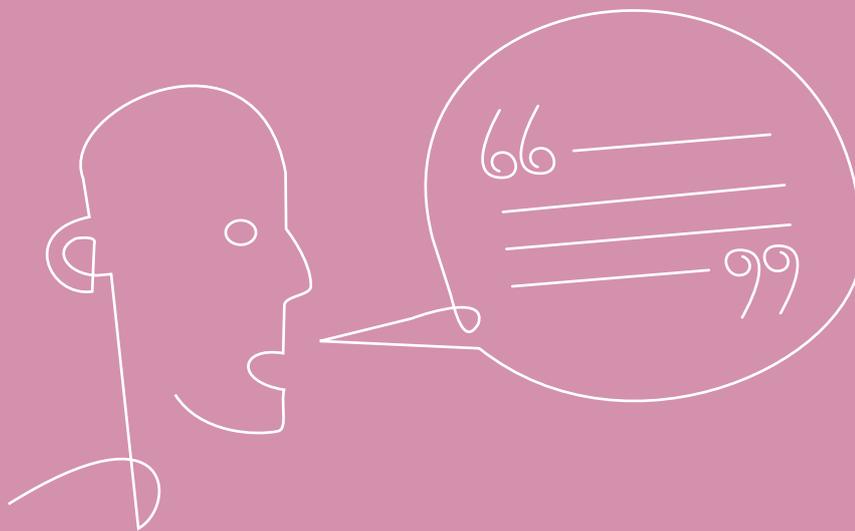


English

Guidelines for Teachers of Students with

MILD

General Learning Disabilities



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Introduction

These guidelines are designed to support the teacher working in the area of English within the context of a whole school plan for students with special educational needs.

This volume is designed to support the language, literature and communication area of experience. Given the importance of communication skills and of functional language for students with mild general learning disabilities, this area of experience needs particular emphasis and support across the junior cycle curriculum. All of the teachers involved in the education of the student with mild general learning disabilities will have a role to play in supporting language development.

A full account of each area of experience is presented in the introductory volume accompanying this set of materials along with useful guidelines on school and classroom planning. In addition to the guidelines presented here, similar materials have been prepared for teachers working with students accessing the primary curriculum. Continuity and progression is an important feature of the educational experience of all students. For students with special educational needs it is particularly important. Therefore, all the exemplars presented here include a reference to opportunities for prior learning in the *Primary School Curriculum*.

In *Approaches and Methodologies* individual differences are emphasised and potential areas of difficulty and implications for learning are outlined and linked with suggestions for teaching strategies for classroom use.

The exemplars in these guidelines draw on the Junior Certificate syllabuses for English and history. These subjects have particular significance for the language, literature and communication area of experience. However, teachers of other subjects at junior cycle level may also find them useful. The checklist for teacher observation and the table of potential areas of difficulty have relevance for all teachers of students with mild general learning disabilities.

The exemplars have been prepared to show how students with mild general learning disabilities can be offered the widest possible range of learning activities. A strong emphasis is placed on using real-life situations as a basis for classroom activity. A range of assessment strategies is identified in order to ensure that students can receive meaningful feedback and experience success in learning.

Approaches and methodologies

Students with mild general learning disabilities will benefit particularly if the teacher is aware of their individual talents, strengths, and needs before embarking on a new activity.

Individual differences in talents, strengths, and needs

Consultation with and/or involvement in the individual education planning process as well as teacher observation will assist the SPHE teacher in organising an appropriate learning programme for a student with mild general learning disabilities. Such an approach will assist the teacher in selecting suitably differentiated methods for the class. If learning activities are to be made meaningful, relevant, and achievable for all students then it is the role of the teacher to find ways to respond to that diversity by using differentiated approaches and methodologies.

This can be achieved by

- ensuring that objectives are realistic for the students
- ensuring that the learning task is compatible with prior learning
- providing opportunities for interacting and working with other students in small groups
- spending more time on tasks
- organising the learning task into small stages
- ensuring that language used is pitched at the students' level of understanding and does not hinder the understanding of the activity
- using task analysis in outlining the steps to be learned/completed in any given task
- posing key questions to guide students through the stages/processes and to assist in self-direction and correction
- using graphic symbols as reminders to assist in understanding the sequence/steps in any given task/problem
- modelling task analysis by talking through the steps of a task as it is being done
- having short and varied tasks
- creating a learning environment through the use of concrete and where possible everyday materials, and by displaying word lists and laminated charts with pictures.

Teaching strategies

When planning for teaching and learning in the area of language, literature and communication a variety of teaching strategies needs to be considered. These will respond to the particular challenges faced by students with mild general learning disabilities in engaging fully in their learning in the classroom.

When the teacher is designing, planning, and structuring a programme, potential areas of difficulty may emerge for students with mild general learning disabilities in engaging with classroom experiences and methodologies. It is important to remember that not all students with mild general learning difficulties face all of these challenges. The following suggests some strategies to meet some areas of potential difficulty.

Addressing potential areas of difficulty for students with mild general learning disabilities

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Functional language (including reading) or delayed functional language development	A student may have difficulties following complex sentences or multiple meanings. He/she may process only part of an instruction or direction. He/she may find it difficult to participate in group work. Engagement with written texts can be frustrating.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Students need opportunities to rehearse, practice, and develop functional language skills with security and confidence. ■ Strong emphasis is needed on functional oral language use and on the practice of real-life communication tasks. ■ If using group work, ensure that roles in the group are clearly assigned and that the task is sufficiently structured to support the participation of a student with functional language difficulties. ■ Technical or specialist vocabulary will require extra reinforcement through the use of cards, posters, or vocabulary lists. Consider a keyword approach. Encourage the student to build up a personal dictionary. ■ Use shorter texts or short extracts from longer texts as the basis for classroom work and homework, and do some preparatory work with the student in advance of the task. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Symbolic language and abstract thinking or writing	Engagement with poetry and drama can be rewarding for students with mild general learning disabilities but can pose particular challenges.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An emphasis should be placed on listening to a wide range of poetry and other texts which use symbolic language. ■ Listening to music in a range of genres can support the development of 'listening for meaning'. ■ Students should be encouraged to create their own short poems, drawing on their own experiences. ■ Drama work, for example performance, role-play, discussion, and writing, should focus on extracts or on shorter scenes. All students should have an audience experience of a variety of dramatic performances. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Visual sequencing	A student can get lost in long sentences, and can have difficulty copying words from a book or from the blackboard. He/she may have poor handwriting, with a tendency to invert or reverse letters, for example b can become d.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoid asking students to copy long text. If it is essential to a lesson, break the text into short paragraphs or sections. ■ When writing on the board use print style rather than cursive script. ■ Use cues in worksheets, for example: Start here → ■ Remind students, <i>'This is the start', 'Begin here'</i>. ■ Encourage students to read their own written work and to check it for errors. Provide them with a list of their own common mistakes to support this self-editing process. ■ Indicate the exact place where they should commence writing. ■ Encourage left to right, top to bottom, front to back orientation for students. ■ Reading aloud should be rehearsed and prepared in advance. ■ Keep instructions short and clear, and repeat and reinforce them if necessary. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Application of previously learned knowledge	Students may find it difficult to apply the learning from one context to another. Lesson to lesson continuity can be difficult, particularly in mainstream post-primary settings.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regularly review and recap previously learned skills and knowledge. ■ Make obvious and clear links with a lesson or previous lessons. ■ Actively draw attention to the sequence of learning—what has been done, what is being done now, and what will be done next. ■ Encourage the students to keep learning journals and invite them to record the key words from a lesson. Using this as a resource for presenting an oral account of work to a learning-support teacher, other teachers, or at home can serve as a further reinforcement. ■ Encourage and assist students to keep a record of their achievements. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Short attention span, lack of concentration and application	Students may have problems with reading long texts or with long written exercises. They may find it difficult to stay on task, may take a long time to complete a task, or may rush a task. The standard of presentation in written work may be poor.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide short passages for reading and reduce written content in exercises. ■ Ensure variety in the tasks presented. ■ Assess a student's ability to perform any given task. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Following instructions	The student may become confused when faced with more than one instruction at a time.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Get the student to repeat the instruction(s). ■ Give short, clear instructions. Use pictorial cues. ■ Present clear guidance on how and when assistance will be given by the teacher/other students during the lesson. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
The student may be overwhelmed by the learning process.	The student may become overwhelmed when presented with new information or skills and consequently may not be able to learn.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adapt the teaching style, for example use more discussion both at the beginning and end of the lesson to help both teacher and student to understand how they are learning. ■ Adapt the responses required. The same activity can often be done with a group or class but some students will answer orally, some by using symbolic representation, and some by using a pictorial response. ■ Adapt the requirements of the task. One group or individual may only have to do six of the questions whereas another may have to do ten or more. Set personal targets for the students so that they do not feel others are getting less to do than they are. 	

Exemplars

The exemplars presented here are designed to show how the strategies outlined above can work in classrooms, and to model practice that can meet the needs of junior cycle courses in a way that will serve the particular learning needs of students with mild general learning disabilities.

Structure

Each of the exemplars is preceded by a summary in the form of two tables. The first table is an introduction to the exemplar. It outlines the relevant sections of the *Primary School Curriculum*, the Junior Certificate (foundation/ordinary level) Curriculum, and Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP). It also highlights some of the potential areas of difficulty for students with mild general learning disabilities that relate specifically to the area covered in the exemplar and lists some of the strategies used. In addition a time scale and a list of resources are provided. The second table outlines the exemplar in more detail by providing suggested outcomes, supporting activities, and assessment strategies for a lesson/series of lessons.

