



TEACHERS' GUIDE
SYLLABUS 2023-2026

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THEORY GUIDANCE

- These examinations involve both communication and performance skills.
- The material should be age appropriate for the Learner and the standard of the grade.
- Ensure the text and emotional understanding of the pieces are understood and appropriate for the Learner.
- Every individual piece should be introduced with a title, author and a brief outline of setting in prose or acting.
- Clean copies of each piece must be brought to the examination.
- Skills should reflect to an appropriate level the following:

| Poetry | Prose | Acting |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | |
| Understanding Text | Understanding Text | Understanding Text |
| Diction | Diction | Diction |
| Projection | Projection | Projection |
| Vocal Expression | Vocal Expression | Vocal Expression |
| Facial Expression | Facial Expression | Facial Expression |
| Sincerity | Sincerity | Sincerity |
| Spontaneity | Spontaneity | Spontaneity |
| Pace | Pace | Pace |
| Pause | Pause | Pause |
| Modulation | Modulation | Modulation |
| Rhythm and Shape | Atmosphere | Physicality |
| Enjambed Lines | Dialogue | Body Language |
| Atmosphere/Mood | Narration | Movement |
| Connection with listener | Connection with listener | Connection with listener |

SPEECH AND DRAMA

ENTRY LEVEL

Transition

Word pictures

Word pictures are a mental response to reading and hearing words e.g. the ruby red leaves fall from the tree. As an artist uses paint to create a coloured picture the words paint a picture in the mind of the Speaker. This will allow “expression” both vocal and facial to create the mood and meaning. Give one example from each of your pieces.

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

Grade 1

Phrasing

A Phrase is a word, or a group of words expressing one thought or idea and is spoken on one breath. Each phrase makes sense on its own, but when linked with others it creates a complete idea. Extra marks will be awarded if examples can be given from performed work.

Grade 2

Reading Aloud

Sharing and connecting a piece of text with an audience. This is done by including:

- Imagination
- Facial Expression
- Understanding of text
- Holding book correctly, so easy to turn page and not covering face
- Lifting eyes from page
- Use of punctuation
- Pause
- Dialogue and narration
- Reading a phrase ahead

- Mood
- Phrasing
- Modulation

Grade 3

Authors – Minimum 3 facts to include other work

Pieces – meaning, understanding, views, aspects of theory as listed below.

Pause

The use of pause is essential when sharing words with an audience. It gives life and shape to our speaking and reading.

- Sense Pause
Taken to make the meaning clear but not always shown by punctuation. i.e. the cat cried/ for food
- Dramatic Pause
Is a pause of intense feeling. It indicates feelings such as anger, sadness, or joy. The pause may be sustained for as long as the full strength of the feeling can be held and then let go. i.e.: and the winner is.....
- Grammatical/Punctuation Pause
This pause occurs at punctuation marks, and they give a guide to the length of pause. A full stop allows renewal of breath.
- Suspensory Pause
Taken at the end of a line of poetry where there is no punctuation, and the sense carries on. We do not take a breath, but we take a tiny pause to show the shape of the verse. This is called an enjambed line. i.e.:

Blink again

Like butterfly wings

Extra marks will be awarded if examples can be given from your work.

Although not required for discussion in this grade teachers should introduce gradually the use of all other verse and prose pauses – Emphatic, Rhetorical, Caesural, Metrical, End Stopped.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

Grade 4

Plays and/or stories should be read in entirety and will be discussed.

Authors – Minimum 3 facts to include other work.

Pieces – meaning, understanding, views, aspects of theory as listed below:

Organs of articulation

- Lips
- Tongue
- Teeth
- Hard palate
- Soft palate
- Alveolar ridge
- Jaw

Modulation

A well-modulated voice uses a variety of pitch, pace, pause, inflection, tone colour, quality and quantity to suit the text. Modulation is the umbrella term that encompasses these vocal qualities.

- Pitch
The range of the voice e.g.
High pitch – Excitement/joy/fear/anger
Medium pitch – Conversation/description and storytelling
Low pitch - Pleading, sorrow and some kinds of fear and anger
- Pace
The tempo that the words are spoken
Quick pace - Excitement/Panic/Nervousness
Medium pace – Used for conversation (see medium pitch)
Slow pace - Thoughtfulness (See low pitch)
- Inflection
This is the glide of the voice up and down the vocal scale that gives meaning to words.

- Pause
A stoppage of sound but not of thought. We pause to take a breath to bring meaning and to emphasise (See page 4)
- Tone quality – The feel of the voice whether hard or gentle etc.,
- Tone quantity - This is the amount of volume given to the voice whether loud or soft etc.,
- Tone colour – Allowing the tone to reflect the emotion and subtlety of the text
- Emphasis – Means stress to bring out a word or words to make them more important. This can be done in different ways:
 - Make the word louder
 - Change the pitch and pace of the voice
 - Take a pause before or after the word

Grade 5

Plays and/or stories should be read in entirety and will be discussed.

Authors – Minimum 3 facts to include other work

Pieces – meaning, understanding, views, aspects of theory as listed below

Breathing

Breathing is essential for life. There are three main ways to breathe

Abdominal (Lower chest)

Relaxed breathing when we are sitting or sleeping

Clavicular

Breathing when the air is inhaled and exhaled using the top part of the chest, this may cause stiffness in the shoulders and neck which doesn't provide no real vocal support and lack of vocal quality.

Intercostal diaphragmatic breathing

This method is used to give full support to voice and speech.

As we breathe in the external intercostal muscles contract raising the ribs upward and outward. The diaphragm then moves from its normal dome shape into a flattened

position allowing more room for the lungs to expand. This support allows a controlled stream of air to travel through the windpipe, between the vocal folds to create sound and continues into the mouth. The sound will pick up resonance as it travels.

Voice production

Projection

This involves the balance between mind, body, and voice to ensure good clear communication. It is essential to appear to be confident with good stance, involvement and audience eye contact when speaking.

Vocal projection

Relies on good vocal support, balanced resonance, forward placing and the voice is then kept within its optimum pitch to avoid strain and shouting.

Forward placing

The forward placing of sound (the direction of the sound to the front of the face) may be checked when vibrations are felt on the lips e.g., humming an MMM sound.

Resonance

Is the amplification of the voice using resonators (hollow chambers) of the head and body. The sound travels from the vocal folds on the outgoing air and develops strength along with tone from the resonators as it passes by or through. A clear well projected voice makes a balanced use of all the resonators.

Main resonators are:

- **Nose** and nasal cavities
- **Sinuses** around the eyes and forehead
- **Pharynx** at the back of the throat, can change shape slightly
- **Mouth** the only resonator that can change shape and size at will
- **Mouth cavities** hard and soft palate
- **Chest or thorax**

- Good breath support along with forward placing of sound is essential for obtaining balanced resonance and may be acquired with practice.

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6

Knowledge from previous Grades should be known at this level.

Plays and/or stories should be read in entirety and will be discussed

Authors – Minimum 3 facts to include other work

Pieces – meaning, understanding, views, aspects of theory as listed below:

Formation of speech sounds

There are two types of speech sound - **VOWELS AND CONSONANTS**. They are shaped by the organs of articulation – jaw, lips, teeth, tongue, alveolar ridge, hard and soft palates.

In this Grade the Vowel sounds are to be studied and examples given from work performed.

Vowels

Vowel sounds are open sounds with a free passage of air. Well-shaped, they provide musical quality and carry power. There are different classifications:

Monophthongs – One sound only when speaking

Students should have the ability to differentiate between the five long monophthongs and the seven short ones.

Long Monophthongs

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| EE | AH | AW | OO | ER |
|----|----|----|----|----|

Short Monophthongs

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| A | E | I | O | U | OO | UH |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|

UH or ER – Neutral vowel – see below

Diphthongs (Two sounds)

Two sounds glide together; one long and one short monophthong to form each of the four main diphthongs

| | | |
|------------------|--------------|--------|
| I (MY) | Ah + I | (pit) |
| OW (HOW) | Ah + oo | (good) |
| OY (BOY, VOICE) | Aw (saw) + i | (pit) |
| U (YOU, CONSUME) | E (me) + oo | (good) |

Vanish Diphthongs

Two short sounds gliding together. There are only two of these

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| AY (MADE, PLAY, WAIT, GREAT) | E (met) + i | (pit) |
| OH (LOW or SEW) | 0 (go) + oo | (good) |

Triphthongs (Three sounds)

Long, short plus the Neutral vowel (uh or an ER sound depending on local area. There are four of these

| | | |
|------|--------------|--------|
| IRE | Ah + i + uh | FIRE |
| OWER | Ah + oo + uh | FLOWER |
| OYER | Aw + i + uh | COIR |
| URE | I + oo + uh | PURE |

The neutral vowel

This is the most common vowel sound in spoken English despite the fact that it occurs only in unstressed syllables. It is a short indeterminate sound (uh) giving rhythmic flow to speech. If ignored, speech becomes jerky. Learners should be able to identify these in the texts they are using. In verse the neutral vowel may have to be ignored to keep the metre.

Grade 7

Knowledge from previous Grades should be known at this level.

Plays and/or stories should be read in entirety and will be discussed

Authors – Minimum 3 facts to include other work

Pieces – meaning, understanding, views, aspects of theory as listed below:

Consonants

In this Grade the Consonant sounds are to be studied and examples given from work performed.

