



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

Specification for Junior Cycle English

Draft for Consultation

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1. Introduction to junior cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome for all.

The junior cycle allows students make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute directly to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners, and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation and enterprise. The learner's junior cycle programme builds on their learning to date and actively supports their progress in learning and in addition, supports them in developing the learning skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school.

2. Rationale

English gives each student the opportunity to access the understanding, knowledge and skills to promote their personal growth and effective participation in society.

The study of English will enable students to build on their learning in primary school and to further develop language with skill and enjoyment for many different purposes. Through language learning and use, students will discover information, develop thinking, and express ideas and feelings. They will learn about the language, and how to use it well in all areas of their studies.

Learning about language in texts, including digital texts, is important to social development and as part of this process students will develop the competence and confidence needed to meet the demands of school, employment, and further education and life. The knowledge and skills of English are also essential to their contributions to political, social and cultural life and as thoughtful and active citizens.

As learners, it will be important that they become aware of where and how they are improving at using English and conscious of where they need to improve. As a route to this knowledge they will develop greater competence in the conventions of spelling, punctuation procedures, sentence structures and text organisation.

Students will also be actively involved in the skills of oral language, reading and writing and in discussing and comparing a wide variety of texts and forms of English. As study is a social activity as well as a personal one, students will engage with the skills and opportunities of working in groups to achieve appropriate language goals.

The ability to appreciate literature written skilfully in English is central to developing the whole person and to this end students will need to read English literature with insight and imagination not only in class but privately as well. Engaging with English and the different cultures it generates over time through the study and enjoyment of Irish and international literature is an essential contribution to the full cultural development of the student.

Finally, the appreciation of how language functions implicitly and explicitly in the world and how it both reflects and shapes society and social attitudes will help students to achieve a better understanding of themselves and the world.

3. Aim

English is our chief means of communicating and of making meaning for ourselves and for the world around us. Our study of English helps us to become skilful users of it in order to form and express our thoughts and make our feelings known.

This English specification invites students at all levels of ability to continue to build on their proficiency and creativity in language, gaining enjoyment and personal growth from English in all its forms.

In their years in school, students will aim to deepen their critical awareness of language, leading to rich enquiry into texts in all their forms. As a result of this awareness they will learn how language works helping them to make informed language choices to find, use, and communicate information using a variety of media.

The study of English also aims to motivate students to continue their enthusiastic and critical reading of literature and to value their own and other cultures in the present and in times past. Critical engagement with non-fiction and digital texts will also encourage the enjoyment of the world of knowledge that reading offers.

The English specification aims to present students with opportunities to engage with and develop the key skills of junior cycle encouraging them to deepen their learning and make them more self-aware as learners.

Finally, in their day to day journey to a fuller literacy, students will continue to develop their potential in oral language, reading and writing. As their mastery of English grows, so too will the opportunities to enjoy their world and give of their best to society now, and in the future. They will fully appreciate their success in English when pleasure and growth in it continue in their lives long after school is done.

4. Links

Tables 1 to 3 show how Junior Cycle English is linked to central features of learning and teaching at junior cycle.

Table 1: Links between Junior Cycle English and the Statements of Learning

Statements of Learning	
The statement	Examples of relevant learning
1. The student communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in L1	Students will participate in a wide range of language activities to develop their oral and written communication in a wide variety of contexts and forms.
3. The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets a wide range of texts	Students will engage critically with texts in a wide range of forms, to understand and respond to their content, and to enrich their own spoken and written output.
4. The student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved	Learning from artistic works with which they engage, students will create a range of texts in narrative and aesthetic forms.
6. The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives	Students will encounter diversity through wide reading and will learn to appreciate the significance of diversity through discussion and reflection.
16. The student describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships	Students will learn—through the study of texts produced by others and through the creation of texts of their own—the significance of patterns and structures and the centrality of relationships in expression and communication.
23. The student brings an idea from conception to realisation	Students will engage in planning and development, by themselves and in collaboration with others, to bring an extended piece of work to fruition over time.

Table 2: Links between Junior Cycle English and Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy and numeracy
<p>Growth in language and literacy are core concerns of English. Students will develop their literacy skills as they become actively involved in the skills of oral language, reading and writing.</p>
<p>In oral language they will engage in purposeful discussion of texts, ideas and dispositions and in so doing develop their own listening and speaking skills.</p>
<p>They will develop their reading skills by encountering a variety of texts which they learn to read with fluency, understanding and competence using a broad range of comprehension strategies.</p>
<p>In further developing their literacy, students will engage in purposeful planning, drafting and writing in a variety of different genres as they show increasing awareness of audience and style.</p>
<p>In their general literacy progression, students will deepen their critical awareness of language, leading to rich enquiry into texts in all their forms. As a result of this awareness they will learn how language works, helping them to make informed language choices to express themselves and to find, use, and communicate information and ideas.</p>
<p>In English students develop their numeracy skills as they gather information through questionnaires, surveys and personal records and present the findings in different formats and to different audiences. They learn to recognise patterns in language and factual information, and they learn to problem solve.</p>