Exemplars provided

No.	Syllabus objectives	Exemplar title	Page
1	Personal literacy, social literacy	The weather forecast	10
2.	Social literacy, cultural literacy	Getting to know you	16
3.	Personal literacy, cultural literacy	Words to see, hear, and feel	23
4.	Social literacy	What happened next?	30
5.	Personal literacy, cultural literacy	My poems	35
6.	Social literacy, personal literacy	My favourite time of the year	39
7.	Personal literacy, cultural literacy	Changes: 1900-1990 and transport	49
8.	Personal literacy, social literacy	Dialogue	55
9.	Social literacy, cultural literacy	Language development: through music and drama	62

Exemplar 1: English

Syllabus objectives: Personal literacy, social literacy

The weather forecast

Primary (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
Strand: Receptiveness to language Strand unit: Developing receptiveness to oral language Strand unit: Developing competence and confidence in using oral language Strand unit: Reading for pleasure and information Strand: Developing cognitive abilities through language Strand unit: Clarifying thought through writing	Personal literacy: To speak and write about his/her experience in a variety of forms. Social literacy: Using language functions for a real purpose.	Respond to a range of reading materials and media sources.

Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to four class periods.

Potential areas of difficulty

- Terminology, difficulty with time sequences, such as today, tonight, tomorrow
- Transferring material from blackboard to worksheet or chart
- Moving from the 'real' to the conceptual—from weather outside to a graphic representation of weather conditions on a map

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Strategies used in this exemplar

- Engaging students in individual and group listening and speaking
- Using a short text as a basis for information
- Group/role-play activities
- Audio and visual elements, which make the activities more tangible and concrete
- Emphasis on functional oracy
- Practice of real-life communication tasks

Resources

- Audio/video clips of weather presenters
- Copies of weather charts from newspapers
- Copies of the text in the reading section of the 2002 examination paper
- Worksheets for weather forecasts

Exemplar 1: English

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and use the kinds of words that are used to describe weather conditions engage in focused listening and speaking in the context of a short presentation participate in a group with a shared sense of task or purpose participate in a short presentation to peers come to an awareness of the sequence, <i>'Today is ..., tonight will be ..., tomorrow will be ...'</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watching/listening to examples of presentations by weather forecasters. Describing today's weather. Small group work, preparing a script for a weather forecast Making a weather chart. Presenting the weather on radio and/or television. Repeating the pattern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher observes the readiness of the student to listen attentively and his/her confidence in speaking in one-to-one or group discussion. The teacher can explore and share the criteria for the weather forecast. Students can use these criteria to build up their weather charts and present their forecasts. The teacher can check on the support needed for the student to complete charts. Students write a list of the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of the weather forecaster. Students evaluate their own and others' presentations by using the presenter checklist.

Exemplar 1: English

Worksheet 1

THE BIG WEATHER CHECKLIST

Listen to the talk about the weather and put a tick after each of the key words below every time you hear it.

COLD	
DRY	
WARM	
WET	
WINDY	
RAIN	
SUNNY	
CLOUDY	
SNOW	
FROST	
HOT	
STORM	
SHOWER	

Now, complete the following.

Today's weather is _____

Tomorrow's weather will be _____

Exemplar 1: English

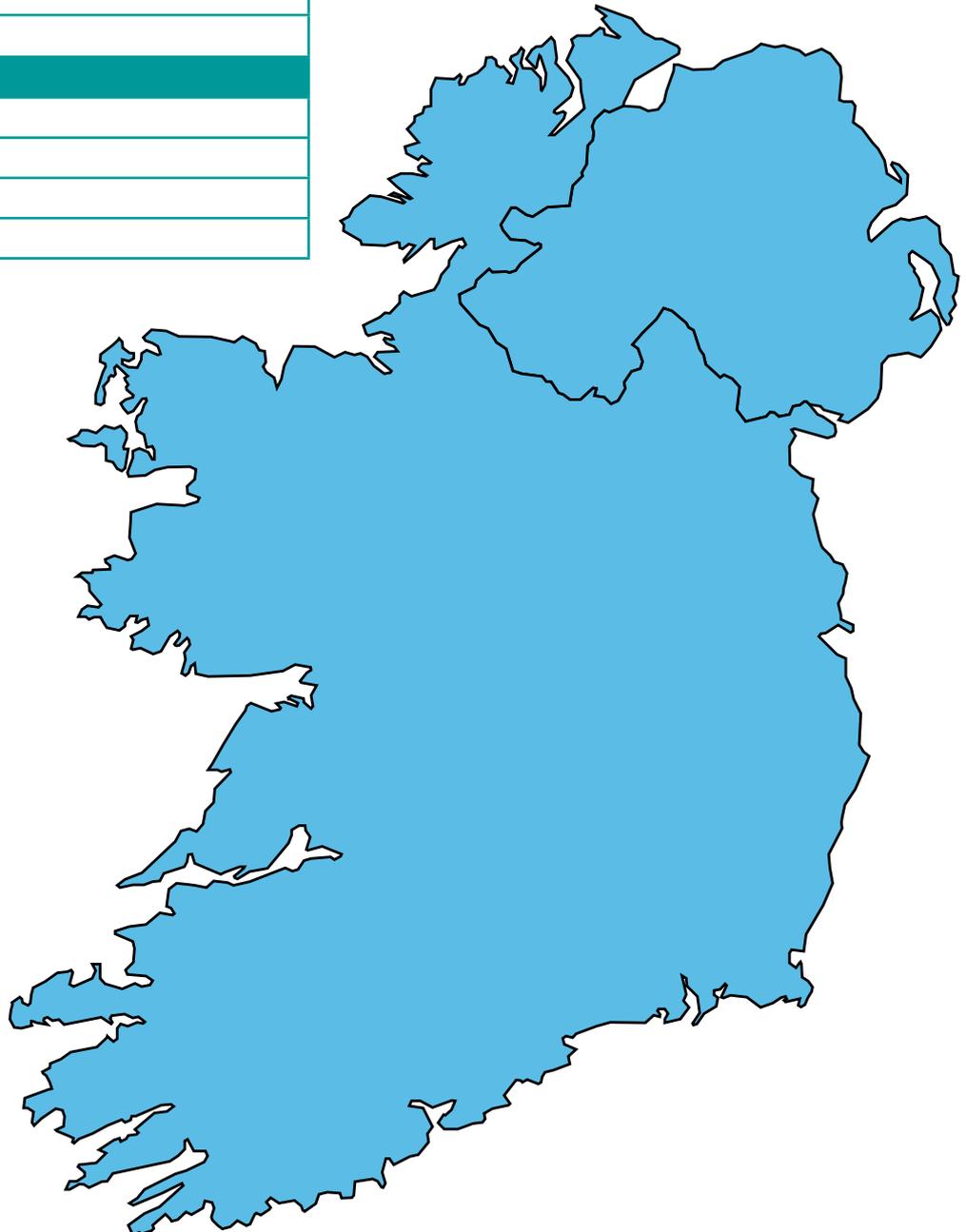
Worksheet 2

TODAY'S WEATHER – PREPARING THE FORECAST

THE WEATHER TODAY IS

TONIGHT WILL BE

TOMORROW WILL BE



Exemplar 1: English

Worksheet 3

PRESENTER CHECKLIST

In the spaces provided below, write down the words that describe a good presenter for the weather forecast. You can work in pairs for this.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

The purpose of this activity is to give the students experience of an event that contains key terms vital to everyday functional communication about the weather. The activity also contains elements relevant to sequencing.

Exemplar 1: English

Activity 1

Talking about the weather

The teacher and class discuss the weather outside.

The weather forecast

The teacher records on the board the words they use to describe the weather conditions.

The teacher then questions the class about other kinds of weather conditions:

- What is your favourite kind of weather?
- What time of year would you usually find that kind of weather?

Activity 2

A conversation about the weather

Two students (or the teacher and one student) dramatise a typical conversation about today's weather. Others (groups of two, three, or four) observe and make notes in their worksheets about the key terms being used.

Each group writes down a description of today's weather.

Each group writes a forecast for tomorrow's weather.

Forecasting the weather

The teacher shows some visual clips of weather forecasting from television and/or plays some audio clips from radio forecasts. The learning intention is to talk about the kind of language used to describe the weather. What are the key words the forecasters use? What words describe good weather? What words describe bad weather? This can be explored orally and the teacher records contributions on the blackboard.

Using *Worksheet 2* the students (in groups if preferred) write a script for a weather forecast for **one** of the following:

- a cloudy and wet day
- a hot and sunny day
- a storm
- a cold day with snow.

[It is not necessary that they all take the same one.]

The map of Ireland can be used as a frame in which to draw symbols such as sun, cloud, lines showing wind direction and strength, numbers for temperature, and so on.

Activity 3

Presentations

The teacher and students brainstorm the characteristics of a 'good' weather presentation. Features can be entered in the spaces on the presenter checklist. [*Worksheet 3*]

Groups take turns in presenting as weather forecasters.

Others use the presenter checklist to judge the completeness of the presentations.

