl' in paragraph 1 refers to :

5. Give a personal and justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

Do you like the Vachons' model of parenting? Why? Why not?

.....
.....

II. LANGUAGE 8 marks

1. Fill in the blanks with six words from the list below. (0.5 x 6 = 3 marks)

to – personally – purchase – might – save – about – should – goods

Online shopping has become very popular because it has many advantages. With just a click of the mouse, you can your shopping orders, which can time. When buying items online, there are no long lines you have to endure just to buy your However, there are some disadvantages that online shoppers complain They are unable to touch, see and test the product Moreover, the description and the photos of the merchandise be different from those of the real one.

2. Match the sentence parts in column A with those in column B to get a coherent paragraph. There is one extra-part in column B. Write your answers in the space provided. (0.5 x 4 = 2 marks)

A	B
1. Exposure to continuous noise	a. may cause headaches.
2. In some cases, it leads	b. on our health and mind.
3. It affects concentration and	c. creates discomfort and irritation.
4. Therefore, it has harmful effects	d. increase the quality of life.
	e. to complete deafness.

Answers:

1 +	2 +	3 +	4 +
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3. Circle the right option. (0.5 x 6 = 3 marks)

Is chocolate good for our health? Kim Hoffman, a dietician, (**warns / advises / invites**) that the sugar in chocolate is not good (**at / for / to**) us. But doctors say there are also healthful substances which (**lead / make / create**) a happy feeling like anti-depressants. Some experts say uncooked pure chocolate may contain (**fair / just / enough**) the right balance. The (**bigger / big / biggest**) value in eating cocoa and dark chocolate may be their (**danger / impact / ability**) to lower blood pressure. This comes from the experience of cocoa butter melting in your mouth.

III. WRITING **6 marks**

Your parents organized a party to celebrate your success in the national exam. At the end of the party, you decided to show how grateful you feel towards them for every good thing they did to you.

Write your speech below.

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME OR SIGN.

Dear Mum and Dad,

.....

.....

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.....

.....

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.....

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.....

.....

Your loving son / daughter

Answer Keys

Eléments de réponse					Barème
I- Reading					6 marks
1	c				1 mark
2	negotiated – agreement				1 x 2 = 2 marks
3	gender				1 mark
4	Maia / her daughter				1 mark
5	(Accept any answer that justifies the student’s choice.)				1 mark
II- Language					8 marks
1	purchase – save – goods – about – personality – might				0,5 x 6 = 3 marks
2	1 + a / c	2 + e	3 + a / c	4 + b	0,5 x 4 = 2 marks
3	warns – for – create – just – biggest – ability				0,5 x 6 = 3 marks
III- Writing					6 marks
• Adherence to task and content adequacy					3 marks
• Grammatical accuracy and lexical appropriacy					2 marks
• Mechanics of writing					1 mark

Assessment of the Arts BAC Examination of 2018

Examen du Baccalauréat *Session 2018*	Section: Lettres Session principale	Durée : 2 heures Coefficient : 2
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Le sujet comporte 4 pages.

I. READING COMPREHENSION (15 marks)

THE TEXT

(1) Arthur Bamsey, 82, has been left with catastrophic damage to his brain after he was struck by a car whose driver was distracted by his mobile. Guilty motorist Ryan Niner, 19, was trying to ring his mother as he drove his car through a Welsh town centre, and hit **the pensioner** who was trying to cross the road. His car struck Bamsey and sent the elderly man flying into the air, before landing on his head, causing serious and life-changing injuries.

(2) The teenager, who was 18 when the accident happened, was trying to call his mum but went straight to voicemail. Just seconds later, he drove straight into Bamsey, who was on his way from home to pick up cakes and the morning newspaper. Passers-by, including an off-duty nurse, ran to his aid and called for an ambulance.

(3) The former steelworker spent five months in intensive care at the University Hospital of Wales before being transferred to Neath Port Talbot Hospital. Bamsey is now barely able to communicate and requires a tube to be fed. But his family are hopeful that he will ultimately come home. He is able to leave his hospital room for a few minutes, but he needs help with most of his personal care.

(4) Judge Paul Thomas said drivers who used their mobile phones at the wheel were a 'public menace'. He told Niner: "You would have had ample time to see the pedestrian crossing the road ahead of you had you not been distracted." Niner was sentenced to 20 months in a young offenders' institution, and banned from driving for two years.

(5) Paul Jones, from South Wales Police, said Bamsey's family's lives had been 'changed forever.' He said: "Talking on the phone while driving is one of the main contributory factors in all road collisions. With the increase in mobile technology and social media, it is believed that a third of all motorists text, make a call or access social media while driving. **We** would ask all drivers to consider their actions and the consequences of the choices which they make – the only safe option is to turn your phone off and put it out of sight."

Adapted from the *Daily Mail*

December 3, 2016

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Complete the table with information from paragraphs 1 and 4. (3 marks)

A driver hit an elderly man

Cause of the accident	Decision of the court
.....	a. b.

2. For each of the following statements, pick out ONE detail showing that it is false. (3 marks)

- a) Nobody helped the victim after the accident. (paragraph 2)
.....
- b) Everybody was sure that Arthur had no chance to leave the hospital. (paragraph 3)
.....
- c) Using mobile phones at the wheel is a minor cause of road accidents. (paragraph 5)
.....

3. Focus on paragraph 3 and pick out three (3) details describing the victim's bad state at present. (3 marks)

- a)
- b)
- c)

4. Tick (✓) the correct alternative. (3 marks)

- a) The accident happened in 2014 ☐ 2015 ☐ 2016 ☐
- b) 'off-duty' (paragraph 2) nearly means
not working at present ☐ quite busy as usual ☐ not doing the job properly ☐
- c) 'ample' (paragraph 3) nearly means
hard ☐ enough ☐ spare ☐

5. What do the words underlined in the text refer to? (2 marks)

- a) "the pensioner" (paragraph 1) refers to
- b) "We" (paragraph 5) refers to

6. Give a personal and justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

Should drivers like Ryan Niner be severely punished? Why? Why not?

I think that such drivers be severely punished because

.....
.....

II- WRITING (15 marks)

1. Use the table below to write a 5-line report about the School Food Plan. (5 marks)

Launching date of the plan	September 2014
Purpose	provide nutritious meals
Beneficiaries	55,000 infant pupils / 350 schools in England
Effects on the pupils	higher attendance / more concentration in class / better communication / less violent behaviour
Parents' attitude	Approve / support / ready to contribute

2. You have just read on a news website that a 64-year-old Tunisian lady is sitting for the baccalaureate exam.

Write a 12-line article for your school magazine in which you state your opinion about pursuing studies at an advanced age.

Support your ideas with sound arguments. (10 marks)

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III- LANGUAGE (10 marks)

1. Fill in the blanks with seven (7) words from the list below. (3,5 marks)

launched – on – access – granted – aims – to – tirelessly – scheduled – hardly

Have you ever dreamt of having a vacation in the moon? Well, a dream of a trip to moon is just about to turn into a reality soon. According to reports, the Moon Express – a company that to bring people from the Earth to the Moon in terms of a vacation – has been permission by the US law to leave the Earth and land on the moon. It is the only private company with such great The company is offering tickets to the moon for more than \$150,000,000, and the trip is for 2026. Naveen Jain, the mastermind behind the company, and his team have been working to convert this dream of many into a reality. Based on another report in IFL Science, the trip will start by being from the Soyuz rocket from Russia and will drop by the International Space Station (ISS) before officially making it the moon.

2. Put the bracketed words in the right tense and /or form. (3 marks)

It has been the dream of retirees for thousands of years to settle in the countryside where the air is cleaner, and the life is quieter, and (healthy). These days, thanks to technological advances, growing numbers of professionals (choose) to base themselves in the countryside, not to retire, but because in many industries there is simply no need to be chained to a desk in the city. Having a broadband connection and choosing a phone or a tablet is all that (require). According to UK statistics, there is some truth to theory that your life (expect) increases in the countryside. Living in rural areas means you are slightly less likely to die (premature) from cancer, stroke or coronary heart disease. Lately, government forecasters (predict) that, on average, people born in very rural areas will live 1.5 to 2 years longer than those in major urban areas.

3. Circle the right alternative. (3 marks)

Parents in Armenia start thinking about their children's careers at a very young age — around six months or so. When an infant's first tooth (**arrives / arrived / will arrive**), typically between the age of four and seven months, a celebration takes place. As part of the ritual, objects (**symbolize / symbolizing / symbolic**) different professions are arrayed in front of a child: a microphone for an entertainer, a stethoscope for a doctor, scissors for a tailor or money for a banker. (**However / No matter / Whichever**) object the baby chooses first is thought to be a sign of where the child's professional aptitude lies. Parents are free to add (**with / to / for**) or omit from the mix as they wish. "Parents may orchestrate the future life of their (**offspring / siblings / relatives**) by choosing only those objects that symbolize prestigious and desired professions," Professor Antonyan said. Parents (**should / must / can**) also game the selection by positioning objects nearer to or farther from their infant's (**reach / achievement / desire**). At one recent ceremony, the father of the baby asked to place a ladle a bit far from his daughter to save her from a destiny of a housewife.

Answer Keys

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS		15 marks
1	Cause of the accident: The driver was distracted by his mobile / The driver was trying to ring his mother Decision of the court: a) (sentenced to) 20 months in a young offenders' institution b) banned from driving for two years	3 x 1 = 3 marks
2	a) <u>Passers-by</u> (, including an off-duty nurse,) <u>ran to his aid and called for an ambulance.</u> b) <u>His family are hopeful that he will ultimately come home.</u> c) ... <u>one of the main contributory factors</u> (in all road collisions)	3 x 1 = 3 marks
3	a) He is barely able to communicate. b) He requires a tube to be fed. c) He needs help with most of his personal care.	3 x 1 = 3 marks
4	a) 2015 b) not working at present c) enough	3 x 1 = 3 marks
5	a) Arthur Bamsey / Bamsey / the elderly man b) the police / South Wales Police	2 x 1 = 2 marks
6	Accepter toute réponse personnelle et justifiée.	1 mark
WRITING		15 marks
1	• Effective used of the prompts • Language	2 marks 3 marks
2	• Adherence to task and content adequacy • Grammatical accuracy and lexical appropriacy • Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling)	4 marks 4 marks 2 marks
LANGUAGE		10 marks
1	aims; granted; access; scheduled; tirelessly; launched; to	7 x 0,5 = 3,5 marks
2	healthier; are choosing / have chosen / have been choosing; is required; expectancy / expectance; prematurely; have predicted	6 x 0,5 = 3 marks
3	arrives; symbolizing; Whichever; to; offspring; can; reach	7 x 0,5 = 3,5 marks

Assessment of the Maths, Sciences, Computer Sciences, and Economics BAC Examination of 2018

Examen du Baccalauréat *Session 2018*	Sections : Mathématiques, Sciences expérimentales, Sciences de l'informatique et Economie et gestion	<i>Durée :</i> 2 heures
	<i>Session principale</i>	<i>Coefficient :</i> 1

Le sujet comporte 4 pages.

I. READING COMPREHENSION

THE TEXT

(1) In 1883, an engineer, named John Roebling, was inspired by an idea to build a spectacular bridge connecting New York with the Long Island. However, bridge building experts thought that this was an impossible feat. Roebling could not ignore the vision he had of this bridge. He knew deep in his heart that it could be done. He just had to share the dream with someone else. He managed to convince his son Washington, an up and coming engineer, that the bridge could, in fact, be built.

(2) The father and son developed concepts of how their dream could be accomplished and how the obstacles could be overcome. With great excitement, they hired their crew. The project started well, but when it was only a few months underway, a tragic accident on the site took the life of John Roebling. Washington was injured and left with brain damage, unable to talk or walk. Nonetheless, he still had a burning desire to complete the bridge. He tried to pass on his enthusiasm to some of his friends, but they were too daunted by the task.

(3) As Washington lay in his hospital room, a gentle breeze blew the flimsy curtains apart and he was able to see the sky for just a moment. It seemed that there was a message for him not to give up. Suddenly an idea hit him. All he could do was move one finger and he decided to make the best use of it. He slowly developed a code of communication with his wife. He touched his wife's arm with that finger, indicating to her that he wanted her to call the engineers again. Then he used the same code to tell the engineers what to do until the bridge was finally completed. Today the spectacular Brooklyn Bridge stands in all its glory as a tribute to the triumph of one man's indomitable spirit and his determination not to be defeated by circumstances.

<https://academictips.org/blogs/determination-and-persistence/>
November 16, 2009 (Adapted)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (12 marks)

1. Tick (✓) the most suitable title for the text. (1 mark)

- a. An unaccomplished Project ☐
- b. A Dream that Comes True ☐
- c. A Vision Crippled by an Accident ☐

2. For each of the following statements, pick out one detail from the text showing that it is false. (2 marks)

- a. Engineers welcomed Roebling's dream. (paragraph 1)

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- b. Washington's excitement was shared by his peers. (paragraph 2)

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3. Complete the following paragraph with words from paragraph 3. One word per blank. (3 marks)

Whenever Washington had a to convey, he would move his finger. Thus, he invented a special that made him able to express himself so as to give instructions to the he hired.

4. Tick the two adjectives that best describe Washington. (2 marks)

- ☐ pessimistic / ☐ creative / ☐ persevering / ☐ frustrated

5. For each of the following definitions, pick out one word that means nearly the same. (3 marks)

- a. Pay no attention to something (paragraph 1):
- b. In progress (paragraph 2):
- c. Not willing to accept defeat (paragraph 3):

6. Give a personal justified answer to the following question. (1 mark)

If you were Washington, would you abandon the project because of obstacles? Why? Why not?

