

Background

Students are expected to have acquired a reasonable degree of language proficiency in English by the time they come to Class XI, and the course will aim, essentially, to promote the higher-order language skills.

For a large number of students, the higher secondary stage will be a preparation for the university, where a fairly high degree of proficiency in English may be required. But for another large group, the higher secondary stage may be a preparation for entry into the world of work. The Core Course should cater to both groups by promoting the language skills required for academic study as well as the language skills required for the workplace.

Objectives

The general objectives at this stage are:

- to listen to and comprehend live as well as recorded oral presentations on a variety of topics.
- to develop greater confidence and proficiency in the use of language skills necessary for social and academic purposes.
- to participate in group discussions/interviews, making short oral presentations on given topics.
- to perceive the over-all meaning and organisation of the text (i.e., the relationships of the different "chunks" in the text to each other).
- to identify the central/main point and supporting details, etc.
- to build communicative competence in various registers of English.
- to promote advanced language skills with an aim to develop the skills of reasoning, drawing inferences, etc. through meaningful activities.
- to translate texts from Mother Tongue(s) into English and vice versa.
- to develop ability and knowledge required in order to engage in independent reflection and enquiry.
- To develop the capacity to appreciate literary use of English and also use English creatively and imaginatively.

At the end of this stage learners will be able to do the following:

- read and comprehend extended texts (prescribed and non-prescribed) in the following genres: fiction, science fiction, drama, poetry, biography, autobiography, travel and sports literature, etc.
- text-based writing (i.e., writing in response to questions or tasks based on prescribed or unseen texts)
- understand and respond to lectures, speeches, etc.
- write expository/argumentative essays of 250-500 words, explaining or developing a topic, arguing a case, etc.
- write formal/informal letters and applications for different purposes.
- write items related to the workplace (minutes, memoranda, notices, summaries, reports; filling up of forms, preparing CVs, e-mail messages, etc.).
- taking/making notes from reference materials, recorded talks etc.

Language Items

The Core Course should draw upon the language items suggested for Classes IX-X and delve deeper into their usage and functions. Particular attention may, however, be given to the following areas of grammar:



- the uses of different tense forms for different kinds of narration (e.g. media commentaries, reports, programmes, etc.).
- the use of passive forms in scientific and innovative writings.
- converting one kind of sentence/clause into a different kind of structure as well as other items to exemplify stylistic variations in different discourses.
- modal auxiliaries — uses based on semantic considerations.

The study of formal (descriptive) grammar, at a very elementary level, will be introduced in Class XI. A book for the Core Course containing suitable exercises on grammar as well as basic phonology is recommended. A conscious knowledge of some grammatical rules and sound patterns may be useful and interesting at this stage.

Methods and Techniques

The techniques used for teaching should promote habits of self-learning and reduce dependence on the teacher. In general, we recommend a multi-skill, learner-centred, activity based approach, of which there can be many variations. The core classroom activity is likely to be that of silent reading of prescribed/selected texts for comprehension, which can lead to other forms of language learning activities such as role play, dramatisation, group discussion, writing, etc. (although many such activities could be carried out without the preliminary use of textual material). It is important that students be trained to read independently and intelligently, interacting actively with texts, with the use of reference materials (dictionaries, thesauruses, etc.) where necessary. Some pre-reading activity will generally be required, and the course books should suggest suitable activities, leaving teachers free to devise other activities when desired. So also, the reading of texts should be followed by post reading activities. It is important to remember that every text can generate different readings. Students should be encouraged to interpret texts in different ways.

Group and pair activities can be resorted to when desired, but many useful language activities can be carried out individually.

In general, teachers should encourage students to interact actively with texts and with each other. Oral activity (group discussion, etc.) should be encouraged.

ENGLISH (ELECTIVE) CLASSES XI-XII

Background

The course is intended to give students a high level of competence in English with an emphasis on the study of literary texts and will provide extensive exposure to a variety of rich texts of world literature as well as to Indian writings in English, including classics, and develop sensitivity to the creative and imaginative uses of English and give them a taste for reading with delight and discernment. The course will be pitched at a level which the students may find challenging.

The course is primarily designed to equip the students to pursue higher studies in English literature and English language at the college level and prepare students to become teachers of English.



Objectives

The general objectives at this stage are:

- to provide extensive exposure to a variety of writings in English including some classics.
- to develop sensitivity to the literary and creative uses of language.
- to further expand the learners' vocabulary resources through the use of dictionary, thesaurus and encyclopaedia.
- to develop a taste for reading with discernment and delight.
- to initiate the study of formal English grammar and elementary linguistics and phonetics.
- to enable learners to translate texts from mother tongue into English and vice versa.
- to critically examine a text and comment on different aspects of it.

At the end of this stage the Elective Course would ensure that the learner

- grasps the global meaning of the text, its gist and understands how its theme and sub-theme relate.
- relates the details to the message in it; for example, how the details support a generalization or the conclusion either by classification or by contrast and comparison.
- comprehends details, locates and identifies facts, arguments, logical relationships, generalizations, conclusions, etc.
- draws inferences, supplies missing details, predicts outcomes, grasps the significance of particular details and interprets what he/she reads.
- assesses the attitude and bias of the author.
- infers the meanings of words and phrases from the context; differentiates between apparent synonyms and appreciates the nuances of words.
- appreciates stylistic nuances, the lexical structure, its literal and figurative use and analyses a variety of texts.
- identifies different styles of writing like humorous, satirical, contemplative, ironical and burlesque.
- does text-based writing (writing in response to questions or tasks based on prescribed as well as 'unseen' texts).
- develops the advanced skills of reasoning, making inferences, judgements, etc.
- develops familiarity with the poetic uses of language including features of language through which artistic effect is achieved.

GRAMMAR

Students opting for the Elective Course will be introduced to the study of the basics of English grammar and phonology. It is recommended that a book based on a suitable pedagogical model that presents the basics of functional grammar and the bare essentials of the phonology of English be used.

The basic concepts in the phonology of English will include the sounds of English, the syllable stress, strong and weak forms and intonation. The course will help the students consult a pronouncing dictionary when required.

Methods and Techniques

The techniques used for teaching should promote habits of self-learning and reduce dependence on the teacher. The multi-skill, learner-centred, activity based approach already recommended for the previous stages of education, is still in place, though it will be used in such a way that silent reading of prescribed/selected texts for comprehension will receive greater focus as one of the activities. Learners will be trained to read independently and intelligently, interacting actively with texts and other reference materials (dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopaedia, etc.) where necessary. Some pre-reading activity will generally be required, and course books should suggest those. The reading of texts should be followed by post reading activities. It is important to remember that every text can generate different readings. Students should be encouraged to interpret texts in different ways, present their views of critics on a literary text and express their own reactions to them. Some projects may be assigned to students from time to time. For instance, students may be asked to put together a few literary pieces on a given theme from English as well as regional literatures.