Exemplar 2: **English****Syllabus objectives:** Social literacy, cultural literacy

Getting to know you

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
<p>Strand: Competence in using language Strand unit: Reading for pleasure and information</p> <p><i>The child should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> read widely as an independent reader from a more challenging range of reading material, including stories, poems, myths, legends, novels and non-fiction texts appropriate to his/her age and reading ability engage with books in group or whole class settings. 	<p>Social literacy: Using the following language functions for a real purpose: recording, reporting, note-taking.</p> <p>Cultural literacy: The student should be induced to give shape to his/her response in a creative manner: to interview characters.</p>	<p>Respond to a range of reading materials and media sources.</p> <p>Respond personally to stories, poems, plays, newspapers and magazines independently.</p>

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Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to 5 class periods.**Potential areas of difficulty**

- Terms such as 'character'
- Retaining a clear grasp of narrative details
- Transferring the context from interviewing a friend/classmate to interviewing a character from a story
- Transferring material from blackboard to worksheet or chart
- Reading and writing at speed

Strategies used in this exemplar

- Engaging students in individual and group listening and speaking
- The use of a short text
- The participation of the teacher in group/role-playing activities
- Using a chart displaying appropriate vocabulary, thereby minimising the need for extended periods of writing

Resources

- Photographs/cartoons
- Copies of a story
- Worksheets for interviews
- A body-shaped character chart with a word bank

Exemplar 2: English

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities, students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage with the kinds of words we use to describe ourselves and others engage in listening and speaking in the context of a short interview listen to an interview and suggest questions that might be asked build up a portrait of a character from a work of fiction write a description of a person using words from a word-bank. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking about the key words we use in getting to know someone. Interviewing the teacher and other students. Small group work, involving interviewing/being interviewed by a class mate. Group work, involving the preparation of questions to ask. Role-playing an interview with a character from a work of fiction. Writing a description of a character from a work of fiction. Building up a visual character chart. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher can observe the readiness of the student to listen attentively and his/her confidence in speaking in one-to-one situation or in a group discussion. The teacher can explore and share the criteria for a good interview by modelling/ demonstration. Students can use these criteria to comment on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> each interview conducted their own participation in the interview. The teacher can check on the support the students need to complete charts, to complete sentence exercises, and to write short passages of continuous prose. Students can write a list of 'tips' for conducting a good interview.

Exemplar 2: English

Getting to know you

The purpose of this activity is to give the students experience of oral and written contexts in which they deepen their encounter with a character from a work of fiction while developing their personal, social, and cultural literacy. This work could be done most usefully at the beginning of first year post-primary when the class is new, and when the teacher wants to offer experiences that can build up trust and identity within the group.

Activity 1

The teacher shows some visual images (photographs and/or cartoons) of people in conversation and introduces the central idea of getting to know you. How did we come to know the people we know? What can we tell about some people who are close to us, and how did we find this out? This can be explored orally and the teacher can record contributions on the blackboard:

- We **meet**.
- We **talk**.
- We **ask questions**.
- We **share things that happen**, etc.

Activity 2

Interviews

The teacher introduces the interview as a good way of getting to know another person, especially a person we haven't met before. The teacher hands out interview sheets (*Interview Planning Worksheet 1* and *Interview Planning Worksheet 2*) to the class, and in pairs or small groups class members can plan an interview with a fellow classmate:

What information do I want to get from the person being interviewed?
What questions will I ask and in what order?

Differentiation is possible through the design of different kinds of worksheets. Some will have blank spaces for questions while others will have pre-prepared questions that can be ticked off for use. The two sample worksheets for interview planning demonstrate this approach to differentiation.

Activity 3

Interviewing the teacher

The teacher is interviewed by one of the class and the others act as observers, recording the questions asked, the answers given, and perhaps the physical gestures 'exchanged' by the interviewer and interviewee.

The teacher can be interviewed as himself/herself or as a character from the world of sport, television, music, or politics.

Activity 4

Interviewing

The students conduct very short interviews with each other while the teacher observes.

Exemplar 2: English

Activity 5

Listening

The teacher reads a short piece of fiction aloud to the class, for example a short story (in edited form if appropriate) in which the narrative line is clear, and which contains a memorable central character, such as Jackie from Frank O'Connor's *First Confession*.

The teacher reviews the students' understanding of the story and their sense of the central character through questions such as

- Who is the central character in the story?
- What is his name?
- How old is he?
- Who are in his family?
- What kinds of things happened to him?
- How did things turn out in the story?
- Did you like him/feel sorry for him/think he was funny?
- Would you like to meet him?
- If you met him, what would you like to know about his life and where he lives?

Activity 6

Interviewing the character

The teacher pretends to be the character from the story and is interviewed by some members of the class. The teacher then reviews the interview with the class and they all record the details that have emerged.

In groups or individually, the students write a short description of the character they have met. This can be done by some in continuous prose and by others by means of a body chart (as in the accompanying *Worksheet—character chart*) into which they enter key, single-word details.

Exemplar 2: English

Interview planning worksheet 2

Here is a list of things interviewers often want to find out. Tick three you want to find out in your interview. If there is something you want to know that is not in the list write it in the blank box at the end.

hobbies	plans for the future	greatest achievement
likes	dislikes	ideal holiday destination
favourite music	heroes	favourite food

Now you are ready to write your questions. Using the words/phrases you have selected, join them to three of the following question words to make your questions. You can use these words as many times as you like.

How?	What?	Who?
When?	Do ...	Where?

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Write your questions here. Don't forget to put a **question mark ?** at the end of each one

TIP ? is used instead of . at the end of a question.

Exemplar 2: English

Worksheet—character chart

Kind _____

Selfish _____

Mature _____

Immature _____

Loved _____

Unloved _____

Mean _____

Generous _____

Funny _____

Sad _____

- Choose from the list of words given above, the ones that you think describe me best.
- Copy them onto my body shape.
- Am I like you, or not like you, in any way?

Here is space for you to write your answer



Exemplar 3: **English****Syllabus objectives:** Personal literacy, cultural literacy

Words to see, hear and feel

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
<p>Strand: Competence and confidence in using language Strand unit: Reading for pleasure and information</p> <p><i>The child should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read widely as an independent reader from a more challenging range of reading material, including stories, poems, myths, legends, novels and non-fiction texts appropriate to his/her age and reading ability • engage with books in group or whole class settings. 	<p>Personal literacy: The student should be encouraged to explore, order, express and symbolise a wide range of intellectual, imaginative, affective and sensuous experience.</p> <p>Cultural literacy: The student should be induced to give shape to his/her response in a creative manner to focus on the choice of words and the reasons for a particular choice of words.</p>	<p>Respond to a range of reading materials and media sources.</p> <p>Respond personally to stories, poems, plays, newspapers and magazines independently.</p>

Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to five class periods.**Potential areas of difficulty**

- Symbolic language and any form of abstract thinking or writing
- Visual sequencing problems
- Short attention span, lack of concentration and application

Exemplar 3: English

Strategies used in this exemplar

- Listening for the aural and affective dimension of words
- Using a short extract from a text, involving short sentences and repetitive structure
- Use of mime to reinforce awareness of the affective dimension of language
- Linking words with visual images
- Use of a response journal to guide and reinforce reading of the longer text to come
- Use of a prediction exercise to deepen engagement with the story
- Use of cross-curricular links to physical education and art

Resources

- Sound effects (wind, sea and metal grinding) downloaded onto a floppy disk or a CD-ROM from one of the many 'free sound effects' websites
- The opening two pages of *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes
- Sketch pads
- A worksheet for planning the writing task
- A worksheet for the prediction exercise
- Students' learning journals

Exemplar 3: English

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities, students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage with some of the aural and visual dimensions of language experience something of the sensual dimension of all language see how these dimensions of language can play a key role in storytelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to and identifying sounds. Linking sounds with the words that describe them. Exploring the effective dimension of sound through mime. Linking visual images with words in a text by drawing a picture of the imagined character and adding words from the written text. Writing a short personal text that pays particular attention to sounds and visual images. Engaging in a prediction exercise to deepen engagement with the character and narrative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher observes the student's ability to respond orally to the affective dimension of language. The teacher can use questioning to determine how well the students can link the written words and the sensations evoked by them. Students can assess their own success in finding key visual words to go with their drawings. Students working in pairs can support one another in the prediction exercise. <p>The teacher can check the gaps in the completed worksheets and provide further support where needed.</p>

Exemplar 3: English

Activity 1

Sharing responses to sounds

The teacher plays some sound effects (repeatedly if necessary) and the students are encouraged to identify each one.

Students offer action words to accompany each sound—*'the wind sang, roared or howled'*, *'the sea whispered, tumbled, roared'*, and so on.

If the teacher judges it appropriate, the students are encouraged to explore their feelings in relation to the different sounds.

Activity 2

Linking sounds and words

The teacher asks the class to listen very carefully as he/she reads an extract from *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes. It should not be necessary to offer much in the way of contextualisation except to tell the students that they will meet a very strange person indeed. During reading the teacher should ensure that the students have an opportunity to feel the sounds and rhythms of Hughes's language.

Activity 3

The affective dimension of sound

The teacher repeats the opening part of the reading, beginning perhaps at, *'Taller than a house ...'* and continuing to *'He swayed forward, on the brink of the high cliff'*. Some or all of the students, depending on considerations of space, etc., can mime the part of the Iron Man in time to the teacher's reading.

Teacher questioning follows this part of the activity, and the teacher records responses on the board:

- How did the Iron Man move?
- How did you know how he should move?
- What did it feel like to be the Iron Man?
- Did you enjoy the feeling?
- If you met the Iron Man what would you want to ask him?
- What would you most want to say to him?
- What sounds are 'closest' to the Iron Man?