Table 3: Links between Junior Cycle English and other Key Skills

Other Key Skills		
Key skill	Key skill element	Student learning activity
Being creative	Imagining	Students will engage frequently with literary narratives and will compose imaginative narratives of their own.
Communicating	Listening and expressing myself Discussing and debating	The English classroom is a place of talk and discussion. Students enjoy frequent opportunities to debate, to adopt a point of view and defend it. They learn to communicate by writing in a range of forms and for many purposes.
Managing information and thinking	Gathering, recording, organising and evaluating information and data	Students will plan for and conduct an investigation into a chosen contemporary issue, leading to the production and presentation of a report.
Managing myself	Being able to reflect on my own learning	Students will manage the development of a portfolio of personal writing, which they will build up over time. Through this they will learn to see writing as a process to learn about and refine.
Staying well	Being confident	In oral language, reading and writing students will develop a sense of audience and purpose through the opportunities they will have to present to and for others.
Working with others	Co-operating	Students will collaborate with others to explore and discuss views on a range of texts and contexts.

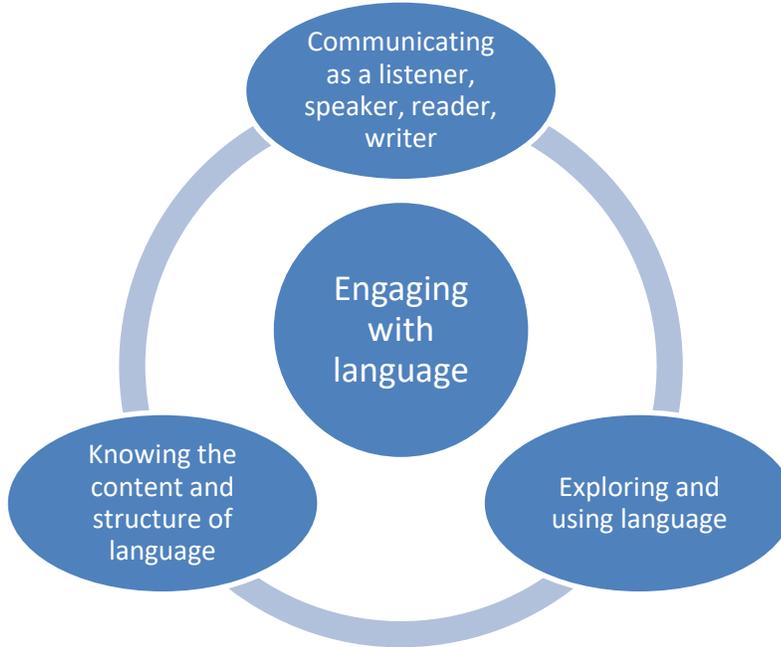
5. Overview

The specification for Junior Cycle English focuses on the development of language and literacy in and through the **three strands: Oral Language, Reading, and Writing**. The elements of each of these strands will bring a renewed focus on communicating, on active engagement with and exploration of a range of texts, and on acquiring and developing an implicit and explicit knowledge of the shape and structures of language. There will be a strong focus on the oral dimension of language, including the vital importance of **learning through oral language**. This will seek to make the English classroom an active space, a place of ‘classroom talk’ where learners explore language and ideas as much through thinking and talking as through listening and writing. While the learning outcomes associated with each strand are set out separately here, this should not be taken to imply that the strands are to be studied in isolation. The student’s language learning is marked by a fully integrated experience of oral language, reading and writing.

To give further emphasis to the integrated nature of language learning the outcomes for each strand are grouped by reference to three **elements**:

- Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader, and writer
- Exploring and using language
- Knowing the content and structure of language

Figure 1: The elements of English showing the components as interactive and interdependent



The elements describe a three-fold focus for language learning as a systematic development of communication skills, learning language by exploring and doing, and building up an understanding and awareness of how language works across a wide range of contexts.

Engagement with text/s is central to the development of language and literacy and it is important to recognise that the term 'text' applies to more than communication in written formats. All products of language use—oral, written, visual, or multimodal—can be described as texts. Multimodal texts combine language with other systems for communication, such as print text, visual images, soundtrack and the spoken word. It is essential that over the three years of junior cycle students have a wide and varied experience of texts that stimulate, engage, inspire and challenge them.

Junior Cycle English has been designed for a minimum of 240 hours of engagement across the three years of junior cycle. In planning a course the teacher will take account

of the need to provide a wide range of opportunities for students to have meaningful and stimulating language experiences across a broad range of contexts. For example, a year's work might be organised around themes and/or central texts with other texts studied in broad contextual relation to them. A course would be expected to include many opportunities for students to generate their own texts in response to those studied and as part of their general language and literacy development. Appendix 1 provides some examples of teacher planning in this regard¹.