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II- WRITING (12 marks)

1. **Earth Hour** is the world(s) biggest environmental event. Use the information in the table below to write a **four-line** report about the 2017 **Earth Hour**. (4 marks)

Date / Time	Saturday, 25 March 2017 8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Organizer	World Wildlife Fund
Venue	170 countries across the continents
Participants / action	Millions of people / Switch off lights
Purpose	-Helps reduce the impact of climate change -Show care about the future of the planet

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2. Some of your friends still think that travelling is a waste of time and money. Do you share this point of view? Write a **twelve-line** post for your friends on Facebook to express your opinion. Support it with relevant arguments. (8 marks)

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III- LANGUAGE (10 marks)

1. Fill in the blanks with six (6) words from the list below. (3 marks)

schedule – attend – for – enabling – quality – turning – making – to

Many student athletes like Jordan Windle, the youngest diver to qualify for the Olympic trials, are to virtual schools to meet their educational needs. There are a lot of reasons why they are opting this innovative learning environment. Virtual school students can adapt their learning around their sports and other obligations. They can pursue a education without sacrificing their dreams of medals and trophies. With a laptop and Internet signal, online student athletes can school from any location. Some virtual schools provide real-time instruction, students to interact with teachers and other students as they continue their travel and training.

2. Put the bracketed words in the right tense and /or form. (3 marks)

With the global population rising, wastage of products like fruit, vegetables and meat has become a real threat. Each year about a **(three)** of all that is produced is wasted, including about 45% of all fruit and vegetables, 35% of seafood, and 20% of meat. Meanwhile, 795 million people suffer from food **(insufficient)** and malnutrition. If the amount of food wasted around the world were reduced by just 25%, there **(be)** enough food to feed all the people who are malnourished.

Recently, the United Nations Organisation **(identify)** the issue of food waste as one of the great challenges to **(achieve)** food security. In their last conference, the UN experts **(suggest)** that increase in food products should reach 60% by 2050 to meet the needs of a growing population.

Answer keys

A- Reading comprehension		12 marks
1	(b)	1 mark
2	a) (However, bridge building experts thought that) this was an impossible feat. b) (He tried to pass on his enthusiasm to some of his friends,) but they were too daunted by the task.	2 x 1 = 2 marks
3	message / code / engineers	3 x 1 = 3 marks
4	creative – persevering	2 x 1 = 2 marks
5	a. ignore b. underway c. indomitable	3 x 1 = 3 marks
6	Accept any plausible justified answer	1 mark
B- Writing		12 marks
1	• Content • Language and mechanics of writing	2 marks 2 marks
2	• Content (relevance of ideas) • Language (grammar and vocabulary) • Mechanics of writing (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling)	3 marks 3 marks 2 marks
C- Language		6 marks
1	turning – for – schedule – quality – attend – enabling	6 x 0.5 = 3 marks
2	third – insufficiency – would be – (has) identified – achieving – suggested	6 x 0.5 = 3 marks

Glossary

Accountability: responsibility for educational outcomes; these outcomes are often measured through standardized testing.

Achievement test: a test that measures how well a student has reached the objectives of a specific course or program.

Alignment: the process of linking the meaning of a score to some external criterion, or definition of a level of language ability required for a specific purpose. Content alignment is the process of matching the content of the test to a set of content standards that state what should be studied and mastered at a particular level of educational achievement.

Alternative assessment: non-traditional forms of assessment; may include portfolios, observations, work samples, or group projects.

Analytic scoring: method of scoring or rating that assigns separate scores for different aspects of the same performance. Analytic scoring is especially effective as a diagnostic tool.

Anchor: (also called exemplar or benchmark); a sample of student work (product or performance) used to illustrate each level of a scoring rubric; critical for training scorers of performances since it serves as a standard against which other student work is compared.

Aptitude test: test which measures a student's talent for learning language; predicts future performance.

Assessment: the process of collecting and analyzing data for the purpose of evaluation. The assessment of student learning involves describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about performance.

Authentic assessments: assessments that emulate the performance that would be required of the student in real-life situations.

Authentic materials: actual materials from the real world, such as newspaper articles, pamphlets, radio broadcasts, and student writing.

Authenticity: how well test tasks reflect/resemble real-life situations/activities.

Bias and distortion: factors, unrelated to the skill being assessed, that interfere with a valid inference regarding a student's true ability. For example, too much reading on a mathematics test might result in a distorted vision of a student's mastery of mathematics content.

Calibrate: in item response theory, to estimate the difficulty of a set of test items.

Clerical marking: a method of marking in which markers do not need to exercise any special expertise or subjective judgement. They mark by following a mark scheme which specifies all acceptable responses to each test item.

Cohort: a group whose progress is followed by means of measurements at different points in time.

Competency test: a test intended to establish that a student has met established minimum standards of skills and knowledge and is thus eligible for graduation, certification, etc.

Component: part of an examination, often presented as a separate test, with its own instructions booklet and time limit. Components are often skills-based, and have titles such as Listening Comprehension or Writing/Composition.

Construct: what a test measures. A hypothesised ability or mental trait which cannot necessarily be directly observed or measured, for example, in language testing, listening ability.

Criteria: (sometimes used as synonym for traits or attributes); the rules or guidelines used for categorizing or judging the quality of a student's response/performance.

Criterion-referenced assessment: an assessment designed to measure performance against a set of clearly defined criteria. Such assessments are used to identify student strengths and weaknesses with regard to specified knowledge and skills.

Curricular alignment: the degree to which a curriculum's scope, sequence, and content match standards, instruction, assessment, or instructional resources.

Descriptor: a brief description accompanying a band on a rating scale, which summarises the degree of proficiency or type of performance expected for a test taker to achieve that particular score.

Diagnostic test: test that identifies a student's strengths and weaknesses.

Dichotomous item: an item which is scored right or wrong, e.g., multiple-choice and true/false.

Direct testing: testing method that closely matches the construct being measured.

Discrete item: a self-contained item. It is not linked to other items or any supplementary material.

Discrete test: test focused on specific language skills.

Discrimination: the power of an item to discriminate between weaker and stronger test takers.

Distractor analysis: in the evaluation of multiple-choice test items, the analysis of how well the distractors succeed in tempting lower scoring students away from the correct answer (key).

Domain of language use: broad areas of social life, such as education or personal, which can be defined for the purposes of selecting content and skills focuses for examinations.

Double marking: a method of assessing performance in which two individuals independently assess test taker performance on a test.

Educational outcome: an educational goal, expectation, or result that occurs at the end of an educational program or event (usually a culminating activity, product, or other measurable performance).

Evaluation: making decisions based on the results of assessment; data from tests, tasks, or performances are used to make judgments about the success of the student or program.

Extended-response assessments: an essay question or performance assessment, which requires an elaborated or graphic response that expresses ideas and their interrelationships in a literate and organized manner.

Formative assessment: (also Assessment for learning) an assessment used during the course of instruction to provide feedback to the teacher and learner about the learner's progress toward desired educational outcomes, rather than assess achievement, or award certificates; the results of formative assessments are often used in planning subsequent instruction.

Grade: a test score may be reported to the test taker as a grade, for example on a scale of A to E, where A is the highest grade available, B is a good pass, C a pass and D and E are failing grades.

Halo effect: the tendency of judges to give the same score across multiple ratings. The initial judgement tends to 'contaminate' all the others, making it difficult to produce profiles.

High-stakes test: assessment that is used to make critical decisions with consequences for one or more stakeholders in the assessment process.

Holistic scoring: method of rating an assessment based on general descriptions of performance at specified levels; while a holistic scoring rubric may take into account performance along several dimensions (e.g., fluency, grammatical accuracy, and word choice for oral language), one overall score which best represents the examinee's performance is assigned.

Item: each testing point in a test which is given a separate mark or marks. Examples are: one gap in a cloze test; one multiple-choice question with three or four options; one sentence for grammatical transformation; one question to which a sentence-length response is expected.

Item response theory: a group of mathematical models for relating an individual's test performance to that individual's level of ability. These models are based on the fundamental theory that an individual's expected performance on a particular test question, or item, is a function of both the level of difficulty of the item and the individual's level of ability.

Item banking: an approach to the management of test items which entails storing information about items so that tests of known content and difficulty can be constructed.

Item analysis: a description of the performance of individual test items, usually employing classical statistical indices such as facility and discrimination.

Invigilator: person who has responsibility to oversee the administration of an exam in the exam room.

Intra-rater reliability: the degree to which any individual judge or rater agrees with him- or herself, when rating the same performances on different occasions.

Inter-rater reliability: the degree to which two judges or raters agree with each other, when rating the same performances.

Interactivity: the degree to which items and tasks engage mental processes and strategies which would accompany real-life tasks.

Integrative test / Integrated tasks/items: test tasks that require the use of other language knowledge or skills to answer. This is most evident in questions that require a test taker to read a text, and perhaps listen to information, before writing or speaking about the topic.

Input: material provided in a test task for the test taker to use in order to produce an appropriate response. In a test of listening, for example, it may take the form of a recorded text and several accompanying written items.

Impact: the effect created by a test, in terms of influence on society in general, educational processes and the individuals who are affected by test results.

Key: a set of all correct or acceptable responses to test items.

Live test (item): a test which is currently available for use, and which must for that reason be kept secure.

Mark scheme: a list of all the acceptable responses to the items in a test. A mark scheme makes it possible for a marker to assign a score to a test accurately.

Marker: someone who assigns a score or grade to a test taker's responses or performance in a test.

Marking: assigning a mark to a test taker's responses to a test. This may involve professional judgement, or the application of a mark scheme which lists all acceptable responses.

Mean: a measure of central tendency often referred to as the average. The mean score in an administration of a test is arrived at by adding together all the scores and dividing by the total number of scores.

Measurement scale: A scale of numbers which can be used to measure the difference between test takers, items, cut-off points, etc. on the construct of the test.

Model of language use: a description of the skills and competencies needed for language use, and the way that they relate to each other. A model is a basic component of test design.

Moderation: randomly sampling from test papers or recorded performances to check on the performance of raters.

Norm group: a group of students that is first administered a standardized norm-referenced test by its developers in order to establish scores for interpreting the performance of future test-takers.

Norm: a distribution of scores obtained from a norm group. The norm is the midpoint (or median) of scores or performance of the students in that group. By design, fifty percent will score above and fifty percent below the norm.

Norm-referenced test: a standardized test which compares the performance of students to an original group that took the test (the norm group); results usually reported in terms of percentile scores (e.g., a score of 90 means that the student did better than 90% of the norm group).

Objective Test: a test for which the scoring procedure is completely specified enabling agreement among different scorers. A correct-answer test.

Objectively marked: items which can be scored by applying a mark scheme, without the need to bring expert opinion or subjective judgement to the task.

Open-ended task: a type of item or task in a written test which requires the test taker to supply, as opposed to select, a response. The purpose of this kind of item is to elicit a relatively unconstrained response, which may vary in length from a few words to an extended essay. The mark scheme therefore allows for a range of acceptable answers.

Partial credit item: an item scored so that a response which is neither wholly wrong nor right is rewarded. For example, the scores awarded for a response to an item may be 0, 1, 2 or 3, depending on the level of correctness described in the key.

Piloting: trying out test materials on a very small scale, perhaps by asking colleagues to respond to the items and comment.

Placement test: test whose results are used to assign students to classes designed for learners at a particular level.

Practicality: the degree to which it is possible to develop a test to meet requirements with the resources available; feasibility of test given materials, funding, time, expertise, and staff.

Pretesting: a stage in the development of test materials at which items are tried out with representative samples from the target population in order to determine their difficulty. Following statistical analysis, those items that are considered satisfactory can be used in live tests.

Proficiency test: test of ability in a defined area of language; the area may be narrowly-defined (e.g., English for airline pilots) or more broad (e.g., social and academic language). Proficiency tests are not tied to a specific curriculum or course and are often contrasted with achievement tests.

Prompt: In tests of speaking or writing, graphic materials or texts designed to elicit a response from the test taker.

Question: sometimes used to refer to a test task or item.

Range: a simple measure of spread: the difference between the highest number in a group and the lowest.

Rasch analysis: analysis based on a mathematical model, also known as the simple logistic model, which posits a relationship between the probability of a person completing a task and the difference between the ability of the person and the difficulty of the task.

Rater: someone who assigns a score to a test taker's performance in a test, using subjective judgement to do so. Raters are normally qualified in the relevant field, and are required to undergo a process of training and standardisation.

Rating scale: a scale consisting of several ranked categories used for making subjective judgements. In language testing, rating scales for assessing performance are typically accompanied by band descriptors which make their interpretation clear.

Raw score: a test score that has not been statistically manipulated by any transformation, weighting or re-scaling.

Register: a distinct variety of speech or writing characteristic of a particular activity or a particular degree of formality.

Reliability: the consistency or stability of the measures from a test. The more reliable a test is, the less random error it contains. A test which contains systematic error, e.g. bias against a certain group, may be reliable, but not valid. The instrument should yield similar results over time with similar populations in similar circumstances.

Response: the test taker behaviour elicited by the input of a test. For example, the answer given to a multiple-choice item or the work produced in a test of writing.

Rubric: • (also a scoring guide or scoring criteria) an established, ordered set of criteria used in subjective assessments; it includes performance descriptors of student work at various levels of achievement. Rubrics consist of a fixed measurement scale (e.g., 4-point) and a list of criteria that describe the characteristics of products or performances for each score point. Rubrics are frequently accompanied by examples (anchors) of products or performances to illustrate the various score points on the scale • the instructions given to test takers to guide their responses to a particular test task.

Sampling: a way to obtain information about a large group by examining a smaller, randomly chosen selection (the sample) of group members. If the sampling is conducted correctly, the results will be representative of the group as a whole. Sampling may also refer to the choice of smaller tasks or processes that will be valid for making inferences about the student's performance in a larger domain.

Scale: a set of numbers or categories for measuring something. Four types of measurement scale are distinguished – nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio.

Scoring criteria: rules for assigning a score or the dimensions of proficiency in performance used to describe a student's response to a task. May include rating scales, checklists, answer keys, and other scoring tools. In a subjective assessment situation, a rubric.

Scoring: a package of guidelines intended for people scoring performance assessments. May include instructions for raters, notes on training raters, rating scales, samples of student work exemplifying various levels of performance.

Script: the paper containing a test taker's responses to a test, used particularly with open-ended task types.

Skills test: test focusing on a specific domain of language use, e.g., listening, reading, writing or speaking (interactive or presentational).