Activity 4

Linking with the visual by identifying as many key words as possible

Having read the passage again, silently or aloud as befits, the students begin to sketch their images of the Iron Man, and transcribe the important words from the text into the margins round the sketch. The quality of the 'art-work' in the sketch is unimportant; what counts is the activity of linking the evocative words to the image.

Exemplar 3: **English****Extract from *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes (Faber and Faber pp. 11-12)****The Coming of the Iron Man**

The Iron Man came to the top of the cliff.

How far had he walked? Nobody knows.

Where had he come from? Nobody knows. How was he made? Nobody knows.

Taller than a house, the Iron Man stood at the top of the cliff, on the very brink, in the darkness.

The wind sang through his iron fingers. His great iron head, shaped like a dustbin but as big as a bedroom, slowly turned to the right, slowly turned to the left. His iron ears turned, this way, that way. He was hearing the sea. His eyes, like headlamps, glowed white, then red, then infrared, searching the sea. Never before had the Iron Man seen the sea.

He swayed in the strong wind that pressed against his back. He swayed forward, on the brink of the high cliff.

And his right foot, his enormous iron right foot, lifted—up, out, into space, and the Iron Man stepped forward, off the cliff, into nothingness.

CRRRAAAASSSSSH!

Down the cliff the Iron Man came toppling, head over heels.

CRASH!

CRASH!

CRASH!

From rock to rock, snag to snag, tumbling slowly.

And as he crashed and crashed and crashed

His iron legs fell off.

His iron arms broke off, and the hands broke off the arms.

His great iron ears fell off and his eyes fell out.

His great iron head fell off.

All the separate pieces tumbled, scattered, crashing, bumping, clanging, down on to the rocky beach far below.

A few rocks tumbled with him.

Then

Silence.

Only the sound of the sea, chewing away at the edge of the rocky beach, where the bits and pieces of the Iron Man lay scattered far and wide, silent and unmoving.

The Iron Man by Ted Hughes

Exemplar 3: English

Activity 5

Personal writing

Working individually or in pairs the students complete the worksheet, *Planning my writing*. Using the key words they have chosen from this short opening passage in the novel they write, in their learning journals, a short piece that describes or tells others about the Iron Man.

Planning my writing

What do I know about the Iron Man?

Where had he come from? _____

How big was he? _____

What happens to him in this part of the story? _____

How do the words tell me about him

What words help me to hear what happens to him? _____



What words help me to see what he is like? _____



What words tell me about the way he moves? _____



Exemplar 3: English

Activity 6

Prediction exercise

The students write a short account of how they imagine the story will develop from here—what kind of story it is, whether it will have a happy ending, and so on. This exercise can be done in pairs or in small groups.

Sample worksheet for prediction exercise

In the next part of the story the Iron Man puts himself back together again and comes back to the world of humans. Think about how he will get on, how people will treat him, and what will happen. You can do this by completing the sections below.

When they see the Iron Man people will think _____

This is what people will try to do to the Iron Man _____

This is how I think the story will finish _____

I think I would/would not like the Iron Man because _____

Exemplar 4: **English****Syllabus objectives:** Social literacy

What happened next

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
Strand: Competence and confidence in using language Strand unit: Reading: reading for pleasure and information <i>The child should be enabled to</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage with books in groups or whole class settings. 	(Ordinary level) Unit 3 Social literacy: Emphasis should be placed on fostering the student's knowledge of spellings, punctuation procedures, sentence structures and paragraph organisation.	Respond to a range of reading materials and media sources. Discuss the plots of a range of written texts or media.

Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to four class periods.

Potential areas of difficulty

- Functional language
- Processing complex instructions
- Participation in unstructured group work

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Strategies used in this exemplar

- Opportunities to listen and to participate in repeated rehearsal of short, familiar texts
- Sequencing games to generate motivation and interest
- Group work on a short text with clearly assigned roles
- Affording students the opportunity to read along with others
- Students applying sequencing in a practical context

Resources

- A 'package' of sentences from *The Iron Man* (large print)
- The worksheet as illustrated on page 34 cut up into sentences, with one sentence only on each piece of paper
- Recipe for tea-brack

Exemplar 4: English

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities, students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think of a story as a planned set or sequence of events • read a 're-assembled' story aloud as part of a group, thus paying attention to pace and dynamics • identify the qualities of a sentence, i.e. makes sense, capital letter, full stop, etc. • understand the concepts of 'beginning and ending' in stories • make selections and provide reasons for choice (orally) • transfer the sequencing skills acquired to a life skill, for example following the sequence of instructions in a recipe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the game based on the patterns of familiar fairy tales, students explore each story as a sequence of related events. • Mixing up the story affords students the opportunity to review the work done on sequencing. • Students play the game, '<i>Spot the Capital</i>'. • In groups students are involved in sequencing sentences. • Students read aloud from their own arrangement of sentences. • Students justify the choice of sequence orally. • Students report the group's arrangement of sentences to class. • Students sequence the instructions for baking a tea-brack. • Students bake the tea-brack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher can explore with the students the criteria for a 'full' story. Students use these criteria when re-assembling the jumbled story lines either individually or in groups. • The teacher can check students' sentence awareness through their oral contributions in the punctuation game. • The teacher can assess students' needs by observing individual reading, sequencing, reporting, and participation in group work. • The teacher can observe the readiness of the students to participate in the reading of the group's arrangement aloud. • The teacher can use the practical task of baking the tea-brack to reinforce students' sense of a sequence.

Exemplar 4: English

The intention in the activities that follow is that students would be given the opportunity to explore a narrative or story line as a sequence of events. The use of the extract from *The Iron Man* for the reassembling exercise provides continuity with the previous set of activities and affords the students the opportunity to revise the opening sequence of the novel, in part as a preparation for further reading.

Activity 1

What happened next?

The teacher, as quizmaster, introduces the class to the game, '*What Happened Next?*'. Two teams are selected to play and scorekeepers and adjudicators are appointed.

The teacher introduces today's topic, 'Well-known fairy tales', and informs each team that she/he will tell one of these stories but will stop at a particular point. The team members must be able to tell what happens next in the story. If an incorrect answer is given the task is handed over to the opposing team for a bonus point, and so on. Two or three tales, for example *Snow White*, *Cinderella*, *The Three Little Pigs*, etc., are used for the game so that the pattern of beginning, middle, and end is established. At the end of the game the quizmaster announces that there will soon be one for everyone in the audience, but one that was used earlier would be reviewed first.

Activity 2

Mixing up the story

The teacher writes the chosen story on the blackboard, in sentences randomly arranged. While doing so, the teacher reads each sentence aloud getting students to repeat them, both in groups and individually, and emphasises when capital letters, full stops, etc. are used. The teacher should deliberately make 'mistakes' with capitalisation when writing the sentences, telling students beforehand and encouraging them to 'spot the mistake'!

Activity 3

Sorting it out

Divide the class into groups, taking care to assign roles carefully within each group. Provide a 'package' of sentences from The Iron Man extract for each group. (See Worksheet 1, page 33.) Ask students to arrange the sentences in sequence. Alternatively, these could be keyed into the computer and students could be asked to 'cut and paste' or to 'highlight and drag' sentences into the correct sequence following a class discussion.

The teacher hears a report from each group in which students justify their choices or sequence by reading the story aloud in choral fashion. Choral reading is an important means of reading support for students, and it raises issues of meaning and interaction in a natural way. Time given to facilitating students to read together in pairs and in larger groups is time well spent, and should also be considered an end in itself for the purposes of these class sessions.

Exemplar 4: English

Worksheet 1

The Iron Man came to the top of the cliff.

Taller than a house, the Iron Man stood at the top of the cliff, on the very brink, in the darkness.

He swayed in the strong wind that pressed against his back. He swayed forward, on the brink of the high cliff.

And his right foot, his enormous iron right foot, lifted—up, out, into space, and the Iron Man stepped forward, off the cliff, into nothingness.

Down the cliff, the Iron Man came toppling, head over heels.

From rock to rock, snag to snag, tumbling slowly. And as he crashed and crashed and crashed. His iron legs fell off.

His great iron head fell off.

All the separate pieces tumbled, scattered, crashing, bumping, clanging, down on to the rocky beach far below.

Then silence.

Only the sound of the sea, chewing away at the edge of the rocky beach, where the bits and pieces of the Iron Man lay scattered far and wide, silent and unmoving.

Activity 4

Getting the recipe right

Hand out a copy of the recipe for tea-brack (provided in *Worksheet 2*, page 34). The instructions are not in the correct sequence. Ask the students to sort them out. Encourage a lot of class discussion during this process. The teacher should take a very big part in this discussion, through prompting, questioning, and making suggestions.

Examples of 'teacher talk' could include the following:

'Why should this one not be first? What are we going to boil? What are we going to boil it in? What are we putting into the cake-tin? What do we have to do before this?'

Note 1: Care should be taken with the formation of groups. The range of abilities within the group should be as wide as possible. Teachers should ensure that no one student should 'take over' and provide all the answers.

However, when activities of different levels are provided it might be better to form groups of similar ability levels.

Note 2: This exercise can be used with any piece that is suitable for reading practice, for example a newspaper article or the narrative line from a novel.

Note 3: If a novel is used, then it is suggested that this type of exercise is done periodically throughout the reading of the novel as well as at its completion.

Exemplar 4: English

Activity 5

Baking the cake

The teacher and students bake the cake together while paying careful attention to the order/sequence of events required to get it right.