Although responsibility for planning a course of study for students rests with the individual teacher, a model of rolling prescription (resembling the current model of prescription applying for Leaving Certificate English) will be put in place. This will include a list of texts (fiction, dramatic texts, poetry) from which teachers and students choose, along with a list of non-literary text types in a range of formats, describing the **kinds of texts** that should be included in a wide ranging course of study. The prescription will set out the scope, the range and number of longer and shorter texts to be studied, introducing a minimum requirement in this context.

¹ The materials included in Appendix 1 were generated for NCCA by teachers of English to provide illustrations of **the kinds of content** that might form the basis of language opportunities for students. They do not indicate the size or extent of a course to be followed. In their current format they provide illustrative material for discussion in the consultation process.

6. Expectations for learners

Expectations for learners is an umbrella term that links learning outcomes with annotated examples of student work in the subject or short course specification. When teachers, students or parents looking at the online specification scroll over the learning outcomes, a link will sometimes be available to examples of work associated with a specific learning outcome or with a group of learning outcomes. The examples of student work will have been selected to illustrate expectations and have been annotated by teachers. The examples will include work that is

- in line with expectations
- ahead of expectations
- has yet to meet expectations.

The purpose of the examples of student work is to show the extent to which the learning outcomes are being realised in actual cases. An annotated sample of student work developed by teachers from the Junior Cycle School Network is included in Appendix 2.

Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes set out in the following tables apply to all learners. As set out here they represent achievement for learners at the end of their three years of study². Those outcomes marked with an asterisk (*) indicate the outcomes upon which the **final assessment** component will be based.

² As with Junior Cycle Mathematics, it is intended to develop a separate set of outcomes for First Year to take account of and to provide continuity with learning in primary education.

Elements	Strand: Oral Language
<p>Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader and writer</p>	<p><i>Engaging with oral language students should be able to</i></p> <p>Know and use the conventions of oral language interaction: variety of tone, eye contact, pausing, gesture</p> <p>Speak with confidence by knowing how to achieve a chosen purpose: ask for information, inform others, give opinions, narrate a story, speculate</p> <p>Engage in oral language for a variety of different and/or related purposes: analyse and evaluate, imagine or explore, inform or explain, argue with or persuade, criticise or comment on what they have heard, viewed or read</p> <p>Engage actively and responsively within class groups in order to listen to or recount events and experiences and to express ideas</p> <p>Engage in extended and constructive discussion of their own and other students' work</p> <p>Listen actively in order to get the gist of an account or presentation noting its main points and purpose</p> <p>Deliver a short oral presentation—alone and/or in collaboration with others—paying attention to aspects that will make it effective, such as planning, language, shape, content, impact, multimedia dimension as appropriate</p> <p>Evaluate and learn from models of oral language use to enrich their own oral language production</p> <p>*Choose appropriate language, style and visual content for specific audiences and chosen purposes: persuading, informing, relating an</p>

<p>Exploring and using language</p>	<p>anecdote, describing a process</p> <p>Listen actively in order to interpret meaning in, and respond to drama, poetry, media broadcasts, digital media, and stories: to note feeling, humour, message, vocabulary, style</p> <p>Evaluate the effectiveness of a spoken text that they have heard or viewed noting key ideas, tone, content and impact in a systematic way</p> <p>Apply what they have learned about the effectiveness of spoken texts to their own use of oral language</p> <p>Collaborate with others in order to explore and discuss understandings of spoken texts by recording, analysing, interpreting and comparing their opinions</p> <p>Compare spoken texts noting the ways they achieve similar or different purposes</p> <p>Develop and evaluate their spoken language range e.g. general vocabulary, word choice, idiom, expressiveness</p> <p>Engage with the world of oral language use as a pleasurable and purposeful activity</p>
<p>Knowing the content and structure of language</p>	<p>*Demonstrate how grammar, text structure and word choice vary with context and purpose</p> <p>Appreciate a variety of registers and understand their use in the spoken context</p> <p>Develop and evaluate their spoken language proficiency: to use full</p>

	sentences when necessary, to be creative with syntax, to be precise, to stimulate appropriate responses
Elements	Strand: Reading
Communicating as a listener and speaker, reader and writer	<p><i>Engaging in reading students should be able to</i></p> <p>*Read texts with fluency, understanding and competence, decoding groups of words/phrases and not just single words</p> <p>*Read for a variety of purposes: learning, pleasure, research</p> <p>Deliver a text to an audience paying attention to meaning, pace, emphasis and nuance</p> <p>*Use a wide range of reading comprehension strategies appropriate to texts: to monitor comprehension; to question, gather, analyse, monitor and evaluate information; to set purposes; to be aware of text structure and visual content; to link to previous knowledge, follow a process or argument, link main ideas</p> <p>*Compare texts noting how the author's purposes affect the choice of language, the shape and impact of the text</p> <p>*Search texts such as advertisements, web pages, tables, diagrams, surveys, reports, reviews, diary entries, in order to locate information, and to interpret, critically evaluate and synthesise the information and/or opinion presented</p>