Specifications: (the blueprints); a description of the characteristics of an examination, including what is tested, how it is tested, details such as number and length of papers, item types used, etc.

Stakeholders: people and organisations with an interest in the test. For example, test takers, schools, parents, employers, governments, employees of the test provider.

Stakes: the extent to which the outcomes of a test can affect the test takers' futures. Test stakes are usually described as either high or low, with high-stakes tests having most impact.

Standard deviation (SD): a measure of the spread of scores on a test. If the distribution of scores is normal, 68% of them are within 1SD of the mean, and 95% are within 2SDs. The higher a standard deviation is, the further away from the majority of the data it is.

Standard setting: the process of defining cut-off points on a test (e.g. the pass/fail boundary) and thus the meaning of test results.

Standardized test: test with fixed content, equivalent parallel forms, standard administration and scoring, field-tested, valid, and reliable.

Standards: agreed upon values used to measure the quality of student performance, instructional methods, curriculum, etc.

Subjectively marked: items which must be scored using expert opinion or subjective judgement of the task.

Summative assessment: outcome-based use of assessments, often for decisions such as grading, program evaluation, tracking, or accountability.

Task: what a test taker is asked to do to complete part of a test, but which involves more complexity than responding to a single, discrete item. This usually refers either to a speaking or writing performance or a series of items linked in some way, for example, a reading text with several multiple-choice items, all of which can be responded to by referring to a single rubric.

Test administration: delivery of the test items/directions to the test-takers; the date or period during which a test takes place.

Test battery: a test that is constructed of a number of sub-tests.

Test construction: the process of selecting items or tasks and putting them into a test. This process is often preceded by the pretesting or trialling of materials. Items and tasks for test construction may be selected from a bank of materials.

Test developer: someone engaged in the process of developing a new test.

Test development: process of creating a test; steps of test development (Hughes, 2003):

1. State the goals of the test.
2. Write test specifications.
3. Write and revise items.
4. Try items with native speakers and accept/reject items.
5. Pilot with non-native speakers with similar backgrounds as the intended test takers.
6. Analyze the trials and make necessary revisions.
7. Calibrate scales.
8. Validate.
9. Write test administrator handbook, test materials.
10. Train staff as appropriate.

Test format: mode and organization of test, test structure (e.g., multiple choice, short answer).

Test materials: items used for the test administration/taking.

Test purpose: what you want to learn from the test results.

Test usefulness: the idea that a test is most useful when the balance between validity, reliability, authenticity, interactiveness, impact and practicality is optimal.

Test: a set of questions or situations designed to permit an inference about what an examinee knows or can do in an area of interest.

Testing: valid and reliable practice of language measurement for context-specific purposes.

Text-based item: an item based on a piece of connected discourse, e.g. multiple-choice items based on a reading comprehension text.

Trait: a physical or psychological characteristic of a person (such as language ability), or the measurement scale constructed to describe this. See also construct.

Trialling: a stage in the development of test tasks aimed at ascertaining whether the test functions as expected. Often used with subjectively marked tasks such as essay questions, which are administered to a limited population.

Validation: the process of establishing the validity of a test by gathering and evaluating the evidence for its validity and reliability.

Validity: ➤ [definition 1] a judgment about whether a test is appropriate for a specific group and purpose and includes considerations such as whether the test really measures what you think it is measuring, whether the results are similar to examinees' performance on other tests or in class or real-world activities, and whether the use of test results have the intended effects.

➤ [definition 2] validity refers to 'the degree to which' or 'the accuracy with which' an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure. Since the 1980s there has been a general consensus that it is more appropriate to talk about the validity of the uses and interpretations of a test, rather than the test itself. A test could be valid for some uses for some test takers, but not for others.

- **Concurrent validity:** the assessment has concurrent validity if it is correlated with other measures of that particular content or area.
- **Construct validity:** how well a test measures what it is supposed to measure.
- **Content validity:** the assessment has content validity if it measures the content or area it intends to measure.
- **Face validity:** non-technical term that refers to how fair, reasonable and authentic people perceive a test to be.
- **Predictive validity:** the assessment has predictive validity if it predicts later actual performance of the individual in that subject or area.

Vetting: a stage in the cycle of test production at which the test developers assess materials commissioned from item writers and decide which should be rejected as not fulfilling the specifications of the test, and which can go forward to the editing stage.

Washback / Backwash: effects of test on teachers' and students' actions; for instance, the exam effects on the curriculum, the syllabus and the coursebooks, etc.; washback can be positive (expected) or negative (unexpected, harmful).

Weighting: the assignment of a different number of maximum points to a test item, task or component in order to change its relative contribution in relation to other parts of the same test. For example, if double marks are given to all the items in task one of a test, task one will account for a greater proportion of the total score than other tasks.

This concise glossary of language testing terms has been compiled mainly from:

- *The Multilingual glossary of language testing terms*, produced by the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE Members 1998)
- Key Assessment Terms (Glossary), from Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) [from <http://www.cal.org/flad/tutorial/resources/7keyterms.html>]
- Assessment Terminology: A Glossary of Useful Terms, Assessing Learning Conference – 9/28-30, 1995 [from: <http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/assess/terminology.htm>]
- *An A to Z of Second Language Assessment: How Language Teachers Understand Assessment Concepts*, by Christine Coombe, published by the British Council © 2018 [from www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis/research/assessment-literacy]

Appendices

- 1 Bloom's taxonomy p100
- 2 Checklist for Effective Tests p103
- 3 Checklist for the Evaluation of Tests p104
- 4 Assessing text appropriateness using technology p105
- 5 Themes / Topics lists for Basic Education p108
- 6 Combined alphabetic vocabulary list of the 9th Year General Basic Education textbook p109
- 7 Themes / Topics lists for Secondary Education p111
- 8 Combined alphabetic vocabulary list of the 4th Year Secondary Education textbook p114
- 9 How to use the 4th Year Secondary Education textbook, *Skills for life* (omitted lessons) p116
- 10 Ongoing Evaluation in Basic and Secondary Education p118
 - I. Ongoing Evaluation in Basic Education p118
 - A Ongoing Evaluation in General Basic Education p118
 - ▶ Profile of 9th Year Diploma Examination – General p121
 - B Ongoing Evaluation in Technical Basic Education, p123
 - ▶ Profile of 9th Year Diploma Examination – Technical p125
 - II. Ongoing Evaluation in Secondary Education p127
 - C Ongoing Evaluation in Secondary Education – Common Core and Arts p127
 - ▶ Recommendations for Baccalaureate Examinations p131
 - D Ongoing Evaluation in Secondary Education – Sports Branch p134
 - E Chart of Ongoing Evaluation in Basic and Secondary Education, all Branches (September 2018) p137

Appendix 1

Bloom's taxonomy in use

1) Structure of the Cognitive Process Dimension of the Revised Taxonomy

- 1 Remember** – Retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory.
 - Recognizing
 - Recalling
- 2 Understand** – Determining the meaning of instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communication.
 - Interpreting
 - Exemplifying
 - Classifying
 - Summarizing
 - Inferring
 - Comparing
 - Explaining
- 3 Apply** – Carrying out or using a procedure in a given situation.
 - Executing
 - Implementing
- 4 Analyze** – Breaking material into its constituent parts and detecting how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.
 - Differentiating
 - Organizing
 - Attributing
- 5 Evaluate** – Making judgments based on criteria and standards.
 - Checking
 - Critiquing
- 6 Create** – Putting elements together to form a novel, coherent whole or make an original product.
 - Generating
 - Planning
 - Producing

Note

In this Taxonomy Table, the Knowledge dimension forms the vertical axis of the table, whereas the Cognitive Process dimension forms the horizontal axis.

Source

A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An Overview, by David R. Krathwohl in *Theory into practice* 41 n°4 Autumn 2002, College of Education, The Ohio State University

2) Bloom's taxonomy levels with can do statements and sample questions

Bloom's taxonomy		
I can use the information to build new ideas	6. Creating	How could you change the plot?
I can say what I think about the information and back up my opinion	5. Evaluating	What would you say is the importance of...?
I can break down the information to understand it better	4. Analysing	What evidence can you find to...?
I can use the information in a new way	3. Applying	What questions would you ask of...?
I can explain the ideas in the information	2. Understanding	How could you say that in your own words...?
I can remember facts about the information	1. Remembering	Where does it say...? When/why/how did...?

1 + 2 + 3 = LOTS (Lower order thinking skills). 4 + 5 + 6 = HOTS (Higher order thinking skills)

3) Reading Comprehension Questions

Here are some examples of reading comprehension questions for a fiction text based on the different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. These could be adapted to suit a non-fiction text.

Remembering

- Who were the characters in the story?
- Write three things that happened in the text.
- Where did the story take place?
- When does the story take place?
- List six facts about the story.

Understanding

- Tell me about the main character using your own words.
- Explain the main problem of the story and how it was solved.
- Retell the story in three sentences.
- How did the main character feel at the beginning of the story?
- How did the main character feel at the end of the story?
- Draw a story board to show the sequence of events.

Applying

- How would you have solved the problem?
- Explain a time when something similar happened to someone you know.
- Would you have done the same as the character in the story?
- What three questions would you ask the main character if you met him/her?

- If the main character came to your school, what would they do?
- Can you think of another story with a similar theme or main character?

Analysing

- Who is the most important character in the story and who is the least important?
- Identify the different parts of story. (introduction, development, climax, resolution)
- Organise the text into parts and think of a suitable title for each part.
- Which things in the text were true and which were opinions?
- What things in the text would not have happened in real life?
- Compare this story to another one. How are they the same and how are they different?

Evaluating

- Did you like this story? Why or why not?
- Was the main character good or bad? Why do you think so?
- Which character would you most want to meet? Why?
- Why do you think the author wanted to write this story? Would you? Why or why not?
- Could this story have happened at a different time or place? Why or why not?
- Was this the best ending for the story? Why or why not?

Creating

- Make a story like this one but use your friends as characters in it.
- What will happen next in the story?
- Rewrite the story from another point of view. (another character or an object in the story)
- Write a different ending for the story.
- Pretend you are the main character in the story and write a diary about what happened.
- Create a book cover for the story.

Source: *Teachers' Guide to Teaching Reading Comprehension P5–S3*. Edinburgh Literacy Hub.

Downloaded from

https://education.gov.scot/improvement/documents/literacy/lit13_teachingreadingcomprehensionfinaldraft.pdf. December 2019

Appendix 2

Checklist for Effective Tests

The Test Development

- Do the test items match the course objectives?
- Do the test items relate to what was actually taught?
- Do the test items measure important concepts rather than trivia?
- Do the test items measure more complex behaviour, such as understanding of basic principles or ability to make practical applications, rather than simply measuring recall?
- Are the test items free from vaguely defined problems, ambiguous wording, extraneous or irrelevant information, and unintentional clues to the correct answers?

Test Preparation and Administration

- Do the test directions specify how the items will be scored and how the students should record answers?
- Are items presented in the same format grouped together?
- Are the items and pages numbered consecutively?
- Have I provided sufficient time for students to complete the test?
- Have I made provisions to reduce cheating?

Test Evaluation

- Was the test long enough to provide a valid, reliable estimate of the students' achievement?
- Are there means for grading students other than on the basis of this exam?
- If the purpose of the test was to rank students (rather than to assess mastery) did I reject items which nearly every student either missed or got correct?
- If the test were given again, can I feel confident the results would be consistent with current test scores?
- Have I considered student input regarding ambiguity and problems with specific test items?

Test Grading and Scoring

- Are the items spaced so they can be read, answered, and scored efficiently?
- Is each answer space clearly associated with its corresponding item?
- Have I established a grading key for all items, even essay questions?
- Have I made provisions to maintain student anonymity and to prevent grader bias?
- Have I checked for accuracy by providing two scorings or by re-scoring sample papers?

Source: *How to Prepare Better Tests*, a booklet by Beverly B. Zimmerman et al.

Appendix 3

Checklist for the Evaluation of Tests

All tests, whatever their purpose or level, must meet certain criteria, and it is appropriate, before looking in detail at how tests are produced, to look at these. The questions asked here underpin the whole process of test production.

Test Validity

- What is the purpose of the test?
- Is the content of the test consistent with the stated goal for which the test is being administered – is it valid?

Test Difficulty

- What are the characteristics of the examinees?
- Is the test appropriate to the overall abilities of the examinees?
- Has it been tried out on a sample of persons from the same general population as the target examinees?

Test Reliability

- Are the test results reliable enough to make accurate decisions?
- Can the degree of reliability be demonstrated, and how reliable is this test?

Test Applicability

- How suitable is the test format and features to the context of use?
- How familiar is the actual test format to the examinees?
- Can the format and features of the test be fairly applied in the real testing situation?

Test Relevance

- How relevant is the test to the proposed test population and/or to the test item domain?
- How closely does the proposed test population/content resemble the developmental sample?

Test Replicability

- How easy is it to produce equivalent or equated forms of the test?

Test Interpretability

- How easy is it to score the test, report the test scores and interpret them?
- Does it require a great deal of training?

Test Economy

- What does it cost to procure, administer and score the test?

Test Availability

- Is the test readily available?

Test Acceptability

- Is the test societally and institutionally acceptable?
- Is it acceptable in the eyes of teachers, parents, administrators?

Adapted from Grant Henning, *A Guide to Language Testing*, Newbury House, 1987.

