

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR TEACHING FROM 2015

CPD AUTUMN 2016

COMPONENT 3

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS

Component 3: Spoken Language

Task Setting Advice

Introduction

Even though Spoken Language is no longer weighted in the candidate's overall GCSE English Language grade, all English teachers would hopefully agree it has value and plays a **vital role** in any English classroom. We clearly want the best for our candidates and would aim to give them every chance to achieve their full potential.

A **separate level for Spoken Language** will appear alongside the candidate's overall GCSE grade and will be an important indicator of his or her confidence and skill in speaking and listening.

As English teachers know, there are candidates for whom this presentation to an audience may well be one of the most memorable and rewarding activities in all their many English lessons.

Key Factors

There are at present no set or even generic tasks as it was felt to be very important that centres and candidates should have the freedom to select their own topics for the presentation. However, experience from the legacy specification's Speaking and Listening has highlighted good practice (and less successful approaches) which would be **equally relevant** to the Spoken Language component:

- candidates perform best when they can play to their strengths and have the scope to choose **a topic which genuinely interests them**, one which they feel will allow them to engage an audience;
- they will need **help and guidance from their teacher** in selecting a topic and shaping the task to meet the relevant criteria;
- those aiming at higher levels will need to include some degree of **challenge and complexity in their content**;
- the criteria for Merit and Distinction include a strand assessing the candidate's ability to "achieve the purpose of the talk". As with writing tasks for Component 2, **establishing a clear outcome or purpose** (and perhaps having a clearly defined audience) would help the candidate shape his or her material and meet this criterion;
- merely downloading a lot of facts and information should be discouraged as **should reading from a script**. Both make it difficult for the candidates to engage the audience's interest and "meet their needs".

Task Setting

Ideally, candidates will choose their own topics, those which genuinely interest them, and will enjoy the opportunity to present their individual ideas, feelings and views. Yet they will need guidance on how to shape their material: **they'll need a good task** and it isn't really fair to expect them to devise these without help.

Merely selecting a theme or subject and talking about it, like a primary school "show-and-tell", often means that candidates don't make the most of their material. Without a clear focus and purpose, their talks can become directionless, with fewer opportunities to develop

and demonstrate the presentational skills which will help them meet Merit and Distinction criteria (and prove valuable in the world beyond secondary education).

Some of the most successful tasks in the **12 exemplar presentations** have a **clearly defined aim** which proves helpful to the candidates:

- **CHARLOTTE** clearly feels strongly about mass food production and makes a spirited case for the small, independent farmer;
- **LAURA's** objective in persuading her listeners that steeplechasing is dangerous is clear from the outset;
- **PHOEBE's** task in recommending a set text to a specified audience also helps her give considered and relevant responses, even in quite an unstructured format.

However, a **little tweaking** would definitely have benefited others in the exemplars:

- While **CONNOR** is clearly interested in his topic, and very knowledgeable about it, the lack of a defined purpose in his talk on Dr Crippen and his narrative, chronological approach make it difficult for him to move beyond the “straightforward” account in the Pass criteria. His task could have been tweaked to give it a clearer focus, helping him to select and organise the material to engage his audience more directly:
 - Setting out to persuade his audience of Crippen’s innocence or guilt
 - Arguing a case for the vital importance of forensic science or of the Crippen case
 - Presenting the main points of the case for and against and inviting the audience to decide on a verdict: Guilty or innocent?
- **ZAIN** also speaks on the serious topic of racism, and has strong views, but his talk lacks a clear structure and the wide focus is too unwieldy. Re-wording his task to inject a **definite purpose and a specific audience** might have been helpful here;
 - The headteacher/principal has asked for students’ opinions on how best to tackle racism in your school or college. Outline what you think are the main issues and give your views on how best to combat the problem.

Many candidates will **choose to talk on their interests or hobbies** and it will be relatively easy to tweak their tasks to give them more shape and purpose:

Original task	Possible tweaks
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuade your peers to take up cycling as a hobby • Persuade a group of local councillors that the town centre should be a car-free zone or to fund a new velodrome in the area • Persuade the school's SLT to include cycling as part of the PE curriculum
My holiday in the Norfolk Broads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the region as a holiday destination (for a specific target group?) • Persuade your audience that Norfolk is cooler than Ibiza/New York
King Henry VIII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monarch or monster? Persuade the audience to adopt a specific view on this controversial figure. • The trial of King Henry VIII
Hairdressing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuade a group of school leavers to consider a career in hairdressing • Argue a case for making hairdressing an Olympic sport!