Exploring and Using Language	<p>*Read their texts for understanding and appreciation of character, setting, story and action, to explore how and why characters develop, to recognise the importance of setting and basic plot structure</p> <p>*Read their texts for understanding and appreciation of language enrichment by examining an author’s choice of words, the use and effect of simple figurative language, vocabulary and language patterns, and images, as appropriate to the text</p> <p>*Evaluate ways in which authors use language and visual material to achieve different purposes³</p> <p>*Identify and appreciate the ways in which texts of different literary genre—fiction, drama, poetry, film, short story—shape a reader’s experience</p> <p>Apply what they have learned about the effectiveness of spoken and written texts to their own experience of reading</p> <p>*Select key moments from their texts and give thoughtful value judgements on the main character, a key scene, a favourite image from a film, a poem or chapter</p> <p>*Use an appropriate critical vocabulary while responding to literary texts</p> <p>Know how to use language resources (e.g. dictionary, thesaurus) in order to assist vocabulary development</p> <p>Engage in sustained private reading as a pleasurable and purposeful activity</p>
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³ See Appendix 2 for student work sample

<p>Knowing the content and structure of language</p>	<p>*Identify and comment on features of English at word and sentence level, using appropriate terminology, showing how such features contribute to overall effect</p> <p>*Understand how syntax, grammar, text structure and word choice may vary with context and purpose</p> <p>*Appreciate a variety of registers and understand their use in the written context</p> <p>*Appreciate how the meaning of sentences can be made richer through the use of grammatical and/or syntactical manipulation</p>
<p>Elements</p>	<p>Strand: Writing</p>
<p>Communicating as a listener, speaker, reader and writer</p>	<p><i>Engaging in writing students should be able to</i></p> <p>*Set clear purposes for all writing activities: to plan, draft, and edit as appropriate within a chosen genre or text form</p> <p>Interact purposefully with teachers and with other students in order to clarify ideas and receive and give feedback when writing</p> <p>Discuss their own and other students' written work constructively and with a clear purpose</p> <p>*Write for a variety of purposes: to analyse, evaluate, imagine, explore, engage, amuse, narrate, inform, explain, argue, persuade, criticise, comment on what they have heard, viewed or read</p> <p>*Write competently in a range of text forms (letter, report, blog, etc.) using</p>

<p>Exploring and Using Language</p>	<p>appropriate vocabulary, tone and a variety of styles to achieve a chosen purpose</p> <p>Employ note making to assist their thinking and learning processes</p> <p>Engage with and learn from models of oral and written language use to enrich their own written work</p> <p>*Write texts for different audiences, exploring how writing style and visual content may need to be adjusted thus enabling them to view their writing from the reader's perspective⁴</p> <p>*Use editing skills continuously during the writing process to enhance meaning and impact: select vocabulary, reorder words, phrases and clauses, correct punctuation and spelling, reorder paragraphs, remodel, manage content</p> <p>*Plan, shape and write a variety of texts—narrative, persuasive, informative, discursive, imaginative, multi-modal—to suit chosen purposes and audiences while adjusting style to achieve the intended impact</p> <p>*Respond imaginatively in writing to their prescribed texts showing a critical appreciation of language, style and content, choice of words, language patterns, images</p> <p>Apply what they have learned about the effectiveness of spoken and written texts to their own experience of writing</p> <p>Explore, plan and create outlines and employ revision strategies when writing extended pieces either for creative purposes or in response to their texts</p>
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⁴ See Appendix 2 for student work sample

Knowing the content and structure of language	<p>Write about the effectiveness of key moments from their texts commenting on characters, key scenes, favourite images from a film, poem or chapter</p> <p>*Write their responses in a 'personal voice' as their individual style is thoughtfully developed over the years</p> <p>Engage in the writing process as a private, pleasurable and purposeful activity</p> <p>*Use and apply their knowledge of language structure to make their writing a richer experience for themselves and the reader: to know the grammatical functions of words (adverb, adjective, etc.), the use of different sentence types, the purpose of paragraphing</p> <p>*Use language conventions appropriately to aid meaning and presentation, and to enhance the reader's experience: capital letters, full stops, apostrophes, subject-verb agreement, appropriate tense</p> <p>*Understand how syntax, grammar, text structure and word choice may vary with context and purpose</p> <p>Evaluate their own writing proficiency and seek remedies for those aspects of their writing that they need to improve</p>
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7. Assessment

Assessment in Junior Cycle English

Assessment in education involves gathering, interpreting and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and can be used in a variety of ways, such as to test and certify achievement, to determine the appropriate route for learners to take through a differentiated curriculum, or to identify specific areas of difficulty (or strength) for a given learner. While different techniques may be employed for formative, diagnostic and certification purposes, assessment of any kind can improve learning by exerting a positive influence on the curriculum at all levels. To do this it must reflect the full range of curriculum goals.