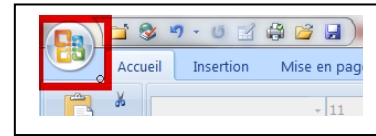
(Source: *ALTE Materials for the Guidance of Test Item Writers*)

Appendix 4: Assessing Texts Using Technology

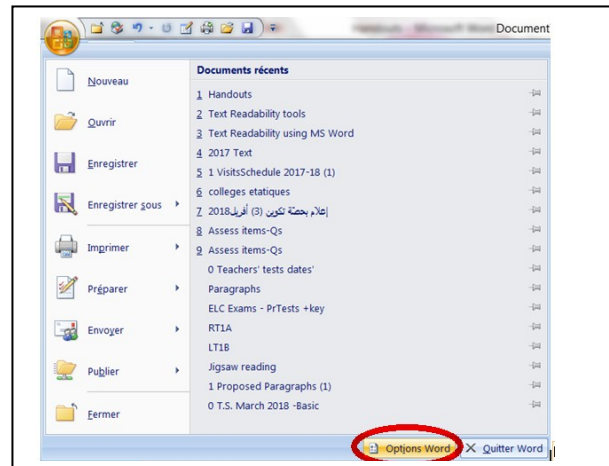
a. Assessing Text Readability Using MS Word

1. Click on “Office” button at the top left-hand corner of the screen.

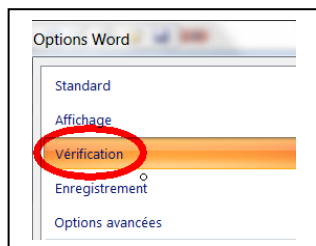
Cliquez sur le bouton Office.



2. Click on “Options...”. *Cliquez sur Options Word.*



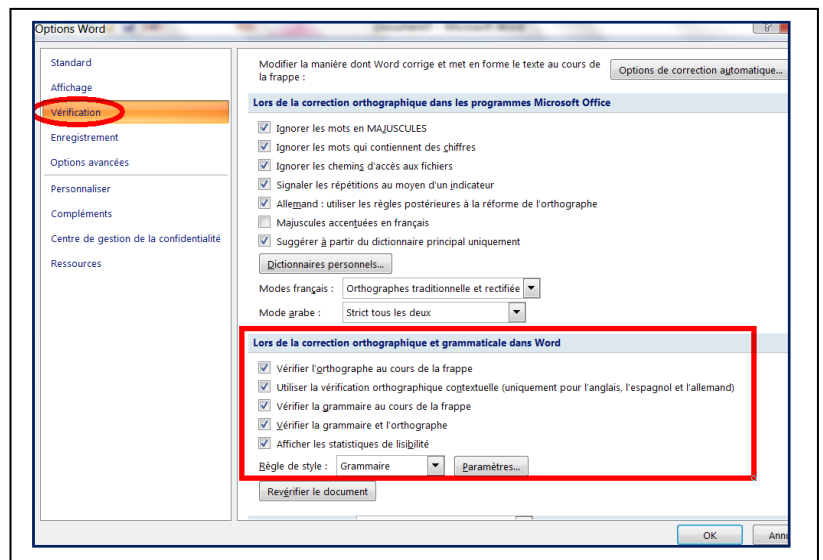
3. Click on Revision / “Vérification”.



4. Toggle to the “Spelling and Grammar” tab.

Sous “Lors de la correction orthographique et grammaticale...”, activez toutes les cases.

Now, your settings look like these:



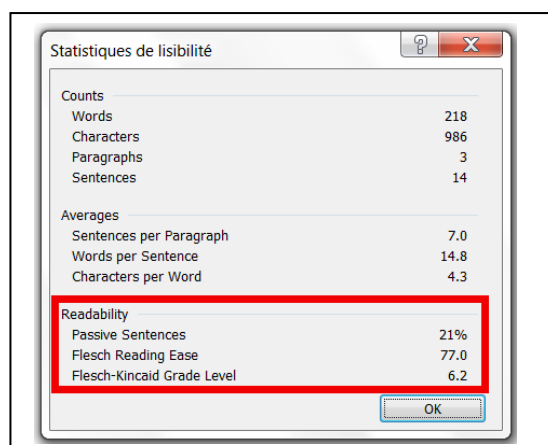
With the “Show readability statistics” option checked, you will get a report whenever you go through a spell check. To run a spell check, click on “Tools” and choose “Spelling and Grammar...”.

Now copy the text you wish to check (only text).

- Open a new Word doc.
- Paste text.
- Click on “Révision”.
- Click on “ABC ✓ Grammaire et orthographe”.

E. Once revision is finished, you will get a report on your text readability.

Here's is an image of what this report will look like:



Flesch Reading Ease Score:

Rates text on a 100-point scale.

The higher the score, the easier it is to understand the document. A higher score indicates easier reading; low scores indicate text that is complicated to understand.

Scores between 60 and 80 should generally be understood by 12 to 15 year olds.

As a rule of thumb:

- Scores between 90.0–100.0 are considered easily understandable by an average 5th grader.
- Scores between 60.0–70.0 are considered easily understood by 8th and 9th graders.
- Scores between 0.0–30.0 are considered easily understood by college graduates.

The following table is also helpful to assess the ease of readability in a document:

- 90-100: Very Easy • 80-89: Easy • 70-79: Fairly Easy • 60-69: Standard • 50-59: Fairly Difficult
- 30-49: Difficult • 0-29: Very Confusing

Score	School level	Notes
100.00-90.00	5 th grade	Very easy to read. Easily understood by an average 11-year-old student.
90.0–80.0	6 th grade	Easy to read. Conversational English for consumers.
80.0–70.0	7 th grade	Fairly easy to read.
70.0–60.0	8 th & 9 th grade	Plain English. Easily understood by 13- to 15-year-old students.
60.0–50.0	10 th to 12 th grade	Fairly difficult to read.
50.0–30.0	College	Difficult to read.
30.0–0.0	College graduate	Very difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates.

→ For suitable texts for younger Tunisian learners, what score would you aim for?

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level:

Rates text on a U.S. school grade level; this indicates that the average student in that grade level can read the text. The result is a rough measure of how many years of schooling it would take someone to understand the content. The lower the number, the more understandable the content will be to your students.

For example,

-A score of 8.0 means that an 8th grader can understand the document.

-An average grade level of 7 means that it should be easily understood by 12 to 13 year olds.

→ For suitable texts for younger Tunisian learners, what score would you aim for?

b. Assessing Text Vocabulary Using Web Tools/Websites

▷ **Oxford 2000/3000 Profiler:**

http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/oxford_3000_profiler.

(According to this tool, if 100% of the words in the text are in the Oxford 3000, it is at a low intermediate level, if 90-95%, it's upper intermediate and if 70-90%, it's advanced.)

c. Assessing Text Readability Using Web Tools/Websites

(i) **Readability Calculator** (plus 'List of sentences to consider rewriting to improve readability')
+ **Vocabulary Builder + New Words English Dictionary**

▷ https://www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve.jsp

▷ https://www.online-utility.org/english/vocabulary_builder.jsp

▷ https://www.online-utility.org/english/explain_all_words.jsp

(ii) **Text Inspector:** <http://www.englishprofile.org/wordlists/text-inspector>

(iii) Others

▷ <http://www.readabilityformulas.com/free-readability-formula-tests.php>

▷ <https://la-tools.lexile.com/free-analyze/>

▷ <http://www.lex tutor.ca/vp/>

▷ <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation>

▷ <https://readability-score.com/>

▷ <http://cohmetrix.memphis.edu/cohmetrixpr/index.html>

▷ <https://readable.io/text/>

▷ <https://www.webpagefx.com/tools/read-able/>

▷ <http://www.analyzemywriting.com/>

▷ <https://datayze.com/readability-analyzer.php>

Appendix 5

Themes and topics for Basic Education (Years 7, 8, and 9)

FAMILY LIFE sharing family responsibilities – family composition – family relationships – children-parents relationships – pocket money – safety rules – jobs
FREE TIME AND ENTERTAINMENT travel – holidays – leisure activities – pets – hobbies – sports – T.V. – radio – music – reading – (computer) games – cinema – eating out – parties
RELATIONS WITH PEERS clubs activities – invitations – friendship – boys and girls relationships – pen friends – birthdays
CIVILITY voluntary work – associations – children’s rights and duties – tolerance – cooperation – respect for others – fair play
HEALTH keeping fit – hygiene – ailments – nutrition
EDUCATION school life – school rules – exams – teacher-pupil relationship – school activities
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES environmental awareness – pollution – traffic – noise – safety rules – landscapes – rural life – seasons – nature – the weather
SERVICES shopping facilities – using the telephone – hospitals – public transport – internet cafés – post office

Source: *English Programmes* (2006)

A. Year 7 Basic Ed. Topics (as they appear in Student’s Book)

- Module one: family, hobbies, routines
- Module two: socializing (friends, welcome to Tunisia, time for lunch)
- Module three: house, farm (fruits, vegetables, animals), market (clothes, shops...), birthday
- Module four: home safety / accidents, minor ailments, fitness, the weather
- Module five: school, helping others, clean environment

B. Year 8 Basic Ed. Topics (as they appear in Student’s Book)

- Module one: family, travel/trip, places/London
- Module two: education/school, parents and education
- Module three: socializing / party, sporting activities, spare time activities, friends
- Module four: celebrations / Easter holidays, transport, accommodation, travel/trip, shopping
- Module five: social life: relationships, family, friends; the environment: Earth Day, save our planet, pollution; pets

C. Year 9 Basic Ed. Themes and Topics (as they appear in Student’s Book)

- Module one: **Family life** – Family relationships; Sharing family responsibilities; The generation gap; Pocket money; Safety at home
- Module 2: **Education** – School memories; School rules; First day at school; Violence at school; School life
- Module 3: **Health and environment** – Air and land pollution; Smoking and health; Pollution, a threat to our environment; Save the Earth!; Let everyday be an Earth Day
- Module 4: **Services** – At the airport; Internet shopping; Tourism; Transport; Communication
- Module 5: **Entertainment** – Means of entertainment; Eating out; Where shall we go?; Let’s watch a film!; Stars’ pastimes
- Module 6: **Civility** – Voluntary work; Volunteering kids; How to be cooperative; Clubs, associations, and charities; Tolerance and respect

Appendix 6

Combined alphabetic vocabulary list of the 9th Year General Basic Ed. textbook

A 1. accent (M2 L4) 2. achieve (M4 L3) 3. acid (M3 L1) 4. acrobats (M5 L3) 5. across (M6 L2) 6. addicted (M3 L2) 7. addiction (M1 L4) 8. afford (M1 L1) 9. agree (M1 L3) 10. aisle (M4 L1) 11. amount (M4 L3) 12. argue (M1 L3) 13. available (M4 L4) 14. awake, v (M2 L2) 15. award, n (M5 L5)	41. cook, v (M1 L2) 42. cool, adj (M2 L2) 43. creature (M3 L4/M5 L4) 44. cruel (M6 L1) 45. crunchy (M3 L5) 46. customs (M4 L1)	81. figure out (M6 L3) 82. first-hand (M6 L4) 83. fish tank (M5 L4) 84. flavour (M5 L3) 85. flight (M4 L1) 86. foreign (M6 L2) 87. forget (M2 L3) 88. frequent, adj. (M4 L4) 89. fumes (M3 L1) 90. fun (M2 L3)
B 16. barbecued (M5 L2) 17. believe (M2 L4) 18. belt (M4 L1) 19. benefit (M4 L2) 20. bin (M3 L5) 21. bite, v (M1 L5) 22. boarding pass (M4 L1) 23. boom, n (M4 L3) 24. break (rules), v (M1 L3) 25. bring up (M1 L2)	D 47. damage, v (M3 L2) 48. demanding (M1 L2) 49. diet (M3 L4/M5 L2) 50. disabled (M6 L1) 51. disapprove of (M3 L2) 52. disc-based (M5 L1) 53. discharge, n (M3 L3) 54. divorce (M1 L1) 55. dog-headed (M1 L3) 56. dolby system (M5 L1) 57. donate (M6 L1) 58. dream, v (M2 L2) 59. dressing (M5 L2) 60. driveway (M6 L4) 61. dump, v (M3 L2)	G 91. garlic (M5 L2) 92. get on (M2 L5) 93. get started (M6 L2) 94. giant, adj. (M5 L1) 95. give a hand (M4 L4/M6 L1) 96. give up (M3 L2) 97. glues (M3 L1) 98. grade, n (M2 L1)
C 26. campaign, n (M3 L5) 27. carry out (M6 L3) 28. chained (M1 L5) 29. charge, n (M5 L2) 30. chat, n (M4 L2) 31. chores (M6 L1) 32. close, adj (M1 L2) 33. coke (M5 L2) 34. come across (M5 L4) 35. come forward (M6 L2) 36. come round (M4 L5) 37. comfort, n (M4 L3) 38. conflicts (M6 L5) 39. contaminated (M3 L2) 40. convenient (M4 L4)	E 62. earthquake (M2 L2) 63. easy-going (M1 L1) 64. e-books (M5 L1) 65. embarrassed (M1 L3) 66. enquiry (M4 L4) 67. erase (M2 L1) 68. establish (M6 L2) 69. exchange, v (M4 L2) 70. exciting (M1 L2) 71. exotics (M5 L3) 72. expect (M2 L5) 73. expenses (M2 L5) 74. experience, v (M4 L3) 75. extras (M1 L4)	H 99. hacker (M4 L2) 100. hard time (M6 L3) 101. hard-earned (M1 L4) 102. harmful (M3 L2) 103. hazard (M1 L5) 104. homeless (M6 L1/L4) 105. huge (M4 L2) 106. hunter (M3 L4)
	F 76. fall, v (M2 L2) 77. fasten (M4 L1) 78. fatty (M3 L5) 79. feed, v (M1 L2) 80. fighting (M1 L1)	I 107. immigrants (M6 L5) 108. impact, n (M3 L3) 109. income (M6 L4) 110. indeed (M2 L5) 111. infected (M1 L5) 112. inflammable (M3 L1) 113. inhale (M3 L3) 114. instead (M2 L1) 115. interrupt (M5 L1) 116. involve (M6 L2) 117. isolation (M1 L5) J 118. jet (M3 L4)