These are sounds where the breath flow is interrupted (either partially or completely) by the organs of articulation. They provide the framework for speech and shape the sound into words. Crisp consonants provide clarity, energy and firmness.

| | | Lips (bi-labial) | Lips & Teeth (labio dental) | Tongue & Teeth (lingua Dental) | Tongue & Hard palate (lingua palatal) | Tongue & Soft Palate (guttural) | Oral |
|-----------|----------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|------|
| Explosive | Voiced | B | | | D, J | G | |
| | Unvoiced | P | | | t, ch | K | |
| Sustained | Voiced | M, W | V | TH (thatch) | L, R, S, Sh, Y | | |
| | Unvoiced | wh | F | th (that) | n, z, zh | ng | h |

How they are made

Whether VOICED or UNVOICED:

Voiced consonants have more weight of voice

B, D, G, M, N, NG, V, TH (father) J, L, Z

Unvoiced consonants are firm but lighter

p, t, k, w, f th (thanks) ch, s

Whether EXPLOSIVE OR SUSTAINED

Explosive consonants are like a little explosion of sound

p B t D k G ch J

Sustained consonants are lengthy in sound

M n ng S z R L th TH

Nasal consonants are made with breath coming through the nose and not the mouth

M n ng (as in the word Morning)

The learner may be asked to make the sound of a vowel or consonant (not the alphabetical letter) and to know how they are formed.

Grade 8

Knowledge from previous Grades should be known at this level.

Plays and/or stories should be read in entirety and will be discussed

Pieces – historical context, meaning, understanding, views, aspects of theory as listed below:

Vocal and physical preparation of pieces should be discussed with the examiner. Consider the context and period in which your pieces are set. The application of physical and vocal techniques applied to enhance performance. Examples of how this character uses his/her vowels?

Metres in English poetry

A line of formal verse is measure in metric feet, some of which have two beats and some three beats either weak or strong. The flow of rhythm in verse can be measured by the distribution of strong (stressed) and weak (unstressed) syllables. This is called the metre.

The Metre

The arrangement of strong and weak syllables into feet. A foot is a group of syllables described as either weak or strong.

Four main metres

| | | | |
|------------|------------------|-------|------------|
| IAMBIC | Weak/Strong | u/ | Today |
| TROCHAIC | Strong/Weak | /u | Happy |
| ANAPAESTIC | Weak/Weak/Strong | u u / | Understand |
| DACTYLIC | Strong/Weak/Weak | / u u | Happily |

Also used occasionally within the structure of one of the above to provide variation or emphasis are the following varieties:

| | | | |
|------------|-------------------------|--|---------------|
| SPONDEE | Strong/Strong | | Amen |
| PYRRHIC | Weak/Weak | | Of a |
| CHORIAMB | Strong/Weak/Weak/Strong | | Over the Hill |
| AMPHIBRACH | Weak/Strong/Weak | | Remember |

Students should be encouraged to find examples of each type of metre and to work out which kind of metre is used for different poems e.g., the iambic is often used in lyrical poetry

Rhythm

Rhythm is in all things, even life itself. It is found in the natural rise and fall, the flow of language and is governed by contrast. Rhythm in prose and poetry creates the underlying mood of the piece. A writer often uses changes in rhythm to alter the pace of atmosphere. Encourage students to work out what is meant by the effective use of language and be ready to suggest poets, authors, or playwrights who especially appeal to them.

Verse Forms

Candidates should be able to discuss any of the following and find examples to back up comments.

Lyric verse – covers poetry of personal thought and feeling.

Ode – Often based on the Greek choral ode with strophe, antistrophe and epode. The theme is usually lofty, moral or sacred or addressed to an object or emotion. It often has elaborate language images.

Ballad – Originally sung. This is a narrative poem, often with a chorus and usually in rhyming quatrains “abab”. Ballads are often about love or war.

Elegy - A poem of mourning.

Narrative – A poem telling a story.

Other verse forms include:

Free verse – As the name suggests it is free of pattern. It can be unrhymed or partially rhymed and lines may be of varying length.

Sprung rhythm – Created by Gerard Manley Hopkins. The stresses are counted but not the syllables.

Blank verse – This is unrhymed and usually has five iambic feet to a line though variations occur in metre and feet.

Monody -This is another poem of mourning but addressed to a specific individual.

Villanelle – Originally French. It has five stanzas of three lines each and one of four lines and has a complicated rhyme structure in which whole lines are repeated in different sequences.

Epic verse – Has lofty themes e.g., Homer’s ILIAD.

Dramatic verse – Written as dialogue by such writers as Shakespeare, Christopher Fry, T.S. Eliot and Tony Harrison.

Sonnet – A poem of fourteen lines. Listed below the four different forms.

Italian or Petrarchan – Invented by Petrarch, divided into an **OCTAVE** (first eight lines) and a **SESTET** (last six lines) with a definite break in thought between them

Shakespearean – This sonnet has three rhyming quatrains ending with a rhyming couplet

Spenserian (Link Sonnet) – This sonnet also has three rhyming quatrains and a concluding rhyming couplet but with a different rhyme scheme.

Miltonic – This sonnet has a rhyming scheme as for the Petrarchan but no break of thought.

For this Grade candidates are expected to be able to understand, discuss and apply to their work, theoretical and technical knowledge as set out in previous Grades within the syllabus.

Candidates should be aware of the evolution of poetry, literature and drama in the English language. They should explore the main periods, writer and influences. Candidates should be able to discuss the periods in which their pieces are set.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Guidance

Learners are able to choose their own subject, therefore guidance should be given to ensure this is a subject in which they are genuinely interested.

Speeches should last between two and three minutes.

Speeches should follow the basic structure of an introduction, three or four key points and a conclusion.

Notes may be used as an aide-memoire.

Learners should demonstrate awareness of modulation in their delivery.

Learners should be prepared to discuss the topic further with the Examiner.

ENTRY LEVEL

Introductory and Transition Grades

Learners should discuss a book that they have recently read, read multiple times or a topic that they can easily research and speak about confidently.

The speech should have an introduction, a good structure and address main points e.g.

Introductory Grade - plot, favourite character, favourite part of the narrative and the ending of the story.

Transition Grade - the animal's strengths, dangers faced, their habitat and the food they eat **OR** object and its importance.

Include personal elements as well as facts – why the student chose this particular book, animal, or object.

Discussion with the examiner should be fluent and confident.

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

Grade 1

Learners are able to choose their own subject therefore guidance should be given to ensure that this is a subject in which they are genuinely interested.

Learners should discuss the content of their talk, to include:

- Why they chose their subject
- What aspects of their research they found the most interesting

Grade 2

Confidence and knowledge of the subject is expected here.

Learners should discuss the content of their talk to include:

- Why they chose their subject
- What aspects of their research they found the most interesting
- Key points from their talk
- Key points to think about when sight reading. (See Grade 2 Speech & Drama theory notes)

Grade 3

Speeches should be of two to three minutes duration with a clear structure.

The subject matter is identified in this grade so Teachers and Learners should choose carefully, playing to their interests as far as is possible, including:

- Construction of talk
- Content of talk
- Why they chose their subject
- What aspects of their research they found the most interesting
- Developing an idea
- Making a list of points and placing in a logical order
- Breath support, specifically intercostal diaphragmatic breathing. (See Grade 6 Speech & Drama theory notes)

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

Grade 4

The speech should demonstrate clear development of skills and should include:

- Relevance to the chosen audience
- Pertinent detail and knowledge
- Clear introduction, purpose and conclusion

- Personal presentation
- Body language
- Gesture
- Facial expression
- Modulation (see Grade 4 Speech & Drama)
- Organs of articulation (see Grade 4 Speech & Drama)

Grade 5

- The speech should be more developed at this grade, with a clear connection between the understanding and expression of ideas, using appropriate vocabulary.
- Speeches should have a clear structure and include convincing arguments to underpin the viewpoint presented.
- The importance of well-formed consonant and vowel sounds to the public Speaker (see Grade 6 and 7 Speech & Drama)
- Formation of Speech sound
- There are two types of speech sound – Vowels and Consonants. They are shaped by the organs of articulation – jaw, lips, teeth, tongue, alveolar ridge, hard and soft palates.

Consonants are important no matter what accent. These are sounds where breath flow is interrupted (either partially or completely) by the organs of articulation. They provide the framework for speech and shape the sound into words. Crisp consonants provide clarity, energy, and firmness.

Vowels

Vowel sounds are open sounds with a free passage of air. For more details and classifications (see Speech and Drama Theory notes).

Learners should be prepared to discuss each topic in detail with the Examiner, and their conversation should reveal thorough knowledge underpinned by focused research.

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6

This grade to include the following:

- Speech as in intermediate grades
- If visual aids are being used ensure they are necessary and enhance the speech. Ensure they can be seen clearly by the audience.
- The subject matter is identified so Teachers and Learners should choose carefully playing to their interests as far as possible.
- Learners should be prepared to discuss the topic in detail with the Examiner and their conversation should reveal thorough knowledge that is underpinned by focused research.
- Introducing a Speaker (formally or informally)
- Confirm with the Speaker how they wish to be introduced and the title of the speech. The purpose is to build a bridge between the Speaker and the audience to create a good atmosphere.
- Include a warm welcome when introducing the Speaker by their name, and reference their qualifications (if the Speaker wishes these to be announced).
- The Introduction should be concise and make it clear to the audience the topics of interest that will be included. It should mention what links the Speaker to the audience. Do not fall into the trap of trying to provide the sort of detail that the Speaker is about to deliver.
- Thank the Speaker after their delivery.

Mention some content from the speech (to show that you have listened) and be sincere and concise.