Assessment in Junior Cycle English rests upon the provision for learners of opportunities to set clear goals and targets in their learning and upon the quality of the focused feedback they get in support of their learning. Essentially, the purpose of assessment at this stage of education is to support learning. To support their engagement with assessment teachers and schools will have access to an Assessment and Moderation Toolkit. The contents of the Toolkit⁵ will be an essential element of quality assurance. The toolkit will include the range of assessment supports, advice, guidelines and exemplification that will enable schools and teachers to engage with the new assessment system in an informed way, with confidence and clarity.

Assessment for the School Certificate

In Junior Cycle English there will be two assessment components in the assessment for the School Certificate: a school work component and a final assessment. The school work component will carry 40% of the marks available. It will be offered at a Common Level and evidence of student learning will be gathered through three assessment tasks

⁵ The Toolkit will provide assessment guidelines and a bank of sample assessment material including: sample questions, tasks and marking guides; digital resources; videos of assessment practice in action; guidelines on developing assessment items and instruments; access to relevant articles, journals and books; online podcasts and lectures on aspects of assessment.

directly linked to work done by students over time. In determining the grade on the School Certificate the marks awarded for these assessments will be aggregated with the marks from the final assessment. Students will complete each of these assessments as close as possible to the completion of each piece of work. The assessment events will be based upon the learning outcomes and will provide students with opportunities to generate their own texts in response to those studied and as part of their general language and literacy development.

The School Work Component		
<p>Portfolio of creative writing</p> <p>As part of language and literacy learning students will build up a portfolio of creative writing, which may include hand-written and/or digitally produced texts.</p>	<p>Students will choose and present for assessment three creative writing texts in at least two genres. These pieces of work will have been written in response to specific tasks set by the teacher as part of language and literacy teaching and learning during the period.</p>	<p>Work will be completed between September of 2nd Year and Christmas of 3rd Year</p>
<p>Investigative report on a contemporary issue</p>	<p>Students will set out five tasks or questions in ascending order of scope to support research and the creation of a report on an issue of their choosing. At the end of the process the student will give a short oral presentation of findings as part of the assessment.</p>	<p>The component will be assessed during Term 3 of 2nd Year</p>

A study linking literary texts	Students will study one significant literary text combining it with at least two other texts with a view to enriching their appreciation of the differences and similarities between the texts, paying attention to character, setting, theme, language features, etc. Students will be given opportunities to respond to questions relating to their comparative evaluation of these texts.	The assessment event will take place at or before the end of the first term in 3 rd Year.
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The final assessment will carry 60% of the marks available. It will be offered at Higher and Ordinary Level and evidence of student learning will be gathered through one assessment event linked in part to reading and study of texts over 2nd and 3rd Year. This assessment will be based upon the outcomes marked with an asterisk in the tables of learning outcomes. An indicative design for the final assessment is set out here. To support teacher planning a Sample Paper will be provided by the State Examinations Commission.

The Final Assessment		
Comprehension and response	Students will sit a two-hour written examination paper. A single establishing unseen text will be followed by a range of linked activities or tasks. Tasks will be chosen from a wide range of possibilities including: reading comprehension, functional	The examination takes place at the end of 3 rd Year and will be offered at Higher and Ordinary Level.

	task, intervention-type task, creative writing task, and response to their general reading including their reading of literary and non-literary texts.	
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The finalised specification for Junior Cycle English will also include details of the practical arrangements relating to the assessment of the school work component including details of the process of school-focused moderation involved.

Appendix 1

Suggestions for course content

Sample planning material

An example of some suggested content for a first year course

Aim: To read and respond to a suite of texts in a variety of genres including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama.

It would be expected that students would read and engage with:

Fiction: novel/s: e.g. *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien, *Wilderness* by Roddy Doyle, *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio and/or personal choices monitored for appropriateness by teachers.

Biography/Memoir – possibilities around sports, history, science, childhood, etc.

Short Story: six short stories (two per term): *The Hitch-Hiker* by Roald Dahl, *Lamb to the Slaughter* by Roald Dahl, *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson, *Guests of the Nation* by Frank O'Connor, *My Polish Teacher's Tie* by Helen Dunmore, *The Sniper* by Liam O'Flaherty.