119. join (M4 L5/M6 L2)	157. preparatory (M2 L1)	199. sound, v (M5 L5)
L	158. pretend (M2 L3)	200. species (M3 L5)
120. lack of (M6 L1)	159. prevent (M3 L4)	201. spill, v (M3 L3)
121. landfill (M3 L3)	160. progress, n (M4 L3)	202. stair lift (M6 L4)
122. legumes (M3 L5)	161. prohibited (M3 L2)	203. stand by, n (M6 L1)
123. logging (M3 L4)	162. proud (M2 L1)	204. starter (M5 L2)
124. look after (M1 L2)	163. purchase, v (M1 L4)	205. stationeries (M1 L4)
125. look forward to (M4 L5)	R	206. sugary (M3 L5)
126. loud (M2 L2)	164. railway (M4 L1)	207. supervise (M1 L5)
127. lyrics (M5 L5)	165. rash (M3 L1)	208. supportive (M1 L1)
M	166. realise (M2 L5)	209. survive, v (M6 L1)
128. mad (M2 L4)	167. reception desk (M4 L5)	T
129. magic (M1 L1)	168. reconciliation (M6 L5)	210. take away (M5 L4)
130. make up one's mind (M5 L2)	169. recycling (M3 L5)	211. take off (M4 L1)
131. mark, n (M2 L1)	170. refugees (M6 L5)	212. take over, v (M5 L1)
132. means (M4 L2)	171. regret, n (M3 L4)	213. take part in (M6 L1)
133. meet (M2 L3)	172. release, v (M3 L1)	214. taunt, v (M2 L4)
134. membership (M6 L2)	173. rent, v (M2 L5)	215. test, n (M2 L1)
135. memory (M2 L1)	174. rides (M5 L3)	216. threat, n (M3 L3)
136. miserable (M1 L1)	175. rock, v (M1 L2)	217. throughout (M4 L4)
137. mission (M6 L4)	176. role (M1 L2)	218. tortured (M6 L5)
138. move, v (M2 L4)	177. ruin, v (M3 L3)	219. true (M1 L1)
N	178. run away (M5 L4)	220. trust, n (M6 L3)
139. needy (M6 L1)	S	U
140. notice, v (M2 L1)	179. safe (M3 L4)	221. unless (M2 L2)
O	180. salty (M3 L5)	222. used to, v (M2 L4)
141. occur (M1 L5)	181. savings (M1 L4)	V
142. offender (M3 L4)	182. seat, n (M4 L1)	223. vegetarian (M5 L2)
143. on-line (M4 L2)	183. secure, adj. (M4 L2)	volunteer, n (M6 L1)
144. opportunity (M6 L4)	184. seller (M4 L5)	W
145. order, v (M4 L2)	185. send (M2 L5)	224. walk-in cinema (M5 L1)
146. organic (M3 L5)	186. sensitive (M2 L5)	225. walking stick (M6 L4)
147. orphanage (M1 L1)	187. service (M4 L1)	226. waste, n (M3 L3)
148. overspending (M1 L4)	188. severe (M1 L1)	227. water slides (M5 L3)
149. owner (M1 L5)	189. shake hands (M2 L3)	228. website (M4 L2)
150. ozone layer (M3 L1)	190. share (M6 L3)	229. wild (M5 L3)
P	191. shark (M5 L4)	230. windsurf (M5 L3)
151. participate (M2 L4)	192. shovel (M6 L4)	231. wisdom (M1 L1)
152. particles (M3 L3)	193. single, n (M5 L5)	Y
153. peacemaker (M6 L5)	194. skateboarding (M5 L5)	232. yacht (M5 L5)
154. peers (M6 L3)	195. skin (M3 L1)	
155. perform (M6 L3)	196. smog (M3 L1)	
156. pesticides (M3 L2)	197. sneak out (M1 L3)	
	198. solvents (M3 L1)	

Appendix 7

Themes and topics for Secondary Education

1. Themes and topics for Years 1 and 2 Secondary Ed.

- **FAMILY LIFE AND RELATIONSHIPS**
family composition – boys and girls – feelings – love – cooperation – harassment – respect for others – altruism – solidarity – honesty
- **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**
computers – Internet – mobile phones – multimedia – inventions – genetic engineering – communications technologies – medicine – research – health
- **SOCIAL PROBLEMS**
violence – youth problems – discrimination – overpopulation – child labour – famine – malnutrition – poverty – unemployment
- **COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS**
correspondence – e-mail – chatrooms – club membership – friendship – penfriends
- **SOCIAL LIFE**
travel – holidays – leisure activities – entertainment – facilities – hobbies – eating out – D.I.Y. – recipes – consumerism – computer games – sports
- **EDUCATION**
why study – why learn English – school life – exams – degrees – qualifications – school and family – virtual schools – distance learning – clubs
- **PROFESSIONAL LIFE**
employment – jobs – careers – promotion – success – training – hard work
- **ATTITUDES AND VALUES**
civism – voluntary work – fair play – tolerance – standards of conduct – democracy – appropriate behaviour
- **RIGHTS AND DUTIES**
human rights – children's rights – women's rights – equality – citizenship – civil rights – law and order – justice
- **ECOLOGY**
quality of life – landscapes – seasons – environmental issues
- **MEDIA AND ARTS**
arts – drama – shows – concerts – cinema – music – newspapers – TV – videos – DVDs – libraries

Source: *English Programmes* (2005)

A. Themes/Topics for Y1 Secondary Ed. (as they appear in Student's Book)

Refer to Teacher's Book, pp14—16

1. Family and friends
2. Mysteries
3. Education and social life
4. Feelings
5. Health
6. Social relations
7. Information and computer technologies
8. House and Home
9. Employment
10. The Environment
11. Social problems and attitudes

(Note: Lessons 1–6 are meant for revision; refer to Teacher's Book, p4.)

B. Themes and topics for Y2 Secondary Ed. (as they appear in Student's Book)

- Theme 1: Family life (L1: The image of who I am; L2: The stepmom)
- Theme 2: Communicating with others (L3: Friendship; L4: Bridge over Troubled Water – Friendship; L5: The e-mailer vs. the texter)
- Theme 3: Social life (L6: Travel is fun; L7: An Interview with a footballer)
- Theme 4: Social problems (L9: Violence; L10: Child labour; L11: Life without parents)
- Theme 5: Attitudes and values (L12: Money and evil; L13: Songs of Freedom; L14: Why I had to leave my job – ((dis)honesty)
- Theme 6: Rights and duties (L15: Human rights; L16: Equality offers prosperity)
- Theme 7: Education (L18: School uniforms; L19: Coping with exams – stress)
- Theme 8: Professional life (L20: I had no choice – working mothers; L21: What's your dream job? L22: A success story – physically impaired teacher)
- Theme 9: Media & arts (L23: The importance of libraries; L24: Death of the single - music)
- Theme 10: Science & technology (L25: Internet addiction; L26: What will man be like?)
- Theme 11: Ecology (L27: Our World, our Environment – pollution; L28: Water Scarcity)

➤ The list above shows the topic areas common to all branches. The following topics supplement the common core programme for the **Economics & Services** branch:

Business: Advertising Offices Office work Businesses Business correspondence Purchasing power Accountancy	Employment: Industrial relations Employment and training Parental leave Job hunting
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2. Themes and topics for Y3 Secondary Ed. (Common to all branches)

- Module 1: **FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**
Family roles; generation gap
- Module 2: **VALUES AND ATTITUDES / PHILANTHROPY**
Charity; altruism; activism; self-sacrifice; volunteerism; solidarity; generosity
- Module 3: **ENTERTAINMENT**
Leisure activities; history and geography of places visited; facilities; travel; holidays; eating out
- Module 4: **SCIENCE AND INVENTIONS / TECHNOLOGY**
Inventions; experiments; medical research & progress; computers; TV; mobile phones; genetic engineering; new technology & its impact on our daily life
- Module 5: **EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL LIFE**
Distance learning; electronic learning; special education; dream school; exams; school life; school violence
- Module 6: **ECOLOGY**
Environment issues; natural disasters

3. Themes and topics for Y4 Secondary Ed. (Common to all branches)

Unit 1: ARTS SHOWS AND HOLIDAYING

- Holidays; travel; package tour
- Summer outings

- Holidays: active & lazy; then & now
- A postcard: a vacation place
- Complaining about holidays
- Space travel; space tourism
- Art shows; music; cinema; drama
- Walking tour
- Festivals

Unit 2: EDUCATION MATTERS

- Virtual schools
- Online learning
- Comparing educational systems
- Age or ability: mixed-age classes
- Lifelong learning
- Feeding poor children to boost schooling
- Education for all: children out of school

Unit 3: CREATIVE, INVENTIVE MINDS

- Humans vs. robots
- The Internet & the Web
- Technology: a blessing or a curse
- Video/Computer games
- Awards; (Nobel) Prize winners
- Women choose to opt out: gender gap, gender discrimination; glass ceiling
- Brain drain vs. brain gain; immigration issues
- Scientists' achievements; inventions

Unit 4: LIFE ISSUES

- Life concerns: jobs, success in life, stress, healthy eating, quitting smoking
- Attitudes: positive behaviour & values; materialism, the rich & the poor, cheating in exams
- Ecodriving: saving energy, ecodriving tips
- Environmental issues: pollution, endangered animals, global warming, extreme weather, natural disasters
- Town & country: urban exodus, rural exodus, city life vs. country life
- Careers & professional life: staff management, employer-employee relationships, hard work, unemployment, pay, choosing jobs, job ads, letters of application

Appendix 8

Combined alphabetic vocabulary list of the 4th Year Secondary Ed. textbook

A 1. accurate (U2 L8) 2. acronyms (U2 L2) 3. actual (U3 L7) 4. acute (U2 L8) 5. admission (U1 L6) 6. affluent (Arts 8) 7. allowance for, make (U4 L3) 8. anguish (Arts 3) 9. appeal, n (U2 L3) 10. appliances (U4 L5) 11. application (U4 L9) 12. apply for (U4 L9) 13. approach (U4 L7) 14. assess (U2 L6) 15. assets (U4 L8) 16. attachment (U3 L1)	42. constituent (U1 L5) 43. contentious (U3 L6) 44. contest (U1 L6) 45. cosmopolitan (U1 L5) 46. couple of, a (U1 L2) 47. couplet (Arts 5) 48. coward (Arts 5/U4 L2) 49. creativity (U3 L4) 50. credit for doing sth, have the (U3 L7) 51. crippled (U4 L7) 52. crumble (Arts 3) 53. culprit (U4 L8) 54. curriculum vitae (U4 L9) 55. cybertrip (U1 L8)	84. expertise (U3 L6) F 85. face-off (U1 L2) 86. Fahrenheit (U4 L7) 87. faith (U1 L4) 88. faith (U4 L3) 89. FAQ (U3 L1) 90. fate (U1 L4) 91. fire, v (U4 L8) 92. fit in (U4 L2) 93. foes (U4 L3) 94. foothold (U1 L2) 95. founder (U3 L4) 96. frugally (Arts 8)
B 17. badly-off (Arts 8) 18. beg, v (U1 L9) 19. bill (U4 L5) 20. billionaire (U1 L2) 21. biodata (U4 L9) 22. biographer (U2 L9) 23. blessed (Arts 9) 24. bliss (U3 L8) 25. blisters (U4 L2) 26. bloom (Arts 9) 27. book, v (U1 L7) 28. booming (U4 L6) 29. boost, v (U2 L1/L6) 30. border (U1 L5) 31. broke (Arts 8) 32. browser (U3 L1) 33. bullying (U2 L3) 34. bustle, n (U2 L3)	D 56. daffodils (U3 L8) 57. deaf and dumb (U2 L9) 58. deal, n (U1 L2) 59. decade (U4 L6) 60. decline, n (U4 L6) 61. delay, n (U3 L3) 62. deny (U2 L1) 63. depicted (U2 L8) 64. deposit, n (U1 L7) 65. dietician (U4 L1) 66. disappointed (U1 L7) 67. discount (U1 L6/L7) 68. download (U3 L1) 69. dumped (U4 L7)	G 97. gather pace (U3 L6) 98. gaze, v (U3 L8) 99. giant (U3 L3) 100. give way to (U4 L3) 101. glance (U3 L8) 102. global warming (U4 L5) 103. go green (U4 L8) 104. greenhouse effect (U4 L5) 105. grieve (Arts 8)
C 35. calendar, on the (U1 L8) 36. cancelled (U4 L7) 37. casualty (U4 L7) 38. characters (U2 L8) 39. check in (U1 L6) 40. cite (U3 L5) 41. confined (U2 L7)	E 70. ecodriving (U4 L5) 71. efficiently (U4 L5) 72. emerging (U1 L2) 73. emission (U4 L5) 74. emoticon (U3 L1) 75. enable (U3 L7) 76. enrolment (U2 L2) 77. entrepreneur (U3 L4) 78. envision (U3 L3) 79. envy (Arts 5/U4 L2) 80. evil (U1 L9) 81. executives (U4 L8) 82. exhibition (U1 L6) 83. expense of, at the (U3 L5)	H 106. hampered (U4 L7) 107. heading to (U1 L8) 108. hire (Arts 8) 109. hold s.o. accountable for (U3 L5) 110. honouring (U3 L4) 111. host (U3 L8) 112. hypertext (U3 L1) I 113. ICT (U3 L1) 114. illuminate (U4 L5) 115. immortality (U1 L4) 116. impediments (U2 L9) 117. impostor (U4 L3) 118. impoverished (Arts 8) 119. incentive (U3 L6) 120. initial (U3 L3) 121. issue, n (U4 L1)