Worksheet 2

Recipe for tea-brack

These are the instructions for baking a tea-brack. They are very jumbled! See if you can put them into the correct order.

Ingredients:

- 285ml/½ pt of strained, strong tea
- 140g/5oz butter
- 170g/6oz soft brown sugar
- 455g/1lb mixed dried fruit
- 455g/1lb plain flour
- 2tsp bread soda
- Heat the oven to 140 - 150 (fan oven), 150 – 160/gas 3 (regular oven).
- Line a 20cm/8in cake tin with greaseproof paper.

Method:

- Bring to the boil and simmer until the butter melts. Allow to cool.
- Place the tea in a saucepan with the butter, sugar, and fruit.
- Put into a lined cake tin.
- Leave the tea-brack to cool before cutting.
- Sieve the flour and bread soda into a bowl.
- Add the boiled fruit mixture and the dry ingredients together.
- Place the cake in the oven for 30 minutes.

Exemplar 5: **English****Syllabus objectives:** Personal literacy, cultural literacy

My poems

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
Strand: Emotional and imaginative development through language Strand unit: Responding to text <i>The child should be enabled to</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respond to poetry. 	Personal literacy: The student should be given frequent opportunities: to speak and write about his/her experience in a variety of forms including poetry. Cultural literacy: The student should be induced to write within the discipline of literary forms, e.g. simple verse forms.	Respond to a range of reading materials and media sources. Respond personally to poems independently. Compose a poem.

Time scale: This activity should not fit into specific class periods. It is more appropriate as an occasional activity that achieves continuity through the repetition of a pattern. Once anthologies have been made, an occasional poetry 'festival' of readings can be organised. Recording of personal or choral readings on tape in advance can support the festival.

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Potential areas of difficulty

- Difficulty with symbolic language
- Difficulty with abstract thinking or writing
- Short attention span
- Lack of concentration

Strategies used in this exemplar

- Emphasis on listening to a wide range of poetry
- Engaging the student in making personal choices about poems, using texts appropriate to the students' capabilities
- Engagement with poems that are sensual and concrete rather than analytical
- Students creating short poem/s of their own
- Using ICT to publish poems in the classroom
- Cross-curricular links with music, and also with art in the poster presentation of the student's own work

Resources

- A variety of poetry anthologies, including songs and poems on audio tape or CD
- A folder or scrapbook
- Some frameworks for writing poems (See worksheet, *My Poems*.)
- ICT resources for publishing student poems in the classroom

Exemplar 5: **English**

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities, students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen to a wide range of poetry • read verse for interpretation and meaning • make choices about poems that are personal favourites • write poems of their own and include them in the anthology • participate in occasional conversations about poems they have chosen. (The emphasis in this kind of activity is not on the analysis of texts.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to a variety of poems and songs on an audio source or being read by the teacher. • Listening to other students reading. • Students' silent reading. • Choral readings of poems, normally chosen by the teacher. • Copying of poems into the anthology. • Writing one's own poetry for inclusion alongside the work of 'adult' poets. • Publishing the students' poems in the classroom. • Participating in poetry 'festivals'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher can observe the readiness of students to listen to words for pleasure and meaning. • The teacher can model the pace and dynamics of the reading for the students. • Students can use the criteria suggested by the teacher's reading to comment on and make decisions about their own performances. • As this is a classroom activity that encourages and facilitates a good deal of independent work, the teacher can give individual support to some students who find reading/browsing challenging. • Teacher can check on the progress of the anthologies, and can make suggestions as to which poems might be read.

Exemplar 5: English

The activities in this section are based on the understanding that a poem is a form of organised speech. Approaching poetry as an aural experience promotes perceptions based on our responses to the sound of the text. In fact, the sound of the words is the principal avenue through which we encounter the meaning of a poem. To the listening we bring a vast repertoire of tacit knowledge of how language works as speech—its silences, pace, stress, tone, intonation, loudness.

Encouraging the student to choose a poem or poems is an effective way of promoting ownership and identification. While the tasks remain uniform there is considerable scope for differentiation in the choice of collections of poetry and song from which the students make their selections.

Activity 1

The teacher regularly sets aside a short time (five minutes or so) during class time for reading/listening to a poem. He/she reads or plays on tape a short, accessible song or poem and the students listen. The poem is not discussed or analysed, but on occasion the teacher will read/play the poem a second time or return to one that had been read earlier, especially when asked to do so by the students.

Activity 2

An informal library context is set up in which the students have access to a number of poetry books (preferably young people's anthologies) in which each student can browse in order to choose a poem that appeals to him/her. The poems the teacher has been reading for the class have for the most part been drawn from these anthologies.

When a student chooses a poem he/she copies it into the scrapbook, and so begins the process of making his/her own anthology. The teacher is on hand to support the student who finds copying long text frustrating. If a photocopier is available the text can be copied and inserted into the scrapbook.

Activity 3

As the anthologies develop students are given opportunities to read aloud from them or to prepare choral readings of chosen poems. Added support for readings can come from a group of students preparing a short 'poetry festival' on tape, using introductions and musical interludes.

Activity 4

Time should be set aside for students to write their own short poems, expressing their personal experience and observations in verse. Use the worksheet *My Poems* for this. Texts such as *Does It Have to Rhyme?* by Sandy Brownjohn (Hodder & Stoughton, 1980) also provide plenty of ways to encourage student writing. As has frequently been pointed out, the patterns of thought and expression used by the 'professional' poet are also available to the student. For example, the following form could be common to Shakespeare and a young student:

- 'When I see ...'
- 'When I hear ...'
- 'When I notice ...'
- 'Then I think ...'

The 'quality' of the verse produced by the student is of little importance, and the teacher should be wary of introducing notions of correctness, although sincerity of expression and creativity should be encouraged. It is of considerable importance, however, that the work of the students be acknowledged by 'publication'. The potential of ICT is considerable here as the poems will gain additional status when presented poster-style with accompanying illustration, and are displayed in the classroom and in the student's own anthology.

Exemplar 5: English

My poems

Here are some starters. Can you complete the patterns?

Animals don't smoke

Animals don't _____

Animals don't _____

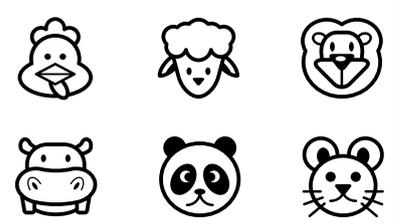
Animals don't _____

But humans _____

And humans _____

And humans _____

And humans _____




The Fish

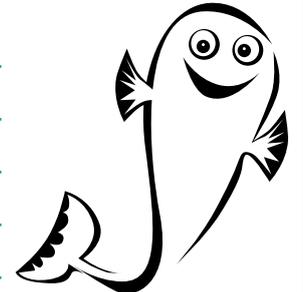
His head is like a _____

His tail swishes like a _____

He moves through the water like _____

His skin feels like _____

He reminds me of _____



The Old House

Why is the _____

And why are the _____

Where is the _____

And where are the _____

It must be that _____



Exemplar 6: **English****Syllabus objectives:** Social literacy, personal literacy

My favourite time of the year

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
Strand: Competence and confidence in using language Strand: Developing cognitive abilities through language	<p>Social literacy: The student should have frequent practice in speaking to and writing for a variety of audiences such as peers, class groups.</p> <p>Personal literacy: The student should be given frequent opportunities to speak and write about his/her experience in a variety of forms.</p>	Use written language to express and reflect on experiences. Write a note or paragraph expressing a preference or opinion about a given situation.

Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to six class periods.**Potential areas of difficulty**

- Limited vocabulary and language difficulties
- Difficulty with concepts of time, such as today, tonight, tomorrow, two months ago, next summer
- Transferring material from a board or a tape to a worksheet or a chart
- Moving from the 'real' to the conceptual—from recounting personal experience to writing, from particular memories or details to generalisation
- Moving from the conceptual to the real, such as relating a fairly lengthy piece of writing to personal experience
- Poor listening skills
- Short attention span including a lack of concentration and application
- Negotiating and co-operating with others
- Difficulty in communicating verbally or non-verbally with others
- Being overwhelmed by the learning process

Exemplar 6: English

Strategies used in this exemplar

- Engaging students in group and individual activities in speaking, listening, reading, and writing
- Emphasis on functional oracy
- Collaborative group activities and role-playing
- Using short texts as both audio and visual stimuli for recollection and composition
- Making the activities more tangible and concrete through the use of real objects incorporating visual and audio elements
- Practising real-life communication tasks

Resources

- Objects associated with various times of year, such as sunglasses, an umbrella or rain hat, caps, pine cones, leaves, Easter cards, Christmas decorations
- Artefacts and/or images of the seasons
- Images and colours for student posters
- Four readings on tape by the teacher or students from other classes
- Copies of the four student texts (See *Worksheet 4*.)
- Worksheets for personal recollection and writing

Exemplar 6: English

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe an object identified with a season, using adjectives of size, colour, and shape engage in comparative conversations, highlighting similarities and differences between objects recognise and use the kinds of words that are used to describe different seasons work in a small group to produce a poster engage in focused listening for significant detail jot down significant details on a simple worksheet prepare and write a personal anecdote related to an activity during a particular season present to the class group, either by reading aloud or on tape complete a short personal essay for marking by teacher and/or display it in the classroom or school library space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative group work. Explaining tasks, assigning roles, and providing stimuli to facilitate student talk. Pair work, which can be extended to group work, in which students compare various seasons. Brainstorming key details from one of the presentations. Exploring and sharing the criteria for a good poster and using these to create their own posters for presentation to the class. Listening to presentations being read. Relating these details to their own experience in a worksheet. Personal writing (alone or in group). Presenting a finished product. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher observes the readiness of students to listen attentively and their confidence in speaking in one-to-one or group discussions. Encouraging self assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Am I happy with how I achieved the task? Did I play my role in the group? Encouraging group assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the group achieve the task set? How well? Could it be improved? The student/group writes keywords on a wall-chart or on the worksheet, and the teacher observes and assists when necessary. The teacher can check on the levels of individual support needed as the students complete their worksheet and poster writing tasks. The teacher gives one-to-one feedback on the final pieces of writing.