Mnemonics may help to remember the structure that has to be included eg:

TIQS = Topic – Importance-Qualification –Speaker

Or

ISQ = Introduce subject – Stress importance to audience –qualifications of Speaker

- Proposing a Vote of Thanks

The Vote of Thanks should clearly thank the Speaker. It should last no longer than three minutes - this proposal should pick out two or three

points from the speech that the audience may have found particularly interesting

Vocal Skills

- Breathing
- Resonance
- Projection
- Diction
- Modulation
- See Speech & Drama notes Grade 4 - 7

Grade 7

Examiners will be looking for clear Structure and a well developed argument within the time limit. Again good presentation skills and a sense of occasion should be in evidence
The choice of subject matter should be chosen carefully

Learners should be prepared to discuss the topic in detail with the Examiner and their conversation should reveal thorough knowledge underpinned by focused research

▪ The usefulness of Debating

The intricate detail of debating is not necessary. A broad knowledge is helpful. It is an extremely good tool. Most politicians have been in debating societies to hone their skills. It sharpens the mind so that immediate responses to arguments may be spoken logically and with authority.

(There are many useful reference books on the subject)

Teachers and Learners should explore the debating procedure in some detail: while it is not necessary to know the intricate detail of debating, a sound knowledge is essential

- Impromptu Speaking

Some would say one of the most challenging talks as the occasion and purpose have to be covered with clear thinking. If there is time, write down a few of the most important points that are essential to cover on this occasion. Do not waver from the points. Keep to the points succinctly, clearly and with a sense of occasion and spontaneity.

Teachers and Learners should explore impromptu speaking in some detail; it would be helpful for Learners to refer to their own preparation for the Impromptu Speech requirement of this grade and be able to outline the challenges and successes.

- Successful Public Speaking requires the following:

- Diligent preparation

- Credible personal presentation

- Connection with the audience

- Appropriate eyeline

- Sincerity

- Spontaneity in delivery

- Vocal skills

- Communicative body language

- Gesture and expression

Grade 8

The Speeches

Demonstrable evidence of research into the Presenter's chosen topic and its impact on society using techniques gained from previous grades including speech, voice, body language, visual aids etc., is essential to successfully convey their point of view to the audience.

The Learner's delivery of the three speeches required for this examination should demonstrate all the theoretical and technical knowledge required for the discussion and in the highest achievement, demonstrate flair and accomplishment.

The Learner's discussion with the Examiner should reveal sound knowledge of all aspects of theory as outlined above and can be found in the Speech and Drama notes.

For this Grade, candidates are expected to be able to understand, discuss and apply to their work, the theoretical and technical knowledge as set out in the previous grades within this syllabus. These will include the following:

- Clarity
- Breath support
- The planning and arrangement of a speech
- Vocal projection
- Communication with the audience
- Body Language/Posture
- The Proposal of Toasts
- The Proposer should be well prepared for the occasion.
- The purpose and names written down in case of nerves or lapse of memory.
- A toast is all the better for sounding spontaneous, perhaps witty depending upon the occasion but above all brief. Jokes can be a problem and if in doubt – leave out.
- It should end with asking the gathering to be upstanding and then saying
- “To (e.g. “George” or “The new building”
- Reply to a Toast
- Should be equally brief
- Reference should be given to points made in the proposal
- Quotes or anecdotes may included; humour to be included as appropriate
- Learners should be confident in discussing the key points to remember when introducing a Speaker and proposing a vote of thanks.
- Venue characteristics and facilities including:
 - Acoustics, audio and other technical requirements
 - Stage, podium or lectern
 - Size of venue and placement of audience

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

ENTRY LEVEL

There are four Grades: Preparatory, Introductory, Preliminary and Transition.

At each level Learners should be able to:

- Present themselves for a formal situation
- Enter room confidently and greet the Examiner and introduce themselves clearly
- Discuss chosen topics with knowledge and enthusiasm
- Complete the form with their Teacher (in preparation for the examination) and discuss its contents with the Examiner.

Preparatory

To enter room with confidence and introduce themselves

Make eye contact

Learner should be able to describe their favourite place and be able to hold a conversation about it.

Introductory

To enter the room with confidence and introduce themselves

Make eye contact

Learner should research their favourite subject or sport, to be able to discuss with confidence

Preliminary

To enter room with confidence and introduce themselves

Ensure form is filled in correctly

Preparation should involve questions relating to the answers on the form to ensure confident responses can be given during the examination

Find facts about hobby, progress e.g. competitions, famous participants, reasons why they enjoy it

Transition

To enter room with confidence and introduce themselves

Ensure form is filled in correctly

Preparation should involve questions relating to the answers on the form to ensure confident responses can be given during the examination

Three or more details about your dreams and ambitions

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

There are three Grades: Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 (Foundation Medal)

At each level Learners should be able to complete a simple CV which will form the basis for discussion in the examination.

Grade 1

Learners should be able to discuss the process of compiling of CV including information/font/layout

- Answer questions arising from CV with enthusiasm and confidence
- Discuss importance of introductions, handshakes and eye contact

Grade 2

The Learner should be able to discuss the process of compiling of CV including information/font/layout

The Learner should explore how to make a good impression (smart appearance/manners/posture/smiling/clear speech)

The Learner should prepare the reasons that it is important to make a good impression

There should be a sense of occasion in posture and presentation

The Learner should be able to sense of sharing feelings about the importance of the object that is brought into the interview

Grade 3

Learner should be able to discuss the process of compiling of cv including information/font/layout

- The Learner should show confidence in posture and body language throughout
- No slouching, hands in pockets or looking at the floor
- Learner should wait to be asked to sit down
- Learner should wear suitable attire that would befit an interview
- Learner should understand the information included in a cv and be able to discuss confidently
- Learner should select extra-curricular activities that can develop life skills

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

Grade 4

Learner should present the completed cv and should be able to discuss the process of compiling a CV including information/font/layout

Learners should enter the room confidently, greet the Examiner and introduce themselves clearly

Learner should read articulately, fluently and expressively See Speech and Drama notes

- Discuss the reading with the Examiner the content and meaning
- Discuss the importance of personal presentation at interview taking into account personal presentation, how to enter a room; how to shake hands; how to speak clearly and use vocal skills effectively. Discuss all the necessary aspects of preparation before attending interviews including travel arrangements, background on companies, questions to ask etc.,
- Research the role of Social Media platforms and the impact on the employment market so that this can be discussed with the Examiner

Teachers and Learners may find it helpful to work on correct breathing technique and breath support in preparation for this examination

See Theory notes in Speech and Drama

Grade 5

The CV should now be clear, concise and in date order.

Learners should ensure the article relates to their chosen profession and be able to discuss both the article and the job with a coherent flow.

Learners should have the ability to communicate with good conversational skills, the information in the articles and the ability to express their opinions supported by facts.

Good sight reading skills are needed for this Grade

(See Theory notes in Speech and Drama for Sight reading skills)

Learners should be able to discuss the different types of interview and the advantages or disadvantages of each

Interviews may include telephone interview; panel interview; assessment day; group interview; individual interview; multimodal interview

Learners should be able to enter the room confidently, greet the Examiner and introduce themselves clearly;

- Present the completed CV and discuss its contents in detail
- Read articulately fluently and expressively
- Discuss the reading with the Examiner in terms of context and meaning
- Discuss with the Examiner the preparation necessary before attending an interview taking into account for example researching the organisation; being secure about how to get to the interview venue; importance of punctuality; how to dress; preparation of possible questions/answers

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6

At this level it will be expected that students demonstrate an understanding of skills gained at previous grades to attain the standard necessary when applying for an interview.

- General guidelines
- Greeting

- Time Management
- Research
- Appropriate questions
- Exit line
- Suitable attire
- Posture/Body Language
- Communication skills
- Presentation skills

This should involve a growing appreciation of exact timing. There should be no shuffling of body or papers. Hand movements should not be repetitive or used frequently. Relevant points should be in a logical order only using a few bullet points as reminders. Avoid looking at visual aids when speaking, ensure eye contact is to the front when speaking to ensure communication is not impaired.

If using visual aids they should be large enough for everyone to see and have a minimum of information to reinforce your talk as opposed to reading off the screen/card the same information this ensures the communication with the listeners is not impaired. Learners should present with vocal clarity and confidence.

Preparation for Interview

Research position and company and time taken to travel to location. Think of questions to ask, Personal appearance: clean hair, clean and ironed clothes, (suitable attire) shoes clean and sensible, clean nails.

Learners should:

- Dress appropriately for a formal occasion
- Enter the room confidently, greet the Examiner and introduce themselves clearly
- Discuss the contents of CV (submitted at time of entry) in detail
- Deliver a short presentation (Between three to four minutes) on an individual that the Learner admires – Teachers and Learners should ensure that the person chosen has some link to the Learner's interests and/or future career, for example, a sporting figure, a

community leader, a politician, a humanitarian; Visual aids can be used if able and appropriate

- Notes may be used as an aide-memoir
- Learners should demonstrate presentation skills, for example, well modulated delivery, vocal clarity and eye contact
- Discuss with the Examiner the preparation necessary before attending an interview, taking into account, for example, researching the organization; being secure about how to get to the interview venue; importance of punctuality; how to dress; preparation of possible questions/answers
- Discuss with the Examiner general guidelines such as personal presentation and thorough preparation; how to behave in the interview room; how to handle questions and timing
- Research the selected individual in detail as preparation for discussion with Examiner
- Discuss the importance of resilience
- Identify challenges that may occur in the workplace and how to deal with them

Grade 7

Discuss the aspects mentioned in the syllabus. Talk about what the interviewer may be looking for from the Interviewee e.g. would they look for interpersonal skills, or look for evidence of research prior to the interview, will the person fit in with the company, have the skills needed for the position.

Apply excellent preparation skills to prepare a presentation given to the Learner 15 minutes before the exam. This should use the techniques that have been gained in previous grades.

The Examiner may ask the Learner what advice they would give to a person having to give a presentation at short notice.