Poetry: a range e.g. *Back in the Playground Blues* by Adrian Mitchell, *The Lesson* by Roger McGough, *The Choosing* by Liz Lochhead, *Not Yet My Mother* by Owen Shears, *Ordinary Man* by Christy Moore, *Bluebottle* by Judith Nicholls, *Mid-Term Break* by Seamus Heaney, *Red Boots On* by Kit Wright, *Jabberwocky* by Lewis Carroll, *Dis Poetry* by Benjamin Zephaniah, *Sling Another Chair Keg on the Fire*, *Mother* by Pam Ayres, *The Streets of London* by Ralph McTell, *Ozymandias* by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Non-fiction texts: comprising news articles, features, blogs/ diaries, biographical texts, historical texts, information texts: cyber-bullying article, teenage blog, *A Life in the Day*, Learning and video games, *Changing the world*, travel article, match report, profile of a person, Q & A article, *It's hard being a teenager*, *The Future*, School, emigration article, unemployment article

Oral texts: great speeches - *Any Given Sunday* (Al Pacino), Barack Obama (inauguration speech). TED talks? Interviews with writers: Michael Morpurgo, J.K. Rowling, Ryan Tubridy interviewing One Direction, Pat Kenny interview with Imelda

May, Poetry Performances: Roger McGough, Benjamin Zephaniah, Poetry Slams,
Comedy clips: Michael McIntyre.

Visual Texts: incorporated throughout exploration of texts- video, photograph, cartoon

Drama: e.g. *Blood Brothers* by Willy Russell, *The Shadow of a Gunman* by Sean O'Casey

Film: one film in the course of first year: *A Bridge to Terabithia*, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, *Billy Elliot*, *In America*

These texts would be used as vehicles through which students could achieve learning outcomes in terms of reading, writing and oral language.

Example of a themed unit of work

Engaging with reading a fiction text

The unifying theme in this unit of work: *Exploring New Worlds* [N.B. there are 16 items/tasks in this themed unit.]

The central text: *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien

Linked texts: A number of travel articles

Jabberwocky by Lewis Carroll

Ozymandias by Percy Bysshe Shelley

This unit of work will address multiple learning outcomes through a wide variety of experiences and tasks. The focus during reading will be on developing literacy through explicit vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension strategies.

Note on the reading process

This unit of work is focused on engaging with a fiction text (*The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien) in order to develop reading, writing and oral language. The unit of work will address multiple learning outcomes through a wide variety of experiences and tasks.

- Acts of reading will take many forms throughout the process. Students should be able to listen to the text being read by teachers and peers (where appropriate) in whole class or small group settings, engage in sustained silent reading at school and at home.
- Students should engage with appropriate comprehension and reading strategies that will assist in reading and comprehension of the material. These strategies may be at word level and/or at the level of sentence and paragraph.

Learning Outcomes	Task	Resources/Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage with the world of oral language as a pleasurable and purposeful activity (O) ▪ Deliver a short oral presentation (alone and/or in collaboration with others) paying attention to aspects that will make it effective, such as planning, language, shape, content, impact, multimedia dimension as appropriate (O) 	<p>Produce a radio broadcast describing the world of The Hobbit.</p>	<p>Vocabulary charts relating to each chapter of the novel</p> <p>Keep an engagement log of reading throughout the process</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak with confidence by knowing how to achieve a chosen purpose (in this case inform others) (O) • Engage actively and responsively within class groups in order to listen to or recount events and experiences and to express ideas (in this case in relation to a reading of the novel) (O) • Deliver a short oral presentation (alone and/or in collaboration with others) paying attention to aspects that will make it effective, such as planning, language, shape, content, impact, multimedia dimension as appropriate 	<p>Create a presentation (digital or otherwise) that details key moments in the plot of The Hobbit.</p> <p>Your presentation should have: 8-10 key moments</p> <p>Pictures to support your key moments</p> <p>Short analysis of the key moment in terms of what we learn about the world, central characters or themes in the novel.</p> <p>Your presentation could be accompanied by an audio voiceover file of your presentation</p>	

Learning Outcomes	Task	Resources/Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with others in order to plan and deliver a digital presentation (O) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ note making to assist their thinking and learning processes (W) Engage in extended and constructive discussion of their own and other students' written work (O) Evaluate their own writing proficiency and seek remedies for those aspects of their writing that they need to improve (W) Use editing skills continuously during the writing process to enhance meaning and impact e.g. select vocabulary, reorder words, phrases and clauses, correct punctuation and spelling, reorder paragraphs, remodel, manage content (W) 	<p>Write a series of diary entries (3) for Bilbo Baggins that show us how he is feeling and what he is thinking as the adventure progresses towards its conclusion.</p> <p>You might consider the following moments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before they depart Bag End on the adventure Bilbo's encounter with Gollum The escape from the Elvenking Bilbo's encounter with Smaug 	<p>Discuss these key scenes (or others) in small groups/pairs.</p> <p>Take some notes regarding the group's thoughts in order to build upon the thinking process associated with writing.</p> <p>Write the diary entries using appropriate style, tone, etc.</p> <p>Comment on the work of others in a supportive and constructive fashion in order to support the re-drafting process. It may be possible to produce these diary entries as a blog detailing Bilbo's perspective on the adventure.</p> <p>Use a formative feedback frame – Two Stars & Wish.</p>