J 122. jail (Arts 3)	163. persuade (Arts 5/U4 L2) 164. plummet (U4 L7)	207. staff (U4 L8) 208. stage (v & n) (U1 L8)
K 123. keen on (U4 L8)	165. portal (U3 L1)	209. standby (U4 L5)
L 124. landscape (U2 L8) 125. lie (U3 L8) 126. life expectancy (U4 L6) 127. life-and-death (U4 L1) 128. lifeless (U4 L1) 129. lifelike (U4 L1) 130. lifelong (U4 L1) 131. lifestyle (U4 L1) 132. lifetime (U4 L1) 133. lifework (U4 L1) 134. limp (Arts 9) 135. loathe (U4 L3) 136. log on (U2 L3)	166. positions, key (U3 L6) 167. potential (U4 L9) 168. priority (U2 L1) 169. proficient (U4 L9) 170. profound (Arts 5/U4 L2) 171. provide (U2 L1)	210. steam (U4 L1) 211. stranger to sth, be no (U2 L9) 212. stream, n (U2 L6) 213. strike (U4 L8) 214. superb (U1 L7) 215. supply (U3 L6) 216. switch, v (U2 L6)
M 137. magnify (U3 L7) 138. make ends meet (U4 L7) 139. manslaughter (Arts 3) 140. maturity (U2 L7) 141. maybe (U3 L3) 142. memory (U1 L4) 143. merely (U2 L7) 144. misfortune (U2 L9)	Q 172. quatrain (Arts 5) 173. queer (Arts 3)	T 217. tackle, v (U2 L6) 218. texting (U2 L3) 219. the late (1980s) (U3 L7) 220. therefore (U2 L2) 221. threatened (U4 L7) 222. tight of (Arts 8) 223. timeless (U2 L9) 224. trends (U3 L6) 225. triumph, n (U4 L3) 226. twinkle (U3 L8) 227. typhoon (U4 L7)
N 145. netiquette (U3 L1) 146. newscast (U4 L7) 147. numeracy (U2 L6) 148. nutritious (U2 L1)	R 174. race, v (Arts 8) 175. rationally (Arts 3) 176. reach the end of the road (U3 L7) 177. reap the harvest (Arts 8) 178. reckon (U4 L8) 179. recognition (U3 L5) 180. refund, n (U1 L7) 181. release, n (U3 L3) 182. relief (U4 L7) 183. residence (U1 L5) 184. rule, v (U1 L9)	U 228. unfaithfulness (U1 L9) 229. unforgettable (U2 L8) 230. unseasonally (U4 L7) 231. utterly (U4 L8)
O 149. occur (U3 L7) 150. official (U1 L5) 151. oil refinery (U1 L7) 152. opportunity (U3 L6) 153. outlive (U4 L6)	S 185. sacred (Arts 9) 186. sag (U4 L2) 187. scheduled (U1 L7) 188. search engine (U3 L1) 189. search of, in (U3 L6) 190. seek (U4 L9) 191. send for s.o. (U1 L9) 192. shake, v (Arts 5/U4 L2) 193. shamefully (U1 L9) 194. shiver (U4 L7) 195. shortage (U3 L6) 196. significant (U3 L5) 197. smoothly (U4 L5) 198. soles (U4 L2) 199. sonnet (Arts 5) 200. sorrow (U1 L4) 201. soul (U1 L4) 202. spaceport (U1 L2) 203. spamming (U3 L1) 204. sparingly (U4 L5) 205. sparkle (U3 L8) 206. spectacular (U1 L5)	V 232. valiant (Arts 5/U4 L2) 233. valued (U3 L5) 234. venture (U2 L7) 235. venues (U1 L5) 236. via (U3 L3) 237. vibrant (U4 L6) 238. vice (U4 L3) 239. virtue (U4 L3)
P 154. package holiday (U1 L7) 155. package tour (U1 L6) 156. palpable (U2 L8) 157. panic-stricken (Arts 9) 158. patent (U3 L7) 159. path (U3 L5/U4 L9) 160. peak (U4 L6) 161. penurious (Arts 8) 162. per annum (U4 L9)	207. staff (U4 L8) 208. stage (v & n) (U1 L8) 209. standby (U4 L5) 210. steam (U4 L1) 211. stranger to sth, be no (U2 L9) 212. stream, n (U2 L6) 213. strike (U4 L8) 214. superb (U1 L7) 215. supply (U3 L6) 216. switch, v (U2 L6)	W 240. wandering (U3 L8) 241. wear out (Arts 9) 242. wearily (Arts 9) 243. well-to-do (U1 L2) 244. whistle, v (U4 L2) 245. will, n (U3 L4) Y 246. year round (U1 L5)

Appendix 9

How to use 4th Year Secondary Education textbook, *Skills for life* (omitted lessons)

It is recommended that, with all sections, teachers devote 5 sessions to the coverage of activities chosen from the “*Check Year 3 Programme*” and the “*Introductory Unit*” of the textbook or activities of their own make that meet the specific needs of their learners. As for the ordinary lessons, teachers are expected to delete those listed below according to sections.

Lessons not to be covered with the Arts Stream

Unit 1

- L3: Arts Shows, Strings pp52-53
- L7: At the Travel Agency pp68-69

Unit 3

- L2: Technology, a Blessing in Disguise? pp142 – 146
- Arts 6: As You Like It pp186 – 188

Unit 4

- L4: Consumerism pp205 – 210

Lessons not to be covered with the Common Core Streams (3-hour classes)

Unit 1

- L3 Arts Shows, Strings pp52-53
- L7 At the Travel Agency pp68-69
- L9 The Winter’s Tale (part 1) pp77 – 81
- Arts Sessions 1 & 2

Unit 2

- L5 Comparing Educational Systems pp103 – 106
- L8 Reading the Back Cover of a Book pp115 – 117
- Arts Session 3 & 4

Unit 3

- L2 Technology, a Blessing in Disguise? pp142 – 146
- L8 The daffodils pp174 – 179
- Arts Sessions 5 & 6 + Project Work 3

Unit 4

- L4 Consumerism pp205 – 210
- Arts Sessions 8, 9 & 10

Lessons not to be covered with the two-hour classes –Technology and Sports Streams

Unit 1

- L3 Arts Shows, Strings pp52-53
- L7 At the Travel Agency pp68-69
- L8 Put a Little Drama in your Travel pp74 – 76
- L9 The Winter's Tale (part 1) pp77 – 81
- Arts Sessions 1 & 2

Unit 2

- L5 Comparing Educational Systems pp103 – 106
- L8 Reading the Back Cover of a Book pp115 – 117
- Project Work 2 Expository Texts p123
- Arts Session 3 & 4

Unit 3

- L2 Technology, a Blessing in Disguise? pp142 – 146
- L5 Women Choose to Opt out pp156 – 160
- L8 The daffodils pp174 – 179
- Arts Sessions 5 & 6 + Project Work 3

Unit 4

- L2 Attitudes pp198 – 201
- L3 If..., a poem by Kipling pp202 – 204
- L4 Consumerism pp205 – 210
- L7 A Newscast pp222 – 226
- L8 Staff Management pp227 – 231
- Arts Sessions 8, 9 & 10

Appendix 10

ONGOING EVALUATION IN BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

I- Ongoing Evaluation in Basic Education

A. Ongoing Evaluation in General Basic Education

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA
Ministry of Education

(September, 2018)

ONGOING EVALUATION IN BASIC EDUCATION

NUMBER OF TESTS, DURATION, COMPONENTS AND SCALE

Each **term**, learners are tested in compliance with the following specifications:

7 TH FORM						8 TH & 9 TH FORMS		
FIRST TERM			SECOND & THIRD TERMS			EACH TERM		
speaking	at least 1	10	speaking	at least 1	10	speaking	at least 1	10
project work	at least 1	10	project work	at least 1	10	project work	at least 1	10
a one-hour	language	14	a one-hour	language	14	a one-hour	listening	08
mid-term test	spelling	06	mid-term test	listening	06	mid-term test	language	12
a one-hour	language	15	a one-hour	reading	05	a one-hour	reading	06
end-of-term			end-of-term	language	10	end-of-term	language	08
test	writing	05	test	writing	05	test	writing	06

COMPONENTS SPECIFICATIONS

1. The oral component

a) **The speaking test:** test takers are tested orally on the acquisitions of the previous lesson at least once a term and the test will be communicative in nature. Their performance is marked out of ten.

b) **Project work:** test takers are allotted a mark out of ten for the outcome of the project work they undertake and /or the process followed.

The final end-of-term mark is the sum of the two marks specified above.

2. The spelling component

It consists of two exercises requiring the test taker to:

a) Write the missing words in a text read by the teacher.

b) Write figures or numbers in letters.

3. The language component

It consists of 3 or 4 exercises testing the assimilation of lexical and grammatical acquisitions in an essentially integrated manner and requiring the test taker to:

- a) Fill in a gapped paragraph with **(5 or 6 items)** words provided in a box including two distractors.
- b) Tick / Underline / Circle the right options in a gapped paragraph with three options per item. **(5 or 6 items)**
- c) Provide the right tense or form of bracketed words.
- d) Match sentence parts to get a coherent paragraph. (with 8th and 9th formers)
- e) Match utterances in a short dialogue with the right functions provided in a list **including one extra option.**
- f) Tick / Circle / Underline the right option in multiple choice questions relative to the function of each utterance underlined in a short dialogue.
- g) Match sentence parts to get correct sentences. (Only with 7th formers)
- h) Reorder 3 or 4 sentence parts to get correct sentences. (Only with 7th formers)

With all three levels, the test taker gets half a mark for each correct answer.

4. The reading comprehension component

It consists of one linear text, a linear text and a non-linear one, or two complementary texts totalling 100, 150 and 200 words respectively for the 7th, 8th and 9th forms. The linear texts are authentic or semi-authentic and extracted from various sources: novels, magazines, newspapers, brochures... Non-linear texts can be charts, notes, tickets, menus, notices, timetables... The linguistic as well as the semantic content of these texts should be appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the text and its organization, the test taker is required to:

- a) Match paragraphs with the appropriate titles, main ideas or visuals.
- b) Provide justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text or worded by the test taker.
- c) Write short answers to WH questions.
- d) Answer one or two reference questions.
- e) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart. **(2 items)**
- f) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with information retrieved from the text, the information being a word, a phrase, a clause, a date, a figure... **(2 items)**
- g) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with one's own words or phrases when the information is not explicitly stated in the text.
- h) Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the title or main idea of a text or the meaning of a given word.
- i) Provide equivalents of new words or expressions underlined in the text.
- j) Identify the topic sentence of a text or a paragraph when that is appropriate.
- k) Tick / Underline / Circle the right option in multiple choice questions about the function of a given statement.
- l) Pick out a statement expressing a given function.
- m) Identify true or false statements. **(2 items)**
- n) Express reaction to the content of the text or the characters or people involved

The test taker gets one mark for each correct answer.

5. The listening comprehension component

It consists of a monologue, a dialogue, a conversation, a speech or a presentation totalling 100, 150 and 200 words respectively for the 7th, 8th and 9th forms. The linguistic as well as the semantic content of these oral texts should be appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the passage and its organization, test takers are required to:

- a) Identify the speaker(s).
- b) Identify the relationship between the speakers.
- c) Give justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text or worded by the test taker.
- d) Write short answers to WH questions, including inference questions.
- e) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart.
- f) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with one's own words or phrases.
- g) Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the main idea of the text or specific words or ideas in the text.
- h) Infer attitudes and moods.
- i) Express reaction to the content of the text or the characters or people involved.

The test taker is allotted one mark for each correct answer to the above specified comprehension questions.

In addition to the comprehension questions, the test taker is required to

- a) Tick the right option in multiple choice questions about the **function** of a given statement.
- b) Find out the function of a given statement.

One mark is allotted to the appropriate answer to either of the above questions.

Pronunciation is tested through questions requiring the test taker to:

- a) Circle the word(s) he / she hears (minimal pairs)
- b) Listen to a section of the text and identify words having (a) specified sound(s) or stress

The test taker is allotted half a mark for each correct answer to the above specified pronunciation questions.

Spelling is tested through a question requiring the test taker to:

- Complete a gapped section of the text as s/he listens to the recorded material.

Half a mark is allotted to each correct answer.

The use of recorded material is recommended.

6. The writing component

Ability to write is tested through **one single** assignment requiring the test taker to

- a) Write a narrative text.
- b) Write an argumentative text.
- c) Write a descriptive text.
- d) Write instructions or directions.
- e) Write an internet post, an e-mail, a short article or a letter.

-The suggested topic should interest and motivate the test takers.

- In the instructions, the audience, the purpose, the context and the text length and type (genre) should be specified.

The following evaluation criteria should be indicated on the test paper:

- a) Adherence to task and content adequacy
- b) Lexical appropriacy and grammar accuracy
- c) Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, capitalization and spelling)

► Examination Profile of 9th Year Diploma Examination

République Tunisienne

Ministère de L'Education

Direction des Programmes et de La Formation

Diplôme de Fin des Etudes de L'Enseignement de Base General

Discipline : **Anglais**

Consistance de l'épreuve

Durée : 1 heure

Coefficient : 1

I/ The reading comprehension component (6 marks)

It consists of one linear text, a linear text and a non-linear one, or two complementary texts totalling 200 words (150 words for Year 9 Technical). The linear texts are authentic or semi-authentic and extracted from various sources: novels, magazines, newspapers, brochures... Non-linear texts can be charts, notes, tickets, menus, notices, timetables...etc. The linguistic as well as semantic content of these texts is appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the text(s) and its organization, the learner is required to:

- a) Match paragraphs with the appropriate titles, main ideas or visuals.
- b) Provide justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text or worded by the test taker.
- c) Write short answers to WH questions.
- d) Answer one or two reference questions.
- e) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart. **(2 items)**
- f) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with information retrieved from the text, the information being a word, a phrase, a clause, a date, a figure... **(2 items)**
- g) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with his / her own words or phrases when the information is not explicitly stated in the text.
- h) Select the appropriate alternative in multiple choice questions related to the title or main idea of a text or the meaning of a given word.
- i) Find equivalents or opposites of new words or expressions underlined in the text.
- j) Identify the topic sentence of a text or paragraph when that is appropriate.
- k) Tick / Underline / Circle the right option in multiple choice questions about the function of a given statement.
- l) Pick out a statement expressing a given function.
- m) Identify true or false statement. **(2 items)**
- n) Express reaction to the content of the text or the characters or people involved.

• **The test taker gets a mark for each correct answer.**

II/ The Language component (8 marks)

It consists of 3 exercises testing the assimilation of lexical and grammatical acquisitions in an essentially integrated manner and requiring the test taker to:

- a. Fill in a gapped paragraph with **(5 or 6 items)** words provided in a box including two distracters.
- b. Tick / Underline / Circle the right options in a gapped paragraph with three options per item. **(5 or 6 items)**
- c. Provide the right tense or form of bracketed words.
- d. Match sentence parts to get a coherent paragraph.
- e. Match utterances in a short dialogue with the right functions provided in a list **including one extra item.**
- f. Tick / Circle / Underline the right option in multiple choice questions relative to the function of each utterance underlined in a short dialogue.