Learners should:

- Present themselves for a formal occasion
- Enter the room confidently, greet the Examiner and introduce themselves clearly
- Discuss the contents of the CV (submitted at time of entry) in detail

- Demonstrate presentation skills, for example, well modulated delivery, vocal clarity and eye contact

Notes may be used as an aide-memoire

Be confident in discussing breathing, breath support, modulation and projection in terms of vocal and physical presentation (Teachers and Learners may find it helpful to refer to notes on Speech and Drama – Grades 4, 5 and 6)

Discuss with the Examiner considerations when giving a presentation at an interview, taking into account, for example, evidence of research and preparation; awareness of audience; awareness of venue; use of notes and/or visual aids; use of microphone; vocal clarity and modulation; breathing breath support; timing and body language.

Grade 8

To discuss aspects in the Interview Technique syllabus up to this Grade.

At this level Learners should demonstrate in their personal presentation, professional conduct, skills and knowledge, confident engagement with the interview process

Confident presentation skills should be in evidence

A clear understanding of why good communication skills are needed in the workplace along with how these are achieved should be well researched and reflected in the presentation and following discussion

The Learner's discussion should demonstrate secure and perceptive knowledge of key issues in workplace both historical and current with an awareness of strategies to manage change

The Learner should demonstrate excellent presentation skills with a sense of accomplishment in terms of structure, content and delivery

The Learner should demonstrate in discussion all the personal, practical and professional preparations they would make for interview.

The Learner should demonstrate, in discussion a sound knowledge of different types of interview, for example panel interviews/one to one interview/practical/problem-solving exercise and be able to highlight the perceived advantages and disadvantages of each. The Learner should discuss how they believe organisations may interview employees in the future?

The importance of recruiting the right people for their organisation
How they may reward and retain employees?

Additional information

The blank form, which is to be completed in preparation for Preparatory, Introductory, Preliminary and Transition Grades, is available to download from the NEA website and Community Hub.

A CV template is also available to download from the NEA hub/website.

Helpful tips for interview technique

READING

Poetry and Prose for the Reading examination should be age and level appropriate. Text should be at a suitable level see Guidance for Poetry and Prose.

For all levels:

- Holding text
- Eye contact
- Diction
- Projection
- Modulation
- Vocal and facial expression
- Engagement of audience with text
- Sense of performance and sincerity
- Spontaneity
- Dialogue and narration
- Shape and rhythm of poem
- Conveying mood and atmosphere
- Emotional connection

LEVEL 3

- Able to discuss their selections in detail including:
- Meaning
- Plot
- Characters
- Rhythm
- Shape of verse

For Grade 8 – challenges of breath support, rhythm, formation of sonnet

SPOKEN ENGLISH

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

(Sight Reading and Reading aloud skills can be found in Speech and Drama syllabus)

Grade 1

To be able to read aloud clearly, not too fast and using sense phrasing appropriately.

To listen and respond with understanding when talking with the Examiner about the subject the Learner has chosen.

Grade 2

To be able to read aloud clearly with fluency and eye contact

Learners should be able to express their views and feelings regarding the object they have chosen to talk about. Expanding appropriate vocabulary linked to the place will assist in discussion.

Reading aloud – see Speech & Drama Grade 2

Grade 3

To be able to read aloud clearly with fluency expression and eye contact

To talk about a book they have read or event attended with clear thought and understanding

Questions may include:

- Why did you choose this book/event?
- What is your favourite section?
- Who is your favourite character?
- Why?
- What sort of book do you want to read next?

Understand how to achieve clear speech

See modulation in Speech & Drama notes

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

Grade 4

An increasing level of fluency and flow of thought when reading aloud will be expected at this level. There should be eye contact with the audience along with expression.

The Learner should be able to talk about an event past or present and discuss this with the Examiner highlighting what they found interesting.

See Speech & Drama and Public Speaking Level 2 notes for engaging a listener

Grade 5

A good level of fluency and flow when reading aloud will be expected at this level. There should be eye contact with the audience along with expression.

The environmental issue needs to be well researched so that detailed discussion may take place about different aspects.

- Audience
- Formal or informal,
- Dress code,
- Vocabulary used,
- Age appropriate
- Physical skills see Level 2 upwards, Public Speaking

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6

A good level of fluency and expression is required at this level. Clear eye contact with audience.

The Learner should share information with enthusiasm and sincerity. There should be an effective use of persuasive speaking.

Confident responses to questions

If visual aids are used they should be large enough to be seen clearly.

There should be an awareness of the rhythm in prose and poetry.

Skills see Level 2 and 3 Public Speaking notes

Grade 7

A good level of fluency and expression is required at this level. Clear eye contact with audience.

The talk should be well structured so that it is easy to follow the intended cause.

Paper notes should not be used but cards with bullet points as a reminder is acceptable and good practice.

The talk should inform and encourage audience to support cause inspired by their presentation

Learners should be prepared to answer questions arising from talk

Discuss the ways in which to structure a presentation

Discuss the ways in which effective vocal communication can help in their future career and in the workplace generally (this should include modulation)

Discussion will also cover the content of the talk and sight reading.

Structure – see Public Speaking notes

Grade 8

A good level of fluency and expression is required at this level. Clear eye contact with audience.

An understanding of the text.

Examiners will be looking for the Learners's ability to use and to talk about voice and speech in differing situations. Eg Types of audience and venue

Clear knowledge of the skills necessary to make the speech vital and colourful.

Demonstrate a broad vocabulary in their talk and conversation.

Clear structure to their talk.

Ways in which they use their presentation skills to engage their listener.

The Learner should be able to discuss techniques used to influence listener.

Learners should expect to answer questions that may arise from the talk.

Learners should understand and be able to discuss the importance of vital and persuasive speaking. See Public Speaking notes

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

ENTRY LEVEL

Preparatory

Learners will be expected to greet the examiner by saying Good morning/Good afternoon

Learners should introduce themselves to the Examiner

There should be clear structure in the manner that they talk about their family and friends

e.g. I would really like to tell you about my family ...

My friends are.....

My favourite thing to do with my family at Christmas is play games/go for walks

Introductory

Learners should greet the examiner with a little more confidence

Learners should introduce themselves with a little more confidence

They should talk about their chosen topic with enthusiasm

Learners should use a good choice of words

e.g. Daily routine – may involve getting up, having breakfast and going to school/work
(Structure a talk that allows this and more information to flow)

Hobbies – may involve facts of famous celebrities, personal accomplishments, how the activity makes them feel

School – The routine/favourite teacher/best and worst subjects/activities after school

Learners should use good vocabulary

Preliminary

Learners should be able to discuss a full description of their favourite food in detail. They should consider vocabulary including details about the food e.g. texture, taste, smell how its prepared.

Hold the shape of the talk.

There should be an awareness of connecting with the meaning in the speaking and to be able to talk about the choice and content.

There should be a level of vocabulary used

The talk should be between 10 -15 lines

Transition

Learners should discuss their place of interest with awareness of full description and details with the ability to hold the shape of the talk.

Visual aids e.g. photos may be used

To discuss the reasons for their place of choice with detail and a flow to the conversation.

To understand and discuss the importance of eye contact when talking to the audience.

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

Grade 1

The Learner should be able to read aloud a paragraph about themselves with some degree of fluency. Learners should be aware of vocal skills particularly clarity and projection.

There should be expression both vocally and facially.

There should be an awareness of the shape of the talk.

Discuss the talk with an awareness of how and why you composed the speech?

Discuss with the Examiner the importance of clear speech.

Discuss with the Examiner the importance of pace.

Explain why clear speech is important?

Explain which organs help with clear speech e.g. lips, tongue, teeth, soft palate and jaw.

Paragraph should be no more than 20 lines.

Grade 2

To create a speech about one of the three subjects with awareness of shape and content in the speech.

To discuss the content of the speech with the examiner and the effective use of pitch and pace.

See Speech and Drama notes

Grade 3

The talk should have clear development of thought with good posture and communication. The Learner should be able to discuss, and use descriptive words effectively along with the use of phrasing and sense pause in their work.

Speech and Drama Grade 2 and 3

Learners should be able to discuss the content of their speech.

Learners should be able to discuss their prose with the Examiner

Learners should be aware of punctuation and its effect on the piece then give examples

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

Grade 4

Learner should be able to discuss reasons for the choice of poem

Learner should be aware of the shape of the poem and interpretation

Learner should be able to discuss the research for their chosen topic

Learner should be able to discuss the shape and content of the talk

Learner should be able to discuss the effective use of projection when speaking either formally or informally

The shape of the poem is a guide to its sound sense and rhythm

(Details can be found in the Speech and Drama section)

Grade 5

Learners should ensure there is a clear structure to their presentation and be able to discuss with the Examiner the content of their speech including their research.

Learners should be able to discuss the importance of good vocal skills particularly inflection and modulation

Learners should be able to sight read with a more fluency and expression at this level

Learner should be prepared to discuss the book from which the section for sight reading has been taken

Learners should have a good level of confidence at this level

See Speech and Drama notes

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6

Learner will speak from memory a passage of prose using good vocal skills throughout clear interpretation of text and an element of spontaneity in delivery. Expression both vocally and facially should be in evidence.

The presentation should include evidence of the vocal techniques discussed in previous grades.

Learner should be able to discuss the full story on which their presentation is based

Learner will discuss the importance of presentation skills both vocally and physically

Sight reading skills should be clearly understood and executed with the text being lifted off the page See Speech and Drama Grade 2 upwards

These points may be helpful:

Presentation skills – Appearance. Confident body language. Clear vocal skills including projection inflection and modulation used appropriately. There should be no shuffling of body or papers. A strong awareness of timing is essential. Hand movements should not be too frequent, repetitive or distracting. Relevant points should be in a logical order only using bullet points as reminders. Eye contact should ensure communication with audience and visual aids used to enhance talk not detract from it.

Visual aids should be large enough for everyone to see and information to reinforce your talk as opposed to a written version of your talk in its entirety.