Exemplar 6: English

Worksheet 1

That time of the year—spring, summer, autumn and winter

Look at each one of these images and write down the time of the year that goes with it. The first one is done for you. You can write other words (colours, weather, clothes, etc.) too.

	Winter
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	

Exemplar 6: English

Worksheet 2

What makes a good poster?

Fill in the boxes below for the things that will help to make a good poster.

A poster should be

--	--

A poster should have

--	--

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Other things to remember about a poster

--	--	--

Exemplar 6: English

Worksheet 3

Our season



Words we will use [Write out the important words or phrases here.] _____

Images we will include [Make a list of the images, photographs, and other things you will use in the poster.]

Colours for our poster _____

Exemplar 6: English

Worksheet 4

Here are four short pieces of writing by young people. Each one tells about a time of the year that the young person enjoys. They were written in response to the reading test in the 2002 Junior Certificate examination paper. The reading test was called The Four Seasons.

Spring

Springtime is one of my favourite times of the year. It is made up of the months of February, March and April. It is the part of the year when everything starts to come to life again after the dull winter has gone. We live on a farm and we keep lots of sheep. Spring is a very busy time with lambs being born. I usually help my father and mother with the lambing and it's a great sight to see a new lamb finding its feet and learning to walk. They do it so quickly you would be amazed.

Once March and April come the days start to get a little bit longer and brighter and the air is fresh and warmer. The grass begins to grow and the leaves start to come out on the trees. This gives me a great feeling of looking forward, and I know that summer is just around the corner.

Summer

This is summer for me – lazy days at the beach and the feel of the hot sun on my skin. Holidays with my family and friends. The days feel like they will last forever. Little things like buying an ice cream from the ice-cream van are the most important things you have to do.

In the summer time I can wear the kind of clothes I like to wear. An old raggedy tee shirt and jeans or cut-offs are usually enough and I love the feeling of not being weighed down by jumpers, jackets and coats. And, how could I forget, not having to think of school the next day, or the next, or the next!

My favourite memory from the summer time is when I used to go fishing with my older brother at the back strand near Rosslare in County Wexford. This is how I remember it. It is evening and the sun is going down across the water from us. The water is so still it is like a glass plate and when the sun sets the whole place glows orange and red. We never cared those times whether we caught any fish; it was great just being there, together.

Autumn

I think everyone must like the autumn time of the year. Certainly if you like walking in the countryside it is hard to beat the bright, cold but not too cold, days of September or October. I belong to a youth club in my town and on some weekends we go off walking for a whole day. The minibus picks us up at about seven o'clock in the morning when it is still nearly dark. We are usually pretty quiet on the journey; some of us are almost asleep. When the bus stops there's a lot of hustle and bustle as people find their rucksacks and jackets, and get ready to set off. The group leader has the plan about where we are going and we follow her in groups of two or three. As we settle into the walk the talking begins. We talk about everything that's going on in our lives, about school and friends and stuff. One time we even had a big argument about which was better Fair City or Eastenders! It seemed to go on for nearly the whole day!

After a few hours we find a good place to have a snack; the sandwiches taste better than ever because you are so hungry. Often, when we set off walking again, there isn't so much talking and you can just take in the world around you for a while. The leaves are still on the trees but they have changed from being a single colour of green to being a mixture of all sorts of colours of green, orange, brown and grey. The air is very clear at this time of the year and if the walking route takes you up to the top of a hill you can see all around for miles and miles. This is a time when it just feels good to be alive!

The homeward journey on the bus is a bit livelier than in the early morning. Believe it or not we sometimes have a bit of a singsong to pass the time. You get home tired but very satisfied after the long day out in the fresh autumn air.

Exemplar 6: English

Winter

Winter for me is all about looking forward to Christmas. I don't really like the wet weather during that time but Christmas makes up for all that. I am the youngest in my family and my older brothers and sisters all come home for Christmas bringing presents for the whole family, but especially for me!

Christmas where I live is not the same as it is sometimes shown in books or films or on the television. I don't remember ever seeing snow-covered fields and roadways at Christmas time. My parents say that winters were colder when they were young and that there were white Christmases. Nowadays people buy lots and lots of lights for their houses and they have a competition with each other to see who can make their house glow best in the dark nights. Still, no matter how hard they try they cannot match the spectacular sight of Christmas lights in a big town or city. Two years ago, when I was still in primary school, my dad brought me and my friend to Dublin to do some shopping and to see the city lights.

I suppose there is more to winter than just Christmas time, and it can be a lovely feeling to be out when the days are frosty and cold and the sky is clear and blue. Funnily enough it is a different kind of blue to the summer sky; it's a lighter colour altogether. People sometimes tell me I am crazy because I like the cold weather but I do, and that's just the way I am.

Worksheet 5

My favourite season of the year

1. My favourite season is _____
2. The months in this season are _____

3. The weather during this season is _____

4. Things I like to do at this time are _____

5. I like this time of year because _____

This can be extended to include:

6. In _____ I wear _____

7. Last _____ I _____

8. Next _____ I am looking forward to _____

Exemplar 6: English

My favourite time of the year

The purpose of this activity is to give the students an opportunity to explore links between a written text and their personal experiences.

Activity 1

Pre-teaching for the topic – Images of the seasons

The teacher assigns roles to group members, emphasising the importance of listening and turn-taking. The teacher gives stimulus objects/pictures to the group chairperson and tells the group members to describe the object and the time of year associated with it. This can be extended by using a small worksheet (See *Worksheet 1*), and/or using a chart size paper on which to write key words. The group then circles a number of words that it thinks evokes a season.

Hint: The more tangible and tactile the activity, the better.

The teacher and class draw up lists of words associated with each of the four seasons. Blackboard or sheets of flip-chart size paper are used to record them.

Activity 2

The four seasons: conceptual development through comparisons.

The teacher gives the following task to pairs of students. Each student compares two seasons. (Use six possible combinations to make sure all the seasons covered.)

Oral language development would focus on

- the use of comparative adjectives, such as warmer, colder, wetter
- identifying colour differences
- comparing clothes worn during two seasons, etc.

The teacher can intervene to suggest or reinforce different aspects of language development, for example

- using a wall chart to record key words
- encouraging one pair to make a small presentation to another pair who has worked on different seasons.

In this way the students' experience of vocabulary and language usage is expanded and enriched.

Activity 3

The four seasons – our posters

The teacher divides the class into groups to prepare posters of the seasons. The teacher and students develop the criteria for an effective poster.

Students, individually or in groups, decide on the key words to be included in the poster. Each group member may bring in an image, a photograph, or a short description of some personal/family activity associated with the season.

Exemplar 6: English

Activity 4

Putting the poster together

Using *Worksheet 3* each group prepares the design for its poster. The 'quality' of the presentation is not important. What the teacher wants to achieve is that each group member contributes some word/s, image/s, or colour/s to its construction.

The group members present their posters explaining why they chose the words and images they did. The final versions of the posters are displayed where students can use them as reminders when they begin their personal writing tasks.

Activity 5

Listening to some people's favourite seasons

The teacher reads or plays the audio versions of one or more of the student accounts of their favourite seasons. (See *Worksheet 4*.)

If one is chosen for closer attention the students, in pairs, re-read it and write down the phrases from it that remind them of the reasons they like the particular season.

A guided listening approach is desirable here, for example:

- Group 1 could listen for colour words.
- Group 2 could listen for words that refer to weather and /or clothes.
- Group 3 could listen for words that describe activities special to a particular season.
- Group 4 could listen for words that tell what you can see, hear, smell, touch, feel, taste, etc.

Listening can generate more words for wall charts and expand potential vocabulary for upcoming writing tasks.

Activity 6

My favourite time of the year

Using *Worksheet 5* students begin to plan for personal writing.

They write personal accounts of their favourite seasons, using the classroom posters, audio texts from others, the written texts in *Worksheet 4*, and their own worksheets.

Completed pieces of personal writing are assessed by the teacher for progress made and for feedback about the next steps in writing development.

Exemplar 7: **English****Syllabus objectives:** Personal literacy, cultural literacy

Changes 1900-1990 and Transport

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
Strand: Life, society, work and culture in the past Strand unit: Language and culture in late 19th and early 20th century Ireland Strand: Continuity and change over time Strand unit: Transport	Personal literacy: The student should be given frequent opportunities to speak and write about her/his experiences in a variety of forms: diary, journal. Cultural literacy: The student should be encouraged to become aware of the images which occasioned her/his responses.	Produce an original piece of creative writing, drawing on either an external stimulus, or on imagination. Write a story or a piece of prose.

Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to four class periods.**Potential areas of difficulty**

- Short attention span, lack of concentration and application
- Difficulty in applying previously learned knowledge

Strategies used in this exemplar

- Short, repetitive tasks
- The teacher drawing attention to the sequence of the learning tasks
- Teacher instructions that are frequent, but short and clear
- The use of games to reinforce concepts
- Using ICT for observation games and diary extracts
- Cross-curricular links to functional writing in English

Resources

- Photocopies (one for each student) of the two photographs that form the core material for this exercise
- Blackboard and chalk
- Worksheet with a cloze exercise
- Student learning journals for diary entries
- Tape recorders for diary entries spoken on to tape

Exemplar 7: English

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine a photograph and point out what is visible and what appears to be missing • examine a second photograph of the same area in a different time setting, and point out the differences • use clues discovered in the two 'photograph games' to highlight similarities and differences • imagine themselves to be living in a different period and write diary extracts as that person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing a game with a photograph, '<i>I notice that ...</i>' • Contrasting/comparing the two photographs to find similarities. • Playing a game using both photographs, for example '<i>Spot the difference</i>'. • Writing and completing cloze sentences. • Writing or dictating diary entries as someone living in 1900 (Diary entries could be spoken and recorded onto tape.) • Asking students to suggest (orally) to the class what they would write in their diaries after that day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher can assess the student's involvement in the 'noticing' games and can judge the support needed for fuller participation by the student. • The teacher can check on what support is needed by students in the cloze and sentence completion exercise. • The teacher can observe the level of imaginative engagement with the diary exercises.

Exemplar 7: English

Activity 1

Provide each student with a copy of photograph A. Everyone is asked to look carefully at the photograph. Then, beginning with the teacher, each person is called on in turn to complete the sentence, *'I notice that ...'*

Examples of answers might include:

- *'There are no buses or cars, etc.'*
- *'There are cobbles on part of the road only.'*
- *'There are tracks on the road.'*

Whenever something arises that the teacher wants to focus on especially, she/he takes a turn and says, *'I notice that there is ...'*

Activity 2

Provide a copy of photograph B. Everyone is asked to look carefully at his/her own picture. The teacher prompts:

'Has anyone seen a picture of this street before? ... No? ... Look at both pictures together. Do you see the steps on the left-hand side? Do you see the Church on the right-hand side? Now, do you recognise photograph B? Isn't it the same street as in photograph A? Now, what is different about them?'

[Answer: photograph A was taken in 1900 and photograph B was taken in 1990. There are 90 years in between them.]

Activity 3

The students are asked to focus on both photographs together and play the following game:

Each student is asked to find a difference between the two photographs, and when they find one, they should complete the sentence, *'I spy, with my little eye, a difference beginning with ...'*

Alternatively, cloze sentences could be provided, such as:

In photograph B I see _____, in photograph A there are none. (street signs)

In photograph A I see _____, in photograph B there are none. (tracks)

If I could draw in one other form of transport in both photographs, I would draw in the _____. (bicycle)

(Some students can be encouraged to point out what they 'spot' rather than writing the words.)

Exemplar 7: English

Photograph A



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Photograph B



Exemplar 7: English

Activity 4

Provide the following as a worksheet.

Using all the clues we've discovered in these games, rewrite these sentences and try to fill in all the gaps.

- In 1900, there were very few c_____ on the streets. The main form of transport was the h_____ and cart.
- The buildings were very d_____ looking.
- People walked a lot more than they do now. There were tracks in the streets for tr _____. If a person was in a hurry, he could use a bic_____.

As an alternative worksheet this paragraph could be keyed into a word processor or written up on a transparency. The teacher could then fill in the gaps in response to student suggestions.

Activity 5

Provide the following either as a class-work exercise or for homework.

Pretend you are living in 1900. Write or tape an extract for your diary telling about a day when you went on a journey.

Use the hints if you need them and begin like this:

11/2/1990

Dear diary,

Left home at 6.30am in order to reach town by 7.30.

Hints:

- What did you see? (people, dress, houses, forms of transport)
- How did you travel?
- Could you have travelled any other way?
- Why didn't you?

Note: This entire exercise can be done as a class/blackboard exercise if the teacher finds it more appropriate for the group.

Exemplar 7: English

The use of photographs/pictures

It is advisable to use photographs in which the details are few and very clear. Small details become much more obvious if the photograph/picture is in colour, although this is not always possible due to the high cost of colour photocopying.

Good visual sources are available in: Children's books, Irish and British museum shops, library websites.

Exemplar 8: English

Syllabus objectives: Personal literacy, cultural literacy

Dialogue

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
<p>Strand: Developing cognitive abilities through language</p> <p>Strand unit: Writing: clarifying thought through writing</p> <p><i>The child should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write in a variety of genres • write about favourite moments, characters and events in stories. 	<p>Personal literacy: The student should be given frequent opportunities to speak and write about her/his experiences in a variety of forms: dialogue.</p> <p>Social literacy: The skills of reading and listening with understanding and discrimination should be introduced to the student.</p>	<p>Creative writing Produce an original piece of creative writing, drawing on either an external stimulus, or on imagination.</p> <p>Write a role-play or interview.</p>

Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to six class periods.

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Potential areas of difficulty

- Functional language difficulties, especially reading a lengthy text
- Sequencing problems, difficulty with group work and reading aloud

Strategies used in this exemplar

- Teacher/peer support with the reading task
- Repetition and rehearsal of tasks, involving reading aloud and role-playing
- The use of games to reinforce vocabulary and concepts
- Reinforcement of the technical vocabulary required to conduct the interview
- Short, direct instructions offered by the teacher at each stage in the activities
- Reviewing and linking the various stages of the process by the teacher

Resources

- *Worksheet 1:* section of Hello magazine
- Interview with Bryan Mc Fadden and Kerry Katona
- Questions for oral comprehension
- Blackboard and chalk
- *Worksheet 2:* Layout for dialogue
- Tape recorder/music by Westlife/telephones for role-play

Exemplar 8: **English**

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of engaging in these activities students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage in group conversation and recall relevant details • read and comprehend a magazine article and read it aloud • prepare a short 'question and answer' interview • write a short dialogue or, alternatively, tape an interview for radio • role-play a piece of dialogue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about a pop group. • Silent reading followed by individual reading aloud. • A game: table quiz. • Oral selection of questions. • Writing of dialogue or taping of radio interview. • Role-playing an interview with a famous person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher observes the readiness of students to take part in group activities. • Students write or give an oral account of questions chosen for interview. • Students are asked to participate in the table quiz, which tests their comprehension of significant details. • The following questions indicate the degree of further support required by each student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Can the student use a dialogue format? (b) Can the student formulate questions? (c) Can the student differentiate between a question and an answer? (d) Does the student show progress in imaginative development?

Exemplar 8: English

The Junior Certificate English syllabus recommends that the development of skills in speaking and listening should play as important a role in language development as those of reading and writing. Students should learn how to write in a variety of forms, one of which is dialogue. In preparing for such writing, students should be encouraged to participate both in free conversations and in more structured oral activities, such as interviews.

The activities that follow are based on an article from Hello magazine, published on the internet on 19/01/01 (<http://www.angelfire.com/mo2/westlife/sunbry.html>). The exercise contains a short, adapted extract (ten conversational interactions) from the article.

Activity 1

Begin by asking students to bring in photographs of the group Westlife. A piece of music by the group might be played as part of the introduction. The teacher initiates the 'conversation' around the topic through questioning. Questions should be simple and direct, with the purpose of involving the class in a lively conversation, for example:

- How many members are in the band?
- Who can name the members of Westlife?
- How many records have they made? Can we name some of them?
- Where do the band members come from?
- How did they start in the music business?
- What makes the members different from each other?
- What do we like about them and their music?
- What are they doing at the moment?

Activity 2

Introduce article (*Worksheet 1*). Allow time for reading it. If circumstances permit this might present an opportunity for a paired reading exercise.

Alternatively, the interview might be read aloud (in character, as it were) by three students as though it were happening on radio or television. If the classroom atmosphere is secure enough observers might be encouraged to offer their own suggestions as to the delivery of the lines, for example, '*I don't think that's how he/she would say that*'.

Exemplar 8: English

Worksheet 1

(To be used first for silent reading and later for reading aloud.)

Article from Hello magazine

(See details on exemplar table)

A journalist interviews Kerry Katona (from the group Atomic Kitten) and Bryan Mc Fadden (from the group Westlife).

Bryan and Kerry met up at London's glamorous Home House to talk exclusively to Hello of their romance.

Let's begin at the beginning, how did it all start for the two of you?

Kerry: We met in August 1999 when Westlife and Atomic Kitten were doing a Smash Hits tour together. The first time I ever saw Bryan and he asked me out I said 'no'. I wasn't attracted to him.

Bryan: It's funny, all the guys in the band had asked her out, and so I knew she was going to say no, because she had said no to all of the others.

What is your first actual memory of each other?

Kerry: He was standing outside a lift. He was in a black polo-neck and he had long floppy hair. I remember looking up really high at him, because he's so tall and I'm quite little.

Bryan: I heard the lift go ding, and this girl in a bomber jacket and big woolly boots ran out. I heard her chatting and I turned round and she came up to me.

Kerry: Being dead cheeky, I went up to him and said, Hiya! I'm Kerry from Atomic Kitten and my mate Liz is a really big fan of Westlife. He kind of looked at me really weird.

How did it go from there?

Kerry: Well, two weeks later, having got to know each other, we ended up having our first kiss. We were in the hotel having this conversation. Most guys would be pitching you with their eyes, but Bryan sat down and he listened. He was so funny, and he made me laugh. That was it. We had our first kiss—and then we lost touch.