- **The test taker gets half a mark for each correct answer.**

III/ The writing component (6 marks)

Ability to write is tested through one single assignment requiring the learner to

- a. write a narrative text.
- b. write an argumentative text.
- c. write a descriptive text.
- d. write instructions or directions.
- e. write an internet post, an e-mail, a short article or a letter.

The suggested topics should interest the test takers and specify the audience, the purpose and the context.

- **The following evaluation criteria should be indicated on the test paper:**
 - Adherence to task and content adequacy
 - Lexical appropriacy and grammar accuracy
 - Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, capitalization and spelling)

B. Ongoing Evaluation in Technical Basic Education Schools

Number of Tests, Duration, Components and Scale

Each **term**, learners are tested in compliance with the following specifications:

8 th and 9 th forms		
EACH TERM		
Speaking	At least 1	10
Project work	At least 1	10
A one-hour mid-term test	Listening	08
	Language	12
A one-hour end-of- term test	Reading	08
	Language	07
	Writing	05

● Components Specifications

1. The speaking component

a) **The speaking test:** Learners are tested orally on the acquisitions of a previous lesson at least twice a semester and the test will be communicative in nature. Their performance is marked out of ten.

b) **Project work:** Test takers are allotted a mark out ten for the process followed and the outcome of the project work they undertake. The final end-of-term mark is the sum of the 2 marks specified above.

2. The listening comprehension component

The passage consists of a monologue, a dialogue, a conversation, a speech or a presentation totalling 100 and 150 words respectively for the 8th and 9th forms. The linguistic as well as the semantic content of these oral texts should be appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the passage and its organization, the test taker is required to:

- Identify the speaker(s).
- Identify the relationship between the speakers.
- Give answers to Yes / No questions.
- Write short answers to WH questions.
- Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart.
- Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the main idea of the passage or specific words or ideas in the passage.
- Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the function of a given statement.
- Answer questions requiring **non-verbal** responses (Listen and draw, listen and colour...).

The test taker is allotted one mark for each correct answer to the above specified comprehension questions.

In addition to the comprehension questions, the test taker is required to

- Tick the right option in multiple choice questions about the **function** of a given statement.
- Find out the function of a given statement.

One mark is allotted to the appropriate answer to either of the above questions.

Pronunciation is tested through questions requiring the test taker to:

- Circle the word(s) he / she hears (minimal pairs)
- Listen to a section of the passage and identify words having (a) specified sound(s) or stress

The test taker is allotted half a mark for each correct answer to the above specified pronunciation questions.

Spelling is tested through a question requiring the test taker to:

- Complete a gapped section of the text as s/he listens to the recorded material.

Half a mark is allotted to each correct answer.

The use of recorded material is recommended.

3. The reading comprehension component

It consists of one linear text, a linear text and a non-linear one, or two complementary texts totalling 100 and 150 words respectively for the 8th and 9th forms. The linear texts are authentic or semi-authentic and extracted from various sources: short stories, magazines, newspapers, brochures... Non-linear texts can be charts, notes, tickets, menus, notices, and timetables...The linguistic as well as the semantic content of these texts should be appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the text(s) and its organization, the test taker is required to:

- a) Match paragraphs with the appropriate titles, main ideas or visuals.
- b) Provide justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text.
- c) Write short answers to WH questions.
- d) Answer one or two reference questions.
- e) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart. **(2 items)**
- f) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with information retrieved from the text, the information being a word, a phrase, a clause, a date, a figure... **(2 items)**
- g) Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the title or main idea of a text or the meaning of a given word.
- h) Provide equivalents of new words or expressions underlined in the text.
- i) Tick / Underline / Circle the right option in multiple choice questions about the function of a given statement.
- j) Pick out a statement expressing a given function.
- k) Indicate whether statements are true or false. **(2 items)**

The test taker gets one mark for each correct answer.

4. The language component

It consists of 2 or 3 exercises testing the assimilation of lexical and grammatical acquisitions in an essentially integrated manner and requiring the test taker to:

- a) Fill in a gapped paragraph with **(5 or 6)** words provided in a box including two distractors.
- b) Tick / Underline / Circle the right options in a gapped paragraph with three options per item.
- c) Complete a gapped dialogue with the right utterances from a box **including 2 extra utterances.**
- d) Provide the right tense or form of bracketed words.
- e) Match sentence parts to get correct sentences.
- f) Reorder **3 or 4** sentence parts to get a correct sentence.
- g) Match utterances in a short dialogue with the right functions provided in a list **including one extra option.**

The test taker gets half a mark for each correct answer.

5. The writing component

Ability to write is tested through **one** single assignment requiring the test taker to:

- a) Write a narrative text.
- b) Write a descriptive text
- c) Write instructions or directions.
- d) Write an internet post, an e-mail, a short article or a letter.

-The suggested topic should interest and motivate the test takers.

-In the instructions, the audience, purpose, context and text type (genre) should be specified.

-The following evaluation criteria should be indicated on the test paper:

- a) **Adherence to task and content adequacy**
- b) **Lexical appropriacy and grammar accuracy**
- c) **Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, capitalization and spelling)**

► Examination Profile of 9th Year Diploma Examination 2

République Tunisienne

Ministère de L'Education

Direction des Programmes et de La Formation

Diplôme de Fin des Etudes de L'Enseignement de Base Technique

Discipline : **Anglais**

Consistance de l'épreuve

Durée: 1 heure

Coefficient: 1

I/ The reading comprehension component (8 marks)

It consists of one linear text, a linear text and a non-linear one, or two complementary texts totalling 150 words. The linear texts are authentic or semi-authentic and extracted from various sources: short stories, magazines, newspapers, brochures... Non-linear texts can be charts, notes, tickets, menus, notices, and timetables...The linguistic as well as semantic content of these texts is appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the text(s) and its organization, the test taker is required to:

- a) Match paragraphs with the appropriate titles, main ideas or visuals.
- b) Provide justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text.
- c) Write short answers to WH questions.
- d) Answer one or two reference questions.
- e) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart. **(2 items)**
- f) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with information retrieved from the text, the information being a word, a phrase, a clause, a date, a figure... **(2 items)**
- g) Select the appropriate alternative in multiple choice questions related to the title or main idea of a text or the meaning of a given word.
- h) Find equivalents or opposites of new words or expressions underlined in the text.
- i) Tick / Underline / Circle the right option in multiple choice questions about the function of a given statement.
- j) Pick out a statement expressing a given function.
- k) Indicate whether statements are true or false. **(2 items)**

The test taker gets a mark for each correct answer.

II/ The Language component (7 marks)

It consists of 2 to 3 exercises testing the assimilation of lexical and grammatical acquisitions in an essentially integrated manner and requiring the test taker to:

- a) Fill in a gapped paragraph with **(5 or 6)** words provided in a box including two distractors.
- b) Tick / Underline / Circle the right options in a gapped paragraph with three options per item.
- c) Complete a gapped dialogue with the right utterances from a box **including 2 extra utterances.**
- d) Provide the right tense or form of bracketed words.
- e) Match sentence parts to get correct sentences.
- f) Reorder **3 or 4** sentence parts to get a correct sentence.
- g) Match utterances in a short dialogue with the right functions provided in a list **including one extra item.**

The test taker gets half a mark for each correct answer.

III/ The writing component (5 marks)

Ability to write is tested through **one** single assignment requiring the test taker to:

- a) write a narrative text.
- b) write a descriptive text
- c) write instructions or directions.
- d) write a internet post, an e-mail, a short article or a letter

The suggested topics should interest the test takers and specify the audience, the purpose and the context.

The following evaluation criteria should be indicated on the test paper:

- a) **Adherence to task and content adequacy.**
- b) **Lexical appropriacy and grammar accuracy**
- c) **Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, capitalization and spelling).**

II. Ongoing Evaluation in Secondary Education

C. Ongoing Evaluation in Secondary Education – Common Core and Arts

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

Ministry of Education

(September, 2018)

ONGOING EVALUATION IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

NUMBER OF TESTS, THEIR COMPOSITION AND THE SCALE

Each term, learners are tested in compliance with the following specifications:

1 st term / 2 nd term / 3 rd term						
	1 st & 2 nd YEARS		3 rd YEAR C. CORE		3 rd YEAR ARTS	
Speaking	At least 1	10	At least 1	10	At least 1	10
Project work	At least 1	10	At least 1	10	At least 1	10
a one-hour mid-term-test	Language	12	Language	12	Language	12
	Listening	08	Listening	08	Listening	08
a two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	15	Reading	12	Reading	15
	Language	10	Language	06	Language	10
	Writing	15	Writing	12	Writing	15

4th YEAR C.CORE : (Sciences expérimentales / Economie & Gestion / Mathématiques / Sciences de l'informatique)

1 st term			2 nd term			3 rd term		
Speaking test	At least 1	10	Speaking test	at least 1	10	Speaking test	At least 1	10
Project work	At least 1	10	Project work	at least 1	10	Project work	At least 1	10
A one-hour mid-term test	Listening	08	A one-hour mid-term test	Listening	08	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
	Language	12		Language	12	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	12	A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	12	A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	12
	Language	06		Language	06		Language	06
	Writing	12		Writing	12		Writing	12

4 th YEAR ARTS								
1 st term			2 nd term			3 rd term		
Speaking test	At least 1	10	Speaking test	at least 1	10	Speaking test	At least 1	10
Project work	At least 1	10	Project work	at least 1	10	Project work	At least 1	10
A one-hour mid-term test	Listening	08	A one-hour mid-term test	Listening	08	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
	Language	12		Language	12	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	15	A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	15	A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	15
	Language	10		Language	10		Language	10
	Writing	15		Writing	15		Writing	15

COMPONENTS / SPECIFICATIONS

1. The oral component:

a) Speaking Test (10 marks):

Each pupil will be tested at least once a term on the oral skills mentioned in the official programme and the test will evaluate his/her ability to express himself/herself correctly, clearly, audibly and in a way appropriate to the communicative situation. The test can be a dialogue, an interview, a report on something read, a summary of an oral or written text, an interpretation of pictures or tables or a reconstruction of a story. The test taker's performance is marked out of **ten**.

b) Project Work (10 marks):

The pupil having contributed to the realization of a project (individually or in a group) will be graded on the strategy and / or the process followed for the realization of the project as well as the content. The mark allotted is out of **ten**.

The end-of-term mark is the sum of the two marks specified above.

2. The language component:

It consists of 2 to 4 exercises testing the assimilation of lexical and grammatical acquisitions in an integrated manner and requiring the test taker to:

- a) Fill in a gapped paragraph with words provided in a box; two extra words are provided in the box.
- b) Fill in a gapped paragraph with reference to 3 options.
- c) Complete a gapped dialogue or paragraph with reference to a list of options including **two extra options**.
- d) Provide the right tense or form of bracketed words.
- e) Match sentence parts to get a paragraph or dialogue.
- f) Express 2 sentences differently as specified in the instructions.

The test taker is allotted half a mark for each correct answer.

3. The listening comprehension component:

It consists of a monologue, a dialogue, a conversation, a speech or a presentation of about 200 words for the 1st and 2nd years as well as the technical section, 250 words for the 3rd and 4th scientific and economics sections and 300 words for the 3rd and 4th arts section. The linguistic as well as the semantic content of these oral texts should be appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the text and its organization, test takers are required to:

- a) Identify the speaker(s).
- b) Identify the relationship between the speakers.
- c) Give justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text or worded by the test taker.
- d) Write short answers to WH questions, including inference questions.
- e) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart.
- f) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with own words or phrases.

- g) Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the main idea of the text or specific words or ideas in the text.
- h) Infer attitudes and moods.
- i) Express reaction to the content of the text or the characters or people involved.

One mark is allotted to each correct answer to the above specified comprehension questions.

In addition to the comprehension questions, the test taker is required to

- a) Identify the **function** corresponding to a given statement with reference to 3 alternatives.
- b) Provide the function of a given statement.

One mark is allotted to the correct answer to either of these questions.

Pronunciation is tested through questions requiring the test taker to:

- a/ Circle the word(s) he/she hears (minimal pairs).
- b/ Listen to a section of the text and identify words having (a) specified sound(s) or stress.

The test taker is allotted half a mark for each correct answer to the above specified pronunciation questions.

Spelling is tested through a question requiring the test taker to:

- Complete a gapped section of the text as s/he listens to the **recorded material**.

Half a mark is allotted to each correct answer.

The use of recorded material is recommended.

4. The reading comprehension component:

It consists of one linear text, a linear text and a non-linear one, or two complementary texts of about 250 words for the 1st and 2nd years as well as the technical section, 300 words for the 3rd and 4th scientific and economics sections and 350 words for the 3rd and 4th arts section. The linear texts are authentic or semi-authentic and extracted from various sources: novels, magazines, newspapers, brochures... Non-linear texts can be charts, notes, tickets, menus, notices, timetables... The linguistic as well as the semantic content of these texts should be appropriate to the targeted level. To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the text and its organization, the test taker is required to:

- a) Match texts or paragraphs with the appropriate titles, subtitles, captions or visuals.
- b) Give justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text or worded by the test taker.
- c) Write short answers to WH questions, including inference questions.
- d) Answer one or two reference questions.
- e) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list or a chart.
- f) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with words or phrases retrieved from the text.
- g) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with own words or phrases.
- h) Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the title or main idea of a text, or specific ideas in the text or the meaning of a given word.
- i) Find antonyms or synonyms of given words or expressions.

- j) Identify the topic sentence of a text or paragraph when that is appropriate.
- k) Identify the function corresponding to a given statement.
- l) Identify the exponent of a given function.
- m) Identify evidence that a given statement is false.
- n) Express reaction to the content of the text or the characters or people involved.
- o) Infer attitudes, moods and figures of speech.

The number of answers to be given is equal to the number of marks allotted to this component of the test.

5. The writing component:

It includes a guided writing exercise and a production task, graded respectively out of one third and two thirds of the total mark allotted to this component. The topics suggested in both activities should be interesting and motivating.