(Sight reading – see Speech and Drama notes on reading aloud)

Grade 7

The talk should have clear development with the points in logical order. Comparisons between the different examples should be clear and reflect research and opinions. If visual aids are used ensure they are large enough to be seen by the audience. Presentation skills should be in evidence including posture and clear vocal delivery.

The reasons for selecting the poem of choice should be discussed. There should be at least three facts known about the poet.

Sight reading skills should be in evidence e.g. reading with fluency, eye contact, interpreting text and good vocal skills. Learner should also be prepared to discuss the passage.

Learner should be able to describe vocal techniques that assist the Speaker and skills that enhance presentation – modulation etc.,

See Speech and Drama notes

Grade 8

The talk should have good structure and clarity of thought. It should be delivered with effective use of the various means of modulation, clear speech and forward placing of voice so that it carries well.

Learners should be able to discuss their speech and poem including the mood and vocabulary of both and they should be able to hold a coherent conversation about all pieces.

Learners should be able to discuss the skills that are necessary to engage an audience including good voice production, vocal tone and all the means of Modulation. The desire to communicate their talk to the audience. Energy, posture, gestures expression and general body language

Learners should be able to give clear examples of how they have extended their English vocabulary.

Learners should mention common misunderstandings and pronunciation problems.
See Speech & Drama notes

Guidance for Poetry and Prose
For Speech & Drama, Reading, Spoken English, EAL and
Verse Speaking

Entry Level Poems – Age 5 +

See Anthology: A First Poetry Book by Pie Corbett and Gaby Morgan
and Public Domain

- Anything That's Broken - Bernard Young – p70
- Kitten – Jill Townsend – p145
- My Face Says it All – Phillip Waddell p26
- Apple – James Carter – p48
- Where Am I – Mike Barfield – p43
- Gran's Old Diary – Wes Magee p 29
- My Dad – Peter Dixon – p28
- Hello – Barry Buckingham p188
- Rhubarb Ted – Ann O'Connor PD
- Snowball – Shel Silverstein PD
- The Crocodile – Lewis Carroll PD
- Snowball - Shel Silverstein PD
- How not to have to Dry the Dishes – Shel Silverstein PD

LEVEL 1 – Age 7 – 12 - Grades 1 – 3

Level 1 See Anthology:

A First Poetry Book by Pie Corbett and Gaby Morgan and Public Domain

- Space Rocket – Richard Caley – p227
- I Did Not Eat the Goldfish – Roger Stevens – p138
- Jealousy – John Mole p38
- The Tiger - Sue Hardy Dawson - p288
- Sounds of School - Michaela Morgan - p194
- Shells and Stones - Eric Finley - p249
- We Share the Air - Kevin McCann - p284
- Boring Mr Grimble - Clare Bevan - p162
- Imagine the World - Moyra Andrew – p41
- Santa in Zooland p 128
- It's a Puzzle – Allan Ahlberg PD
- When Daddy fell into the Pond – Alfred Noyes PD

Level 1 Authors

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| • Dick King Smith | • Jill Tomlinson |
| • Roald Dahl | • Jill Murphy |
| • David Walliams | • Julia Donaldson |
| • Cressida Cowell | • Michael Morpurgo |
| • Varjak Paw | • Eoin Colfer |
| | • Jacqueline Wilson |

LEVEL 2 – Age 13 – 15 - Grades 4 and 5

All Poems are **free choice** but suggestions from the public domain can be found within this guidance pack.

Level 2 Poetry

20th Century Poetry

- The Listeners by Walter de La Mare
- The Gresford Disaster by Anon
- Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost
- The Lockless Door by Robert Frost
- A Road Not Taken by Robert Frost
- My Typewriter by Edward Dyson
- Sea Fever by John Masefield
- Mistletoe by Walter de La Mare
- The Things We Dare Not Tell by Henry Lawson
- The Call by John Frederick Freeman
- At The Theatre: To The Lady Behind Me
- To E.T by Robert Frost
- Mid-Term Break by Seamus Heaney

19th Century Poetry

- The Star by Sara Teasdale
- If by Rudyard Kipling – verses 1,2 and 4
- Hope is the thing with feathers by Emily Dickinson
- The Tyger by William Blake
- The Lake Isle of Innisfree by W B Yeats
- A Dream within a Dream by E A Poe
- Break, Break, Break, by Alfred Lord Tennyson
- I Travelled among Unknown Men – William Wordsworth
- The Welcome by Thomas Osborne Davis
- Water of Gold by Henry Austin Dobson

Level 2 Authors

- Philip Pullman
- Anthony Horowitz
- Patrick Ness
- Malorie Blackman
- RJ Palacio
- Suzanne Collins
- John Green

LEVEL 3 – AGE 15 – 17 - Grades 6 – 8

Level 3 Poetry

War Poets

- Dreamers by Siegfried Sassoon
- An Irishman Foresees his Death by WB Yeats
- Anthem for Doomed Youth by Wilfred Owen
- Rupert Brooke
- Robert Graves

Award Winning Poets

- Langston Hughes
- Still I Rise by Maya Angelou
- Caged Bird by Maya Angelou
- Blackberrying by Sylvia Plath
- You're by Sylvia Plath
- Age Appropriate by Phillip Schultz
- Greed by Philip Schultz
- The Evening Darkens Over by Robert Bridges
- Warming Her Pearls by Carol Ann Duffy
- Camera Obscura by Simon Armitage

Sonnets from The Elizabethan or Jacobean Era (1500 - 1625)

- Sonnet 55 by William Shakespeare
- My heart I gave thee, not to do it pain by Sir Thomas Wyatt
- Death, be not proud by John Donne

Sonnets from The Romantic Era (1780 – 1830)

- Lift not the painted veil which those who live by Percy Bysshe Shelley
- Bright Star by John Keats

Contemporary Sonnets – (1900 – 2020)

- I shall go back again to the bleak shore by Edna St Vincent Millay
- Glasgow Sonnet i by Edwin Morgan
- Acquainted with the Night by Robert Frost
- Love Sonnet XI by Pablo Neruda

Level 3 Authors

- Laurie Lee
- George R R Martin
- Iris Murdoch
- Harper Lee
- F Scott Fitzgerald
- Graham Green
- Joanna Trollope
- John Steinbeck

Recommended Playwrights, Plays and Adaptations for Acting Syllabus

Entry Level – Age 5+ - Grades Preparatory - Transition

Entry Level Age 5+

- Beatrix Potter
- Jaqueline Wilson
- Roald Dahl
- J M Barrie
- Frances Hodgson Burnett
- Frank L Baum
- Michael Morpurgo
- Kenneth Graham
- C S Lewis
- Ellen Dryden
- Lewis Carroll
- Francesca Simon
- Anne Fine

Level 1 – Age 7 – 12 - Grades 1 – 3

Level 1 Age 7 - 12

- Roald Dahl
- Jaqueline Wilson
- Frances Hodgson Burnett
- J M Barrie
- Michael Morpurgo
- Frank L Baum
- C S Lewis
- Kenneth Graham
- Lewis Carroll
- Ellen Dryden

- Francesca Simon
- Anne Fine
- Alan Ayckbourn

Level 2 – Age 13– 15 - Grades 4 – 5

Level 2 Age 13 -15

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Different Era | 1900 – 2000 |
| Charlotte Bronte | Willy Russell |
| Jane Austen | Tom Stoppard |
| L M Montgomery | Alan Ayckbourn |
| Charles Dickens | Michael Frayn |
| William Makepeace Thackeray | JB Priestley |
| L M Alcott | Lillian Hellman |

Level 3 – Age 15– 17 - Grades 6 – 8

Level 3 Age 15 - 17

1900 – 2000

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Harold Pinter | Terrence Rattigan |
| Arthur Miller | Joe Orton |
| David Edgar | April de Angelis |
| Edward Bond | John Arden |
| Jim Cartwright | David Hare |
| Bryony Lavery | Tennessee Williams |

1850 – 1950

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Somerset Maugham | Anton Chekov |
| August Strindberg | Thornton Wilder |
| P G Wodehouse | Noel Coward |
| Henry James | Bram Stoker |
| Thomas Hardy | Eugene O'Neill |

George Bernard Shaw Oscar Wilde

1660 - 1780

Richard Brinsley Sheridan David Garrick

William Wycherley Frances Beaumont

John Fletcher Aphra Benn

John Vanbrugh William Congreve

George Farquhar

ACTING

Pieces selected should be within the capability of the learner at each level and not emotionally beyond their comprehension.. Each piece should be within the Learners potential experience and age related for example a 10 year old cannot interpret the feelings of going to a solicitor and seeking a divorce etc.,

Teachers and Learners should spend time choosing selections carefully. The pieces selected should play to the Learners dramatic strengths, interests, age taking into account the specific requirements of each grade.

The Learner should also be aware of and able to demonstrate the period, costume and manners of the piece confidently without recourse to costuming. Learners should demonstrate awareness of period and style in voice, facial expression, movement and gesture.

Whichever piece is chosen the Learner should have a thorough knowledge of the entire play in order to fully comprehend the character and progression of that character within the story as a whole. As the grades progress, so the selections should become more challenging and allow the Learner to display literary comprehension and an ever increasing range of emotions and technique.

Sight reading is introduced at Grade 3 Foundation Medal. The text should be taken off the page and brought to life. Learners should interpret the character and situation and remain within the scene, address other imagined characters when appropriate and only share with the audience should the piece dictate.

Please refer to the technical guidance at the front of this guide.

ENTRY LEVEL

Preparatory, Introductory, Preliminary & Transition Grades

Learners should understand who the character/s is/are and how they feature in the play and what they would be wearing. Where two selections are required the characters should contrast.