Learning Outcomes	Task	Resources/Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with and learn from models of oral and written language use to enrich their own written work (W) Write texts for different audiences, exploring how writing style and visual content may need to be adjusted thus enabling them to view their writing from the reader's perspective. (W) 	<p>Design a questions and answers (Q & A) with Thorin Oakenshield, Gandalf the Wizard, and Bilbo Baggins</p> <p>Your Q & A should interview these characters about their early life, their ambitions, their thoughts about each other, their feelings on the adventure, their hopes for the future, etc.</p>	<p>Students collaborate in pairs for this exercise. Each pair should produce two question-and-answer interviews, one as interviewer and one as interviewee. The process of such an interview may be modelled through written and/or visual texts (interview from Television or radio).</p> <p>Joanne O’Riordan interviewed by Ryan Tubridy http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R97hDC4hwEs Use this interview as a research piece and as a model of how an interview is constructed. Ask students to pay particular attention to the types of questions and how the interviewer elicits more information from the speaker</p>

Appendix 2

Annotated example of student work

Teacher booklet used to support the task

STRAND	ORAL LANGUAGE and READING and WRITING		
ELEMENT	Exploring and using language		
LEARNING OUTCOME/S	<p>Reading: <i>Students should be able to understand how syntax, grammar, text structure and word choice may vary with context and purpose</i></p> <p>Writing: <i>Students should be able to write texts for different audiences, exploring how writing style and visual content may need to be adjusted thus enabling them to view their writing from the reader's perspective</i></p>		
TASK	<p>In class: Read two short texts; discuss and analyse them. Guide questions have been included to direct discussion and group or individual written responses.</p> <p>Homework/Assessment task: Write a brief report about a local event in two different journalistic styles, similar to the texts read in class: a factual account of an event and a racy account of the same event.</p>		
TIME ALLOWED	Up to three classes for discussion/preparation Homework completed over one or two evenings		
CONDITIONS	Open access to given texts and other materials		
STUDENT RESPONSE FORMAT	Written		
TEACHER'S OVERALL JUDGEMENT	In line with expectations	Ahead of expectations	Has yet to meet expectations
		✓	
TEACHER'S COMMENTARY (Supporting the judgement made)	STUDENT'S COGNITIVE COMMENTARY (if appropriate)		
<p><i>In some respects the student is ahead of expectations (especially for a first attempt at this kind of task) but is less successful when it comes to the more factual, objective piece of writing. Therefore, the first text is very successful but the second text is somewhat underdeveloped and skimpy on detail.</i></p> <p><i>On balance, I would see the student as ahead of expectations for 2nd year.</i></p>			

Student's first text

4

English-Homework 11/10/2012

Violent Flamingo Startles Child

Saturday, December 8, 2012.

A small girl was distraught after a violent encounter with a terrifying Flamingo.

On Saturday the little girl was visiting Fota wildlife park with her family.

The girl was walking down by the monkeys when the pink perpetrator attacked her almost breaking her arm.

She said he popped up out of nowhere like a pink feathery ninja.

A park worker blamed the girl for wearing a pink t-shirt causing the flamingo to attack.

Effective headline, dramatic word choice

Emotive language...
'distraught... violent encounter... terrifying'

Clever imagery –
'pink perpetrator'
'pink feathery ninja'

Humorous presentation of the incident

Good sense of genre

Student's notes and second text

Serious: About an incident that was avoided.
 Formal: because ~~it's~~ ~~at~~ ~~it~~ it has formal language like "made its request".
 Objective: Almost all factual information.

Objective: there is alot of facts in the article.
 Emotional: it's creating a story.

Pick a recent incident: Ost fast style 1/2 page.

Flamingo Assaulted Child

Saturday, December 8, 2012

A Flamingo in Fota wildlife park assaulted a young girl because of her bright pink t-shirt

The girl was on a tour of the park when she got a nasty shock when one of the Flamingos grabbed onto her and injured her arm.

A worker in the park said that the Flamingo was attracted by the girl's pink t-shirt causing him to attack

The girl did not sustain a serious injury from the Flamingo but will not be returning for another visit. She and her family also recieved their money back.

Headline understated and factual

Word choice more measured – absence of imagery

Direct focus on 'who, what, where' etc.