The **guided writing** exercise requires the test taker to:

- a) Complete open-ended utterances in a dialogue.
- b) Develop full sentences from notes to get a coherent paragraph.
- c) Use the information provided in a table or chart to write a paragraph, letter, article, report or biography.

Only one **production task** is administered

- The suggested topic should interest and motivate the test takers.
- In the instructions, the audience, the purpose, the context and the text length and type (genre) should be specified.

The following evaluation criteria should be indicated on the test paper:

- a) Adherence to task and content adequacy
- b) Lexical appropriacy and grammar accuracy
- c) Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, capitalization and spelling)

● Recommendations for Year 9 Diploma and Baccalaureate Examinations

I. General issues

Test item writers should:

1. Vary the themes in the Reading comprehension, Language exercises and Writing tasks.
2. Make sure test takers are familiar with the question types and the language used. Avoid repetition or overuse of a question type.
3. Suggest accessible materials and tasks to the **average pupil**.
4. Have a clear rationale for each suggested task / exercise / question, etc. Avoid time-consuming tasks.
5. Give clear, simple and concise instructions.
6. Avoid heavy and demotivating cultural load and depressing / shocking themes in texts / paragraphs.
7. Avoid testing the same thing twice.
8. Not use materials from coursebooks and commercial workbooks “*livres parascolaires*”.
9. Revise and proofread for language accuracy and appropriacy and content validity.

NB Regional commissions involved in exams proposals are requested to provide copies of the sources/references cover page and the pages containing the text, the language exercises and the guided writing tasks.

II. Specific issues

1. Reading Comprehension

Test item writers should:

1. Consider the words number. (**Basic**: General: 200; Technical: 150. **Secondary**: 300, Sciences. / Arts: 350 / Sport: 200.)
2. Suggest texts containing topical issues (themes / subjects: recent, up-to-date, of particular present time interest). For Secondary levels: accessible literary texts conveying universal values is possible.
3. Design comprehension questions according to text suitability for a good exploitation; the following option has been considered a realistic and practical solution:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9th Y. (6 items): 4 or 5 questions• The Arts (<i>Lettres</i>) branch (15 items): 6 or 7 questions maximum• The Sciences branch (12 items): 5 or 6 questions maximum |
|--|

4. Vary the questions to “demonstrate comprehension of text content and organization”.
5. Avoid designing questions which require a variety of possible answers, with the exception of the question which requires testees to “express reaction to text content or characters / people involved”.
6. When asking examinees to complete a summary with words from different paragraphs, test developers should:

- indicate in the instructions the paragraphs where the words exist.
- ask the testee to identify and copy the words as they are—without making any changes to them.

7. In the question type: ‘Circle / Tick / Underline... the adjectives/adverbs which apply to...’,

- make sure the adjectives or adverbs suggested are familiar to the pupils—the words are mentioned in the word lists/book maps/module maps/exist in lessons, etc.
- ask for no more than two items – two adjectives/adverbs – to be identified in the list suggested.

8. In the question type: Complete with details from the text,

- the detail ranges from one word to one full sentence, but no more.
- the detail should be explicitly and completely written. Dots (.....), or ellipsis, are not accepted and the answer is considered **false**.

9. [For BAC exams/tests.] For “identifying evidence that a given statement is false”, the instruction is worded as follows:

- For each of the following statements, pick out one detail from the text showing that it is **false**.
- Each statement is followed with the paragraph number—the paragraph where the detail exists.

10. Test item writers should design a correct option and distractors in the multiple choice items of equal length: containing almost the exact number of words as in the correct answer.

2. Language exercises

Test item writers should:

1. Provide a **complete sentence** at the beginning of the paragraph—leave the first sentence integral in order to set context.
2. Avoid suggesting **ungrammatical words** in the multiple choice items.
3. **Spread items**; do not overload one or two sentences with test items.
4. Suggest the **bare infinitive** in tense/form exercises as a rule. (Bracketed words)
5. Strike a **balance between tenses and forms**.
6. In the tense/form exercise, avoid items requiring a **double task** such as adding a prefix and a suffix; e.g. *avoid* to get unavoidable.
7. **Vary the items in the multiple choice** question (prepositions, tenses, forms, lexical words, etc.)
8. Refer to the word lists/book maps/module maps/lessons to make sure the **selected lexical items exist**—each lexical test item should be found somewhere in the teaching materials in one of the official coursebooks in use.

3. Writing tasks

- *For BAC exams*

1. In developing full sentences from notes, test item developers should make sure notes are not single words, but **chunks/series of words separated by slashes**.
2. **Avoid overloading tables/biography data** with many details and notes. Suggest a reasonable amount of information to be developed in a paragraph/short text written in the specified and provided number of lines.
3. Say: a **correct sentence** (not a *coherent* sentence) and a **coherent paragraph**.

- *For 9th Year Diploma and BAC exams*

Production task

1. Suggest a **topic** that should “**interest and motivate** the pupil to write”.
2. Suggest a **theme** that relates to the syllabus.
3. Design a task that allows the pupils to use their own ideas, activate and reinvest personal knowledge and language resources, and express attitudes. The task should not be suitable for memorizing and learning off by heart data and ready-made sentences and rewriting them. It shouldn't lend itself to **rote learning**.
4. Avoid ill-defined tasks—they should specify topic, **a communicative situation, purpose, audience, clear context, genre/text type**.
5. Specify a clear **functional organization** (e.g. narrative, argumentative, description of a process, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, making suggestions, etc.)
6. Suggest a task which is **manageable within the time allotted** and which **doesn't require much background knowledge** some pupils might not have.
7. **Avoid scaffolding**—do not provide the test takers with helpful notes and hints in the free writing; give the instructions only.
8. **Quotes** – when used – should not confuse or mislead the test takers .They should be clear enough, carefully selected, guiding and related to the issue raised in the task.
9. Provide **clear and appropriate lay-out**.
10. Specify the length of the written text – **the number of lines required**.

D. Ongoing Evaluation in English – Sports Branch

REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

Ministry of Education

(September 2018)

SECTION SPORT

ONGOING EVALUATION IN ENGLISH

NUMBER OF TESTS, THEIR COMPOSITION AND THE SCALE

Each **term**, learners are tested in compliance with the following specifications

	1st year / 2nd year / 3rd year	
Speaking	At least 1	10
Project work	At least 1	10
a one-hour mid-term-test	Listening	08
	Language	12
a two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	12
	Language	10
	Writing	08

4th YEAR								
1st term			2nd term			3rd term		
Speaking test	at least 1	10	Speaking test	at least 1	10	Speaking test	at least 1	10
Project work	at least 1	10	Project work	at least 1	10	Project work	at least 1	10
A one-hour mid-term test	Listening	08	A one-hour mid-term test	Listening	08	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
	Language	12		Language	12	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		
A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	12	A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	12	A two-hour end-of-term test	Reading	12
	Language	10		Language	10		Language	10
	Writing	08		Writing	08		Writing	08

COMPONENTS / SPECIFICATIONS

1/ The oral component:

a) Speaking Test (10 marks):

At least one speaking test shall be administered each term. Student performance is assessed through interactive communication situations and in relation to the speaking skills stated in the official curriculum pertaining to the ability to express oneself correctly, fluently, appropriately and audibly. Assessment is carried out through tasks including: a dialogue, an interview, role play and drama, a speech, a presentation, a report on something read, an oral summary, a narration or reconstruction of a story, an interpretation or description of pictures or tables or a reconstruction of a story.

b) Project Work (10 marks):

Student contribution to a project (individually or in a group) will be graded with regard to the process/efficiency of procedures, product, content relevance and quality; and presentation.

The final end-of-term mark is the sum of the two marks specified above.

2. The listening comprehension component:

Auditory/Aural passages include: a monologue, a dialogue, a conversation, a speech or a presentation of about 100 words (year 1 and year 2) and 150 words (year 3 and year 4). The linguistic as well as the semantic content of the text should be appropriate to the student level.

The use of recorded material is recommended.

To demonstrate comprehension of the content of the passage and its organization, test takers are required to:

- a) Identify the speaker(s).
- b) Identify the relationship between the speakers.
- c) Identify/ provide the function of statements, utterances.
- d) Select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the main idea and specific words or ideas in the passage.
- e) Give justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the passage or worded by the test taker.
- f) Write short answers to WH questions, including inference questions.
- g) Transfer information by completing a table, a diagram, a list, a chart, a map, a flow chart...
- h) Complete a sentence or a paragraph with own words or phrases.
- i) Infer attitudes and moods, outcomes, information and links.
- j) React to content or attitudes.

Each item is allotted one mark.

In addition to the comprehension questions, the test taker is required to

- a) Identify the function corresponding to a given statement with reference to 3 options.
- b) Provide the function of a given statement.

One mark is allotted to the correct answer to either of these questions.

-Pronunciation:

- a/ Circle the word(s) he/she hears through minimal pairs or list.
- b/ Listen to a section of the passage and identify words having (a) specified sound(s).

Each item is allotted half a mark.

-Spelling:

- complete a gapped section of the text as s/he listens to the recorded material.

Each item is allotted half a mark.

3. The language component:

It consists of three or four exercises integrating lexis and grammar. Test takers should:

- a) Fill in a gapped paragraph with words from a list with 2 extra options/distractors.
- b) Fill in a gapped paragraph in multiple-choice format.

- c) Provide the right tense and/or form of bracketed words.
- d) Match sentence parts to get a coherent paragraph or dialogue.
- e) Express 2 sentences differently as specified in the instructions.

Each item is allotted half a mark.

4. The reading comprehension component:

Reading materials may include a linear text and a non-linear one, or two complementary texts of about 200 words (year 1 and year 2) and 250 words (year 3 and year 4). The linear texts are authentic or semi-authentic extracted from various sources: novels, magazines, newspapers, brochures... Non-linear texts can be charts, notes, tickets, menus, notices, time-tables... The linguistic as well as the semantic content of these texts should be appropriate to student level.

The test takers are assessed in terms of their ability to:

- a) match texts or paragraphs with the appropriate function(s), main idea, topic, titles, subtitles, captions or visuals.
- b) select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to the text title, function, type, genre, main idea, or specific ideas in the text
- c) identify the topic sentence of a text or paragraph.
- d) identify the function corresponding to a given statement.
- e) give justified answers to Yes / No questions, the justification being retrieved from the text or worded by the test taker.
- f) identify evidence that a given statement is false.
- g) write short answers to WH questions, including inference questions.
- h) answer one or two reference questions.
- i) transfer information onto a table, a diagram, a list or a chart.
- j) complete a sentence or a paragraph with words/phrases or information retrieved from the text or worded by the student.
- k) paraphrase extract(s) from text.
- l) select the appropriate option in multiple choice questions related to specific ideas in the text or the meaning of a given word.
- m) find antonyms or synonyms of given words or expressions.
- n) identify the exponent of a given function.
- o) react to text content or attitudes or characters.
- p) infer attitudes, moods, information or outcomes.

The reading comprehension rubric should comprise 12 items (1 mark each).

5. The writing component:

Only **one production task** is administered. The **topic** should **relate to the curriculum**.

- The suggested topic should interest and motivate the test takers.
- In the instructions, the audience, the purpose, the context and the text length and type (genre) should be specified.

The following evaluation criteria should be indicated on the test paper:

- a) Adherence to task and content adequacy**
- b) Lexical appropriacy and grammar accuracy**
- c) Mechanical accuracy (punctuation, capitalization and spelling)**

Ongoing Evaluation in Basic and Secondary Education, all Branches (September 2018)

Number of tests, duration, components and marking scales

	7 th Y. Basic Ed.	8 th and 9 th Y. Basic Ed.	8 th & 9 th Y. Tech Basic. Ed.	1 st and 2 nd Y. Second. Ed.	1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd Y. Sports	3 rd Y. C. Core / Tech.	3 rd Y. Arts	4 th Y. C. Core / Tech	4 th Y. Arts	4 th Y. Sports
1ST TERM	Speaking Test(s): 10 marks / Project work: 10 marks									
	Mid-T. Test: 1h Language: 14 Spelling: 6	Mid-term Test: 1h Listening: 8 (Comprehension: 1x5 = 5pts + Function: 1x1 = 1pt + Spelling: 0,5x2 = 1pt + Pronunciation: 0,5x2 = 1pt) Language: 12								
	End-of-Term Test: 1h Language: 15 Writing: 5	Term Test: 1h Reading: 6 Language: 8 Writing: 6	Term Test: 1h Reading: 8 Language: 7 Writing: 5	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 10 Writing: 8	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 6 Writing: 12	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 6 Writing: 12	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 10 Writing: 8
2ND TERM	Speaking Test(s): 10 marks / Project work: 10 marks									
	Mid-T. Test: 1h Language: 14 Spelling: 6	Mid-term Test: 1h Listening: 8 (Comprehension: 1x5 = 5pts + Function: 1x1 = 1pt + Spelling: 0,5x2 = 1pt + Pronunciation: 0,5x2 = 1pt) Language: 12								
	End-of-Term Test: 1h Reading: 5 Language: 10 Writing: 5	Term Test: 1h Reading: 6 Language: 8 Writing: 6	Term Test: 1h Reading: 8 Language: 7 Writing: 5	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 10 Writing: 8	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 6 Writing: 12	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 6 Writing: 12	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 10 Writing: 8
3RD TERM	Speaking Test(s): 10 marks / Project work: 10 marks									
	Mid-T. Test: 1h Language: 14 Spelling: 6	Mid-term Test: 1h Listening: 8 (same components as 1 st & 2 nd Term Mid-term Tests) Language: 12						None	None	None
	End-of-Term Test: 1h Reading: 5 Language: 10 Writing: 5	Term Test: 1h Reading: 6 Language: 8 Writing: 6	Term Test: 1h Reading: 8 Language: 7 Writing: 5	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 10 Writing: 8	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 6 Writing: 12	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 6 Writing: 12	Term Test: 2h Reading: 15 Language: 10 Writing: 15	Term Test: 2h Reading: 12 Language: 10 Writing: 8

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