If the monologue, duologue or scene is a stand alone piece then an imagined scenario/back story/set with clearly drawn characters should be explored in lessons and discussed with the Examiner in place of a set text.

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

Grades 1 – 3 inclusive

Learners should:

Understand who the character/s is/are and how they feature in the whole play/story.

Be able to describe the character e.g. scary/kind etc.,

Be able to give examples from the text or from the story that illustrate these characteristics.

Be able to have a sense of the place/setting and be able to discuss where the action of the piece is taking place.

Be able to suggest what kind of costume the character might wear including detail such as outfits/shoes/boots/ fabrics, shape/colours

In an ideal world each selected scene will come from a published play/book/film however If the monologue, duologue or scene is a stand alone scene then a full back story should be able to be discussed to allow the scene to have context and meaning.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Grade 4

Learners should select two contrasting characters that allow the students to show their range of acting skills e.g. Modern/Period, Sad/Comedy etc.,

Learners should be able to devise a short piece related to one of the scenes e.g. a prequel/sequel or your character in a different time completely

OR

Learners should be able to interpret sight reading text and perform with expression both physically and vocally

Clear understanding of characters should be able to be discussed at this level

Learners should explain how they approached the character both physically and emotionally

Learners should be able to describe the setting of each scene

Learners should be able to discuss the plays or adaptations that the pieces came from

Learners should understand the skills necessary when sight reading text

Learners should understand Modulation – pitch, pace, pause, inflection, emphasis

(See Speech and Drama notes for Modulation and Sight Reading)

Grade 5

Learners should display a stronger understanding and demonstration of the specific period of each selection at this level.

Learners should be able to devise a short piece related to one of the scenes e.g. a prequel/sequel or your character in a different time completely

OR

Learners should be able to interpret sight reading text with fluency and the interpretation should display more depth

Learners should be able to explain in detail the way in which they approached each character both physically and emotionally.

The plays from which the pieces were chosen should be discussed in detail

Learners should be able to discuss the characters and the impact that different historical periods have on their characters this should include costume/manners/age

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6,7 & 8

Learners should be confidently in role as the character (s)

Learners should have a clear understanding of their characters role throughout the play (s) their relationship with other characters and the impact their character has on the play as a whole

Learners should be able to discuss the intention of their performance on the audience

Learners should interact with other characters in the scene(s) in terms of verbal and non-verbal communication with awareness of positioning other characters

Learners should be aware of body language

Learners should be able to discuss the vocal techniques used in rehearsal to create and develop characters in a confident manner. This should include all components of modulation along with clear accents, dialects and style of speech

Learners should be able to discuss with confidence the physical techniques used in the rehearsal process to create and develop characters including hot seating, thought tracking etc.,

Learners should suggest period style in voice, facial expression, movement and gesture

Learners should be able to sight read with confidence, interpret text, create and remain in the scene, address dialogue to other imagined characters in the scene

Learners should perform improvisation confidently with a clear structure of beginning middle and end in evidence. There should be a clear relationship to the given subject.

Learners should have a clear storyline when creating Mime and again clear structure should be in evidence along with excellent physical and facial expression throughout.

Learners should be able to discuss all aspects of effective breathing techniques breath support, forward placing and projection.

There is an expectation that as students move through the Grades that there will be an increase in accomplishment and flair.

Teachers and Learners may find it helpful to refer to the notes in the Speech and Drama notes

These notes are also applicable for examinations in Shakespeare

Those Learners taking these examinations should research and study the social, historical and cultural context of Shakespeare's plays and the rhythm and metre of his language.

Teachers and Learners may find the following resources helpful. "Teaching Shakespeare by Rex Gibson, Cambridge University Press; ISBN 0-521-57788-8 www.shakespearesglobe.com – www.ehdltd.co.uk

Grade 6

Greater emphasis should be placed on the vocal and articulative interpretation of the now more complex language found in these selections. Text, context and subtext should be considered when creating characters. The social, historical and political context of each scene should be explored at this level.

Sight reading should be fluent, confident and interpreted as a more rounded performance.

In Improvisation the learner should be confident to interpret the given subject in a concise manner, constructing a clear story with a beginning, a middle and an end.

In Mime clear structured storyline should be communicated with detailed facial expression and physicality.

Grade 7

The dialect chosen must be well researched and accurately placed. The best way to authenticate an accent is to learn from someone with the genuine accent however recording and television/film dialogue are useful tools but should not be the online

courses of study. There are many courses online. Text, context and subtext should be considered when creating characters. The social, historical and political context of each scene should be explored at this level.

Sight reading should be fluent, confident and interpreted as a more rounded performance with a clear understanding of period and character.

The mime/improvisation should show physical dexterity and precision and demonstrate an experienced level of ability. Once again clear structure and storyline should be in evidence.

The importance of breath support and control; a sound knowledge of both intercostal diaphragmatic and central breathing, their physiological techniques and their application must be thoroughly understood. More complex language, sentence construction and phrasing encountered at this level requires this demonstration of knowledge and control.

(See Speech and Drama Notes)

Grade 8

A sound in-depth knowledge of the required periods is essential at this grade in order to convey the understanding of the characters and a recognition of the period in which they are placed. There should be an understanding of how social/political/historical periods impact performance therefore a certain depth of characterisation involving behaviour, movement, actions and speech is expected at this level. There should be an awareness of style including the impact of clothes that would have been worn at that time, gestures and use of props of the period.

Sight reading should be fluent, confident and interpreted as a more rounded performance with a clear awareness of the status of the character the emotional context and the period in which it is set.

Improvisation and Mime should display clear structure. There should be a clear narrative, imagination execution and strong ending.

Creative thought: Learners should be able to discuss the research they have undertaken to arrive at their characterization both creatively and technically. The process from page to stage should be discussed in detail. The decisions on their physical movement or vocal qualities as they build their characterisations should be discussed in detail. The journey and status of characters should be well mapped.

The details of one playwright from which the selections have been taken should be studied and shared in depth.

Duologues

Pieces chosen should be fairly balanced between the two learners in each scene and provide equal opportunity both to speak and to listen

With Duologues and Groups attention should be paid to listening, focus and reaction and cue bite (the crisp pick up of cues)

MUSICAL THEATRE

As with any other discipline, first be sure to read the syllabus thoroughly; this can apply rather more rigorously in the case of the use of printed sheet music as copyright laws apply.

Song Selection

Do remember that songs are essentially sung text; some lyrics are better written than others, with more scope for characterisation and a good, strong through thought. As with acted selections, try to keep the song choice within the ability of the candidate; not only should the age and character be manageable, but also the rhythm intricacies. The more complicated Sondheim pieces, for example, will be way beyond many performers until they are entered for the highest grades, as they are very wordy and the rhythms render these words like the trickiest of tongue-twisters. Similarly, songs with very long, sustained notes will not be a good choice for a candidate who has not, as yet, mastered good breath control.

Perhaps the most important thing to address in the initial stages of selection is the key of the piece to be attempted. Everyone's singing voice falls into fairly clearly defined brackets; girls will be altos, mezzos and, at the top, sopranos. Younger boys will be in a similar range to a low soprano, and once their voices break, will be revealed as baritone or, higher, as a tenor. Occasionally you will find a bass, but this is a rather rarer range. Just as you would never consider encouraging a 10 year old girl to attempt playing Lady Macbeth, neither should you encourage a girl with a lower voice to attempt a high soprano piece, or vice versa. Not only will it sound wrong, it could also strain the voice. The acting of the song is of paramount importance. Standing stock still and singing without thought or emotion, no matter how pure the voice, will not gain high marks; these are not singing examinations but **Musical Theatre**. As in all the other acting exams marks may not be gained if period gesture, or the way a costume affects movement, or characterisation are ignored.

Rhythm

More so than in the case of acted text, songs have a clear set pattern of rhythms, although a rigid interpretation sung pedantically on each note without emotion will inevitably sound flat. This will also have the same effect as a poetry Speaker who allows the metre to rule at the expense of correct or fluid emphasis. The habit of “back-phrasing”, where the lyrics are left to the last minute in each phrase, is however a pop affectation not to be encouraged, as the shape of the song will suffer. The important thing here is to listen to the accompaniment in order to root the pattern of sung text to the music. Learn the score thoroughly, and then interpret that with the colour of thought.

Tuning

All singers, unless they have perfect pitch (an extremely rare talent, this is not the ability to sing in tune but it means that the owner can “hear” and sing any suggested note without musical prompting and it is inborn rather than learnt) will have the tendency to occasionally go either flat (sing under the note) or sharp (above). This can occur if the singer is unwell, or forcing the voice, or simply not concentrating or listening. Even if the teacher cannot sing well themselves, most of us can hear if someone else is out of tune. Careful attention, especially in the higher grades where such lapses are more stringently penalised, should be paid to the finer aspects of tuning to bed the sound square in the middle of the note.

Key

If a song suits a candidate well and they are intent on performing it, but the key is wrong for them, please use every online facility to search for an alternative version. Another artiste's recording (and therefore songbook) may be in a totally different key. There are also many sources of sheet music on the internet; sometimes this can be a cheaper option, as you may only require one song and if you were to buy it in a shop, it would only be available in a compilation book. You can buy single pieces of music from a number of sources to download and print at home, and many of these can be transposed at the click of a button. There is no reason for a candidate to strain to reach

high or low notes when a key can be altered, as long as the feel of the piece is not damaged.

It is well to remember that examination nerves, which lead to that well-known constricting of the throat, will knock 2 or sometimes 3 notes off the top of a singer's range, so the song should ideally have a little leeway at both top and bottom of comfortably attainable range!

Vocal Health

It is essential for the singer to warm up the voice before an examination, both to avoid damage and to ensure flexibility and strength. Scales and sirening are by far the best way to warm up. Again, if the teacher is unsure, there are many sources of warm-up sets online, and there is even a warm-up app for Smartphones which can be downloaded directly onto the candidate's phone!