Register more formal

Lacking detail and development

Criteria identified by the teacher group:

- Genre awareness - precise and accurate response
- Formal/informal/emotive
- Subjective v objective
- Structure of the report
 - Headline/s
 - Introduction, development, conclusion
 - Paragraph V bullets
- Clear expression, including the mechanics of writing - spelling, grammar, punctuation
- Denoting v connoting
- Editorial presentation

Teacher Booklet used to support the task

Learning outcomes:

Reading: *Students should be able to understand how syntax, grammar, text structure and word choice may vary with context and purpose*

Writing: *Students should be able to write texts for different audiences, exploring how writing style and visual content may need to be adjusted thus enabling them to view their writing from the reader's perspective*

Task: We have had a classroom task that involves reading two short texts, **discussing and analysing** them. Your homework task is to write a brief report about a local event **in two different journalistic styles**, similar to the texts we have read in class: a factual account of an event and a racy account of the same event.

N.B. for teachers: Tabloid/Broadsheet may be acknowledged but not dwelt upon.

Here is the material, with questions, for discussion/classwork. Please note that all need not be used.

The material consists of two reports of an air incident.

TEXT 1

From the Irish Times Newspaper

Passenger helps land flight in Dublin

Wed, Nov 21, 2012

An off-duty pilot assisted an emergency landing of a Lufthansa flight in Dublin Airport on Monday morning.

The pilot was identified through the passengers' list after the co-pilot fell ill while halfway through the flight from Newark to Frankfurt. The aircraft landed safely at Dublin Airport at 5.40am.

The Boeing 747 flight was in Oceanic airspace when it made its request to Shanwick Air Traffic Control to divert to Dublin.

Shannon Air Traffic Control was informed of the diversion by Shanwick.

A spokeswoman for Lufthansa said that even if the off-duty pilot had not been on board, the captain would have had control of the aircraft.

The Air Accident Investigation Unit has begun an inquiry into the incident.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2012/1121/1224326897920.html>

TEXT 1 – Some prompt questions/suggestions for teachers

N.B. It is not necessary that you use all/or any of these questions.

1. Tick which of the following questions are answered in the opening one sentence paragraph:
Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?
2. Is this report factual? Count the number of facts mentioned in the article.

Number:

Place * on the margin beside any paragraph that contains a fact.
3. How would you describe the tone of the article? Tick any three of the following tones:
Serious, formal, light-hearted, objective, exciting, funny and emotional.
4. Are there any words or phrases that strike you as an attempt to be dramatic? Show any such words and phrases with a 'D' beside them. If there are none, then don't mark any.
5. Which **one** of the following best describes the tone and language use of the report:
a) Emotive b) Informative or c) Informative and Emotive?
6. Consider the wording of the final fact. Why is it stated in this way?

TEXT 2

From the Daily Mail website

'I can wing it!' Passenger steps in to land 747 after co-pilot falls ill... lucky he happens to be off-duty pilot himself

- Co-pilot struck down with migraine on flight from Newark to Frankfurt
- Passenger reveals he is fully qualified to help captain land Lufthansa jet
- Captain traveling on the plane 'works for North American Airlines'
- Plane diverts to Dublin Airport, where accident investigation is under way.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2235746/Passenger-steps-land-747-pilot-falls-ill--happens-duty-pilot.html>

TEXT 2 – Some prompt questions/suggestions for teachers

N.B. It is not necessary that you use all/or any of these questions.

1. Tick which of the following questions are answered in the opening one sentence paragraph:
Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?
2. Is this report factual? Count the number of facts mentioned in the article.

Number:

Place * on the margin beside any paragraph that contains a fact.
3. How would you describe the tone of the article? Tick any three of the following tones:
Serious, formal, light-hearted, objective, exciting, funny and emotional.
4. Are there any words or phrases that strike you as an attempt to be dramatic? Show any such words and phrases with a 'D' beside them. If there are none, then don't mark any.
5. Which **one** of the following best describes the tone and language use of the report:
a) Emotive b) Informative or c) Informative and Emotive?
6. Consider the wording of the final fact. Why is it stated in this way?

Comparison Questions – these are the more important questions and could be used as a basis for group and/or individual work.

N.B. It is not necessary to use all/or any of these questions.

- a. Compare the way the final fact in each article is presented to a reader. What can you say about the difference between them?
- b. Which of the articles contains opinion? Is that helpful to the reader?
- c. As a reader, which of the articles do you consider to be the most interesting? Explain
- d. Which of the reports tries the hardest to appeal to a wide audience? Consider using some of the words '*informative*', '*emotive*', '*dramatic*', '*theatrical*' and '*sensational*' in your answer. Select at least one example of language to illustrate your answer.
- e. Which report tries to be more entertaining? Does that mean it will have a bigger audience of readers, in your opinion? Why.
- f. Do you think that the readers of the Irish Times and the Daily Mail differ from each other in some ways? How?
- g. Which version would you like on Facebook? Compose a smart comment in Facebook style reacting to that report or a fact from the report?

Homework/Assessment Task:

Model these report styles to compose an alternative story on some event that happened around your area. **Write two versions**, one resembling the Irish Times style, the other the Daily Mail web-page style.