Bryan: Even though we'd both had too much to drink, I knew the first time I kissed Kerry that there was something there. But the next day, sadly, she left with Atomic Kitten for Japan.

Exemplar 8: English

Activity 3

Comprehension questions (oral work) can be done in either of two ways, open response or table quiz.

Open response

The questions can be called out to the class to be answered by students who 'know' the answers.

Table quiz

Students could be put into a table-quiz format, the questions called out, and points awarded accordingly.

The teacher uses the answers to focus on areas of non-comprehension. He/she rereads these sections and discusses them with students.

Comprehension questions for use with Activity 3

These are based on the article on *Worksheet 1*, and are used as a follow-up to a period of silent reading or as responses to the teacher's reading.

- Name the three people in the article.
- When did Kerry and Bryan first meet?
- How did they meet?
- What is the name of the group to which Kerry belongs?
- What is the name of the group to which Bryan belongs?
- What was Bryan wearing when Kerry first noticed him?
- What was Kerry wearing on that occasion?
- How long after they met did they have their first kiss?
- In what way did this incident change the way they both thought?
- To where was Kerry travelling the following day?

Activity 4

Worksheet 1, which has already been used for reading, is now used for work on the format of the dialogue as written. Teacher should

- focus on dialogue format this time
- have students insert the word 'journalist' before each question
- point out the requirements of dialogue, for example the speaker is named at left-hand side
- remind students that there is no need to say '*he said*', '*she replied*', etc.
- get students to underline any words that prove difficult, break up, and use different decoding strategies to try and identify them
- get students to write the first question and the first two answers (or suggest these to the teacher, who can then write them).

Exemplar 8: English

Activity 5

Preparation for writing a dialogue

Tell the students: You are a journalist. You are going to interview either Kerry Katona or Bryan Mc Fadden or any other member of Westlife. (Another well-known figure will serve equally well.)

- Ask students to suggest three or four questions they would like to ask.
- Write these on the blackboard and sequence them (with their help) if necessary.
- Have them role-play one or two of these.
- Ask the students to copy the questions from the blackboard and make up answers to them.
- Ask them to read some of their responses aloud.

Distribute *Worksheet 2* and ask the students to write the dialogue.

Further activities

Setting up a situation like this offers many possibilities for extending the boundaries of the experience. Activities such as the following will emerge naturally from the task:

- writing a short letter to the person requesting the interview
- making an imaginary phone call to set up the interview
- writing the letter that might come back from the person or his/her agent or manager
- writing the diary entries of the reporter on the day of the interview itself
- two or more students working in a group to plan the questions to be asked
- designing the page of the newspaper or magazine in which the interview will appear, including visual elements, other stories, etc.

Alternative approach

The preparation could be entirely oral, and this could be followed by an oral exercise such as taping the interview for radio.

Exemplar 8: English

Worksheet 2

You are a journalist. You are going to interview _____

Write out the interview that you think would take place. Remember, you write your question everywhere you see the heading '*Journalist*'.

Journalist: _____

Interviewee: _____

Exemplar 9: **English****Syllabus objectives:** Social literacy, personal literacy

Language development: through music and drama

Primary School Curriculum (5th and 6th classes)	Junior Certificate (Ordinary level)	Junior Certificate School Programme
<p>Strand: Competence and confidence in using language Strand unit: Writing: developing competence, confidence and the ability to write independently Strand: Emotional and imaginative development through language Strand unit: Writing: developing emotional and imaginative life through writing</p> <p><i>The child should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choose a register of language appropriate to audience and subject • analyse in writing his/her reactions to personal experience • express in writing reactions to the experiences of others. 	<p>Social literacy: The skills of reading and listening with understanding and discrimination should be introduced to the student.</p> <p>Cultural literacy: The student should be encouraged to interpret orally and attempt performances and productions.</p>	<p>Respond personally to stories, poems, plays, newspapers and magazines independently.</p> <p>Produce a piece of writing responding to a letter, story, poem, book, film, newspaper article or TV programme.</p>

Time scale: The full range of learning and assessment activities may take up to five class periods.**Potential areas of difficulty**

- Problems with becoming involved in group work
- Short attention span
- Difficulty in applying of previously learned knowledge

Exemplar 9: English

Strategies used in this exemplar

- Presenting context for the drama as a song, allowing for repetition and assimilation
- Clearly defining group roles for participation in improvisation
- Using a short text
- Dividing sessions into separate yet linked activities, affording teacher an opportunity to recap and reinforce regularly
- Using tangible, homely activities to make the learning task more concrete and approachable for students

Resources

- The story of young girl leaving home (on tape or CD)
- A written copy of the story (optional)
- Loose-leaf pages for the students

Exemplar 9: English

Suggested outcomes	Supporting activities	Assessment strategies
<p>As a result of these activities students should be enabled to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen actively • answer oral comprehension questions • identify with the main character • write briefly about the character's feelings • write an informal note to the character's parents • read letters written by other students • improvise a drama based on the imagined scenario • extend the story beyond the text, either orally or in written form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to story on tape. • Answering oral comprehension questions, establishing the context for the subsequent tasks. • Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the story as recollected – an imaginative letter to the parents in the story. • Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – story (optional) – other students' letters. • Improvising the story as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the mother and father – the central character and a friend – the central character and her parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher observes of students' ability to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – engage in listening – comprehend – use imagination. • The teacher tests writing skills under the following headings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – content – identification with character – the correct use of simple sentences. • Teacher observes students' ability to read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – their own work – the work of others. • The teacher observes students' ability to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – role-play – improvise – extend the story, orally or otherwise.

Exemplar 9: English

The guidelines for teachers of Junior Certificate English recommend that, in so far as it is possible, listening, speaking, reading, and writing should be part of every task.

[This exercise is based on the content of a lecture given by Hugh O Donnell to English teachers at a Department of Education seminar. The idea is further developed in *Some Uses of Role-play as an Approach to the Study of Fiction* by A. Wilson and R. Cockcroft: Wakefield Literature and Learning Project 8–14, Wakefield, LEA.]

The song used is ‘She’s Leaving Home’ by John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

Activity 1

Record the story on tape/CD.

Play the tape twice, three times if necessary.

In an oral comprehension session the following questions might be asked. (The tape can be stopped or replayed as required.)

- At what time does she leave?
- On what day does she leave?
- Does she leave a note?
- Who is the note addressed to?
- How does she leave the house?
- Is she sad about leaving?
- How did her parents treat her?
- Were her parents wealthy?
- What is the one thing she never got at home?
- What was she trying to prove?
- How was she travelling?
- Where was she going?
- Who is the girl meeting?
- On what day is she going to meet him?
- When did she intend to return?

Activity 2

Ask the class to write four or five sentences telling the story, for example, what kind of a life does she have? Why does she leave? What does she intend to do?

Exemplar 9: English

Activity 3

Ask the students to write the letter she has left for her parents.

Place the letters on the floor, in the centre of the classroom.

Each student (or a selected few) chooses a letter, other than his/her own, and reads it aloud (with help from the teacher if necessary).

Activity 4

Drama A: One week before she'd left, the mother and father had had a conversation about her. The mother had noticed that she had been acting strangely. The father hadn't, and didn't want to discuss the matter.

Get the students (in pairs) to improvise the conversation between the mother and father.

Drama B: A few days before leaving she had confided in her best friend 'Brenda'.

Get the students to improvise the conversation between them. Remind them to think hard about Brenda's reaction.

Ask them to think about the situation six months later. Use questions like: What do you think is likely to have happened? Does she miss her parents? Does she regret having left? Would she do the same thing again?

Get the students to improvise a conversation between her and her new friends. One of them convinces her to make contact with her parents. The teacher could play one of these parts as 'Teacher in role'. This would provide an opportunity to introduce different ideas that might be needed to keep the drama going.

Activity 5

Ask the students to write the letter she writes to her parents. Alternatively, students could be asked to suggest the wording of the letter so that the teacher can write it on the blackboard. Place the letters on the floor in the centre of the classroom.

Each student (or a selected few) can choose a letter, other than his/her own, and read it aloud (with help from the teacher if necessary). If the letter on the blackboard is selected the students could be asked to read it aloud from the blackboard.

Further drama options (prepared through prior discussion) might include

- getting the students to improvise the arrival of the post and the parents' reaction to it.
- getting the students to improvise her first visit home.

Exemplar 9: English

Sharon's story

Sharon switched on her bedside lamp so that she could see the clock. It was 6am. She threw back the bedclothes and sat on the side of her bed. She was fully clothed. She walked over to the window and peeped out. It was Saturday morning, not many people about. The sky was just beginning to lighten. She took an envelope from under her pillow and propped it against the clock. Written on the front of it was *'Mum and Dad'*. She took her backpack (already packed) from inside her wardrobe, sneaked down the stairs, and left the house by the back door. As she reached the gate she looked back, hesitated a minute, and then ran down the street clutching her handkerchief.

She couldn't stand another day in that house! They treated her like a baby. She couldn't stick it anymore, even though they gave her everything she wanted. Money was never a problem. But they wouldn't give her the one thing she really wanted. They couldn't even see that what she wanted most was freedom! She had told them so in the note, they were always going on about making sacrifices and about the struggle they'd had. She felt that they never really thought about her, about her needs, about the fact that she was growing up, that she needed friends, that she had to have space! Well, now she'd show them.

She had her train tickets, she had some money, and she had an appointment with the manager of a supermarket in a nearby town on Monday morning. She was going to be independent. They would never find her!