Head voice

The lighter tone in which the larynx has a higher position, occurs naturally in slightly different places for different singers; the vocal transition as the laryngeal position shifts is clearly marked by a change in intensity and tone.

Mix

Which is as its name suggests, a mixing of the two sounds, in order to smooth out the sound difference between the two previous definitions.

Falsetto

Is the use of a very high head voice, the register occupying the frequency range just above the normal vocal register and overlapping with it by approximately one octave. It is produced by the vibration of the ligamentous edges of the vocal folds, in whole or in part. It has a characteristic breathy, flute-like sound, and is more limited than its modal counterpart in both dynamic variation and tone quality.

Nasal Twang

Which is the placing of the sound far forward in the nasal resonators in order to reproduce the brighter, harder sound required by many modern musicals. This can also recreate a “chest” sound without placing strain or pressure on the larynx.

ENTRY LEVEL

Preparatory, Introductory

The song should be sung comfortably with enjoyment and thought and a sense of musicality.

Preliminary, Transition

The character who sings the song must be understood, both when they sing the song, and their story through the Musical.

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

Grade 1

The character who sings the song must be understood, both when they sing the song, and their story through the Musical. The story of the musical must be clearly understood.

Grade 2

The character who sings the song must be understood, both when they sing the song, and their story through the Musical. The story of the musical must be clearly understood.

Grade 3

Understanding of the story of the musicals and vocal ranges as below:

Vocal ranges, from lowest to highest are

Bass, Baritone, Tenor (m)

Alto (or contralto), Mezzo, Soprano (f)

Additional information of voice changes

Vocal changes are obviously different for males and females. Boys show a more marked change when their voices “break” and the adult male voice emerges. A great deal of care is needed at this time, more so than with adolescent girls; sometimes singing will be too stressful to the altering male voice as the vocal chords are unstable and uncontrollable. Girls also encounter instability with the onset of puberty.

Stress, tiredness and emotion all affect the adult singing voice; in particular, stress can tighten the chest (especially if the shoulders are tense) which in turn can lead to the larynx tightening and eventually, if pushed, spasming and locking. This can be released by rest and vocal massage by a singing specialist. The early stages of the onset of hormonal changes in women will again alter the voice; usually a lack of control and flexibility in the upper or mid section of the vocal range.

Also for the more mature singers mens voices tend to go higher with age as opposed to women whose voices tend to stay the same or go lower.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

Grade 4

In depth understanding of storylines and characters involved

Breathing techniques are the same as for acting; intercostal diaphragmatic breathing is best, ensuring the shoulders are relaxed and low. Exercises to help control (such as a steady breath on a candle flame, extending the time the breath can flicker the flame) are helpful.

On very long musical phrases or long sustained notes, it is useful to have a reserve of breath; this is achieved by taking the in-breath deep into the lungs, relaxing the belly as the breath is drawn in, then keeping the ribcage high (although not forced up and out) as the breath is exhaled, subsequently relaxing the ribcage gently as the note/phrase continues to access the reserve of breath in the deeper part of the lungs.

This ability to relax the belly to aid the drawing in of breath can be helpful when a snatched breath is needed in a short musical rest between phrases.

It is essential for the singer to warm up the voice before performance, both to avoid damage and to ensure flexibility and strength. Scales and sirening (the voice starting as low as possible and sliding without stepped notes, as in a police car siren, as high as is comfortable, then back down again) are by far the best way to warm up. Sirening can even be done silently, moving the larynx from a high to a low position, and back again. Tongue twisters also aid flexibility and lightness of diction. Warming down after singing can take the form of gentle scales and sirening downwards.

All warm downs MUST be performed quietly, gently and with a soft touch.

Grade 5

In depth understanding of storylines and characters involved.

Development of character from initial ideas through to performance, what changes did you make, body language, movement, gestures, vocal technique, did character age etc
The effects of physicality on characterisation are, broadly speaking, dependent on two major areas, as in all acting:

1. The physiological depiction of the character, (i.e., whether they stand and walk straight and freely, whether they have a physical defect, their age and race, and that effect on agility; joint suppleness, style of movement etc., whether their emotion constricts their actions); and
2. The period definition of the character, (i.e., the effect of costume and clothing on the character, whether restricted by corsets, sleeves, ruffs, etc.; and the style of period gesture and movement)

Perhaps for costume and physicality explore e.g. King and I/Oklahoma/Wicked/My Fair Lady/Les Miserables/West Side Story

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6

Acting styles have changed within Musical Theatre as much as they have in other theatre; histrionics have been replaced with a stronger realism. However, this is not always as marked as in “straighter” theatre, and there are still larger-than-life stylised performances in some of the bigger productions. The emotional connection with the lyrics and music will allow an interpretation that enables an emotionally charged song to be achieved rather than just a technical performance. Ideally the technical knowledge will underpin the thought through process and the combination will result in an engaging performance.

Other changes to consider:

- Set
- Size of orchestra
- Amplification
- Costume
- Size of cast

The through thought and the emotionally charged song will always win out over the technical but cold performance.

Rock musicals often require a more stylised, strident form of acting than a strong, story-led piece in order that there is not such a gap between music and speech.

When devising alternative scene, ensure character is maintained even though storyline may or may not be unrelated.

Vocal techniques may include chesting (or “belt”) which is the harder, stronger sound produced in the lower register, where the larynx is in a low position. There tends to be a slight glottal stop at the beginning of notes; this closure cuts off the escaping air. When the air pressure in the trachea rises as a result of this closure, the folds are blown apart.

This creates the harder sound. However, the use of overly strong chest voice in the higher registers in an attempt to hit higher notes in the chest can lead to forcing, and damage.

Vocal Health

Is maintained in the main by warming the voice up and down, by not straining to achieve sounds or notes that are out of the reach of the performer's natural range or ability, keeping the body hydrated by drinking water (room temperature – iced water causes the chords to contract as it would any other muscle, ligament or tendon) and by not overusing the voice by singing at full pitch for too long. This in turn assists the ability to maintain vocal consistency. Resting when the voice is tired, and attention to general health play a large part too; many singers avoid too many dairy products (this can in some people cause the over-production of phlegm) and keep a close watch on colds and medication. Gentle sirening (mentioned before) acts as an early warning to colds and infections, as gaps will appear in the smooth run of the sliding note if the voice is tired, unwell or damaged

Grade 7

Compilation

Often, but not always, a pop musical, e.g. “Tonight's the Night”, “We Will Rock You” “Mamma Mia!”, which require a bright pop sound true to the original style of the artist. Some compilation musicals are of a composer; the story will evolve from the song catalogue and therefore may not always have such a strongly coherent book as the story must fit the songs.

Through-sung

There is no spoken script, except perhaps for some occasional lines included in some part of a song, but never as stand-alone dialogue; as in opera, all is scored. Conversations, speeches, and musings are communicated musically. (e.g. “Les Misérables”, “Cats”, “Evita

Operetta

A lighter style of opera, light in terms both of music and subject matter; (e.g., Gilbert and Sullivan). Operetta grew out of the French opéra comique, around the middle of the 19th century, to satisfy a need for short, light works.

Book Musical

Since the 20th century, "book musical" has been defined as a musical play where the songs and dances are fully integrated into a well-made story, with serious dramatic goals, that is able to evoke genuine emotions other than laughter. Invariably a piece where the book and score are written anew, the book being the centrepiece and the songs written to flow seamlessly within the piece. The acted style must flow too, with the songs furthering the plot and progressing the story.

What explorative strategies did you use to develop your character ie: hot seating, role on the wall, starting point etc. How did this impact your development.

Amplification

Originally, no amplification was used for either musician or performer; as the operatic style became less popular for the stage musical, and along with that, the operatic technique, amplification was required in theatres.

Amplification only makes the voice louder, NOT more distinct; sloppy diction or vocal technique will be more obvious, so even greater clarity is required.

Float microphones

One or several microphones strategically placed either at ground level or suspended from the proscenium arch.

Hand-held

Microphones (either wired or radio operated) can be one-directional, where the performer has to sing directly into the centre of the unit, or omni-directional, which gives more scope for movement as one can sing into any surface of the head of the unit. These give the performer greater control over the position of the microphone, and therefore the volume level.

Head

microphones are radio controlled, and give greater clarity as they are worn on the forehead so pick up minutest sound. However, volume levels are controlled from a sound desk, so the performer has no control other than vocal. Sweat can short out the mic head.

Lavalier

Or jaw microphones are hooked over the ear and stand away from the face, following the curve of the jaw. Mixed as Head mics, but less chance of being sweated out or getting make-up in them

GRADE 8

The process of approaching a musical theatre performance is the conglomeration of all the theory learned throughout this syllabus; always start from the acting point first and foremost. See previous grades.

MIME

When miming an action or activity observation and attention to detail are crucial.

Practice watching yourself in a mirror particularly for facial expressions

Breakdown the main action into sections e.g. Drinking a hot drink from a cup

Hold handle of cup

Blow onto hot drink

Make sure hand is not directly under mouth – leave room for cup

Sip drink as it is hot

Place down

If held with second hand only hold top of the cup.

A narrative mime should have a clear structure with a clear beginning middle and end

Good facial expressions and believable actions enhance performance

Any object you introduce to the audience appears real therefore you have to consider it throughout the mime.

If you pick something up, then it is in your hand until you put it down again

When picking up a painting then the size of the painting should be maintained throughout

This can be done by placing hands a certain width apart e.g. in line with shoulders

When miming yourself looking in the mirror observe how people look at themselves and where their eyes look as they observe their appearance.

There should be a clear difference between looking at something long distance and something shorter distance away.

When miming a duologue, reactions between the two performers are crucial and this adds to the overall entertainment value of the mime. Timing is also crucial.

DEVISED DRAMA

When devising original work whether as a solo duo or group it is good to think of a range of responses to a subject e.g. "The Match" could be a Sports Match, A box of matches, a romantic match or identical match

Each devised story should have a clear structure and a beginning middle and end

When answering question in role this should be as the character (these can be storybook characters but **do not** have to be) Humpty Dumpty- I like sitting on a wall

Explorative strategies should be in evidence when creating devised drama

Clear understanding of the difference between improvisation and devised work

Learners should be able to discuss response to stimuli and strategies use to create final work

Evidence of response to the process/challenges including historical/political/status

ENTRY LEVEL

PREPARATORY

Learners should devise a scene in which they have created a character

The Examiner will ask questions and the Learner should answer as the character portrayed

The Learner should answer in role (See above)

INTRODUCTORY

Learners should devise a scene in which they have created a character

The Examiner will then ask questions about the scene and the character.

The Learner should answer in role. (See above)

PRELIMINARY

Learners should portray a character that can be of their own making or one that has special/magical powers

The Examiner will ask questions about the scene

The Learner should answer in role (See above)

TRANSITION

Learners will now create their own original story and the character/s

Examiner will ask questions of the Learner in role (see above)

Examiner will ask questions about the story they have created

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

GRADES 1-3

There should be clear structure of scenes here with clear beginning middle and end.

Characters should be well drawn and believable

Learner should discuss the process of creating original characters and scenes

Contrasting scenes may be set in different periods (Victorian/Prehistoric or contrasting emotions amusing/serious etc.,)

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

GRADES 4 & 5

Music may be used but should not detract or overwhelm performance

Learners should discuss the process from initial ideas through to performance and strategies used

Learners should be able to discuss their characters

Learners should be able to discuss the importance of structure and a good ending

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

GRADE 6

Learners should discuss their research and reasons for their chosen scene

Learners should discuss the creative process and strategies used when devising original work

Learners should discuss the challenges when changing status including body language, speech mannerisms

GRADE 7

Learners should discuss the reasons for their choices of stimulus

Learners should discuss the reasons for their choice of news event

Learners should discuss the differences they experienced in factual and fictional material

GRADE 8

Learners should discuss their reasons for their choice of historical or political event and their research

Learners should discuss the reasons for selecting the chosen individual

Learners should discuss the differences of being involved in the scene and as an observer

Learners should discuss the explorative strategies and which ones were the most successful and why

Learners should be able to discuss their research and the creative process from initial ideas through to performance

CREATIVE MOVEMENT

FOUNDATION LEVEL 1

Grades 1-3

There is no discussion element until Grade 4

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL 2

Grade 4

Creative Process

This should involve the concept, the choice of music and how the movements selected enhance the overall performance with the speed and style of movements.

There should be facial expression included in every performance

Grade 5

Learners should discuss their own process of creating a piece from the initial idea and selection of music etc

Learners should be able to discuss the process of selecting a topic or storyline and why this was chosen?

The starting point could be an idea or a topic or a poem or music.

Learners should be able to discuss the reasons why music was chosen.

ADVANCED LEVEL 3

Grade 6

Choreographic devices may include

Repetition – A device in which movements or motifs that may be repeated

Motif – A brief movement or gesture that may be developed in a number of ways

Canon – A movement performed by one dancer then repeated by another

Levels- Height at which dancer is moving eg high medium low

Unison- Dancers performing the same movements at the same time

Climax – The main highpoint of the dance or the most significant moment which only happens once.

Contrast – When something changes in a dance e.g. dynamics, number of dancers

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Ensuring room is clear of furniture/clean sprung floor
- Ventilated room
- Temperature of room
- Keep hydrated
- Wear suitable clothing
- Wear suitable footwear
- Remove or tape up jewellery
- No chewing gum
- Warm up and cool down
- Eat at least three hours before a class

NUTRITION

- Fresh fruit and vegetable (5 portions a day at least)
- Wholegrains
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Dairy products
- Lean meat or fish
- Beans
- Nuts
- Avocados
- Olive oil

WATER IS CRUCIAL FOR DANCERS

Grade 7

See previous grade for Health and safety

Musicality means Artistic sensitivity when performing to music – how music interpreted through a range of different movements

The selected eras/styles of dance are the choice of the Learner

The discussion of difference between the two is to reflect the understanding of the research the Learner has shown

e.g. Classical Ballet/Tap

COSTUMES

Learners should discuss their research and opinions regarding Music, Costume and Lighting

e.g. The costumes of cats being made of lycra unitards/catsuits allowed the performers to execute cat like moves with ease and individual personalities were represented by make up and individual additions

Grade 8

Learners should discuss the creative process from selecting the stimulus through to performance

What made you choose this stimulus?

How did you decide on the accompaniment and why?

How did you decide on your style of movement?

Learners should describe the process from idea through to performance of their original idea

West Side Story – Musical version of Romeo and Juliet

Serious/Tension/Gangs/Immigration/Love/Sacrifice/Status

Costumes – how did they reflect the concept of West Side Story

Billy Elliot

Miners strike/Poverty/Rebellion/Class war/Political unrest/North South divide/Judgmental attitudes regarding a number of issues/Struggle/Passion/Loss/Dreams/Determination

Costumes - How did they assist the concept of Billy Elliot

Hairspray

Racism/Pop Music/Fashion/Hairstyles/Protests/Political change/Social values/Individualism/Morals/Image/Love/Self expression/Self belief/Determination/image

Costumes - How did they assist the concept of Hairspray

Consider that although based in the same time as West Side Story the costumes for Hairspray are very different

Consider the impact of bright lighting/dim lighting on the production

SHAKESPEARE

ACTING SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare can be a daunting; you get the play, the part, and then you read your first line, which will be a disaster, because you don't know what it means? You must first get an overview of what the play is about. Its viewpoints, its characters, their motives, and what part does your character play in it. Even now you will still be unsure of the language. Therefore, you must own a good Shakespeare anthology, such as 'The Norton Shakespeare', with its footnotes that clearly defines all the unfamiliar words, and also provides a lengthy and clear explanation of the meaning and the content of each play. Also the 'Essential Shakespeare Handbook' that allows the quick look up of any key information.

After understanding all the words that at first you did not understand, dissect small sections of the script with its now new meanings. Take a key paragraph of your character and, line by line, translate any unusual words by now knowing its meanings. Then take a flowery speech, such as a line in Romeo and Juliet that reads; "My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound" Realising that simply it means; "I've hardly heard your voice and yet I recognize it".

Thus, understanding the sentiments expressed and by simplifying the script so you can deliver all the lines appropriately. Once, you've taken time to understand the play and understood the Shakespearean language - explore the play and your character within it. Who are you? What's your situation? What is your connection to the other characters and how do you interact with them. Remember when you are reading Shakespeare's lines, he never placed any punctuations in his work; therefore, know the meaning and don't pay any attention to the modern punctuations – if you feel it hampers your understanding of the lines!

If you have taken the time to translate the text, and understood the sentiments within your lines and explored your character, you should feel confident enough to relax. However, once you've learnt the liners, and know the character it's very easy to fall into

performing Shakespeare with great over gusto and speed. However, Shakespeare himself tells you how to perform his works and you can do no wrong by closely and faithfully following his advice. "Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskillful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably."

It is a good exercise to look-up those expression that are not clear to you.

A good way to help understanding the motivation for the role is to interview the Learner as the character. Your challenge is to establish the type of character that the Learner is playing in the play. As a teacher get your group line up in two rows and, one-at-a-time, each learner walks down the middle in character while other learners call out their thoughts about the character as they see it being performed. Or, re-create, as if a photograph, the characters in a play at different stages in the play, having learners pose in groups. For example, you could create a family portrait of the Montagues and the

Capulets as Romeo and Juliet's romance develops. Alternatively, you can freeze the frame by taking a key moment from the play and freeze it. Then get the other learners to move around those frozen and question them as to what is happening, and why, and how they are feeling at that moment.

Speaking Shakespeare is very different from performing other scripts. In order to perform Shakespeare it is absolutely essential that you understand everything you are saying. Remember what Shakespeare said and do not allow your learners to turn into idiots clutching hearts, flinging arms around, and rapidly changing the pitch of voices. Learners should play it as naturally as possible with no overacting or over emoting.

VERSE SPEAKING, CHORAL SPEAKING AND RECITAL

These three disciplines are essentially performance disciplines, with no theory requirements. Within the guidelines of the syllabus for each discipline, Teachers and Learners should have a sense of the complete programme, and its intended audience. All text should be spoken from memory.

Selection of material:

A theme should be defined, at all grades, across all of these disciplines, in order to give a sense of unity to their performance,.

In selecting material, Teachers and Learners should keep in mind issues such as the age of performers, their vocal and dramatic strengths, interests, timing and potential audience.

Learners should provide the Examiner with a well-presented programme, outlining theme and including the complete selections with titles, poets and authors.

Audience

- Keep in mind the audience experience during the performance.
- Learners may wish to consider the audience's visual and aural experience
- Music can enhance or detract from a programme so use with care.
- Introduction and Linking Narrative
- Each grade within each performance discipline should have a clear Introduction and Linking Narrative including:

Stating the theme and outlining of programme, see example below

"We chose Heaney's sonnet from 'Clearances' because of the insight he gives us into his relationship with his mother. Heaney's language is simple, honest and layered and we realise that while his relationship with his mother was loving, it was also complex and occasionally fractured."

Be aware that Introductions and Linking Narrative should be brief and support the performance.

Performance

As with every discipline within the New Era syllabus, it is expected that Learners will demonstrate progressive performance skills.

Performers should be increasingly confident within their performance space with a strong sense of audience.