Reinforcing Component 2

There are clear links between Spoken Language and **Component 2 Writing skills**. For example:

- candidates may be asked in Section B to write a formal speech/talk;
- selecting relevant information or ideas, organising them effectively;
- employing rhetorical devices where appropriate and presenting a persuasive argument;
- appealing to a clearly defined audience and achieving a specific purpose.

The Spoken Language presentations could help to reinforce or extend non-literary/transactional writing skills:

- In Question B1 of the Specimen Assessment Materials, candidates were asked to write a report for the senior leadership team on ways to reduce waste in the school/college. This could also be adapted as a Spoken Language task in which several candidates present their views to their peers in role or even representatives from the actual senior leadership team. It could also be a useful way to highlight the differences in format, tone and register between a persuasive speech and a formal report.
- Question B2 of the Specimen Assessment Materials requires candidates to write a lively article about a proposed motorcycle race in the local area. This could be the basis of a debate in which two candidates, perhaps in role as a keen biker or a concerned resident, argue a case for or against the race, followed by a class vote to decide. Once again, some consideration of key similarities and differences between a presentation and an article could be helpful in consolidating the distinct formats.

Literary Links

As we can see in PHOEBE's promotion of her set text *Mr Pip* as a good read to her teenage listeners, the Spoken Language task can be a valuable learning and/or revision aid for the English Literature course.

Many of the longer answer **Shakespeare questions** in Section A of Component 1 could be easily converted to a Spoken Language task:

- 'Even though Mercutio dies at the beginning of Act 3, he is very important to the play as a whole.' Show how Mercutio could be described as important to the play as a whole.
This task would work equally well if arguing the central importance of Banquo in *Macbeth*.
- Othello/Iago/Shylock/Lady Macbeth on trial
Two candidates could give opposing views of these controversial characters, acting as prosecution and defence lawyers.

In addition to characters, candidates could present their views on key themes in the texts:

‘It is difficult to defend Shakespeare against a charge of racism in his portrayal of the French in *Henry V*/the Jewish characters in *The Merchant of Venice*’.

‘Shakespeare was clearly a feminist! The female characters in *Much Ado About Nothing* are vastly superior to their male counterparts’

How far do you agree with this statement? Present your views and persuade your audience to agree with your interpretation.

More confident candidates could also “teach” a set poem to the class or make a case for the most important character or scene in a set novel or play:

- The death of Piggy in *Lord of the Flies*;
- The character most responsible for Eva's death in *An Inspector Calls*;
- The wedding scene in *Jane Eyre*;
- Silas' discovery of the baby Eppie in *Silas Marner*;
- Elizabeth's visit to Pemberley in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Baby and bathwater

Finally, although the status of oracy and the course requirements have changed from the legacy specification's Speaking and Listening, there is obviously a **strong cross-over** between Communicating and Adapting Language and the Spoken Language presentations.

Many of the successful communicating and adapting language tasks would be equally relevant to candidates giving presentations for the new specification. There are many listed in the **Principal Moderator's reports** from 2010 to 2016, often focusing on local or school/college based issues which are immediate and relevant to the candidates, or current affairs which have grabbed their interest.

The following are some examples of tasks which have allowed candidates to demonstrate **real skill in spoken language**:

- advising Year 10 students on how to prepare for work experience;
- persuading peers to select a particular charity to receive funds from money collected in the school's “rag week”;
- promoting a hobby or interest to classmates and encouraging them to take it up;
- reviewing a book and recommending it for inclusion on the literature set text list;
- advising parents on the pros and cons of social media sites and how to monitor their children's use of them;
- “selling” the idea of a Year 11 common room to the headteacher/principal
- promoting a particular subject to Year 9 students approaching their GCSE options;
- persuading residents to oppose plans to build a new shopping centre in a local beauty spot;
- a speech in defence of an “open-door” policy to refugees;
- promoting the sugar tax as a way of combatting the obesity epidemic;
- speaking in favour of banning Barbie dolls;
- convincing the audience of the existence of the Loch Ness Monster!

Component 3: SPOKEN LANGUAGE

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. What exactly is meant by the term “presentation”?

- It's likely that most candidates will deliver an **individual talk or speech**, but there is some degree of flexibility.
- The presentation could take the form of a **dialogue in which the candidate gives extended responses to questions** posed by an “interviewer”. As we see in the exemplar materials¹, this works best if the “interviewer” is a teacher, rather than a fellow candidate, so as to inject some formality into the dialogue.
- The presentation could also be an **extended contribution to a group debate**, in which the candidate gives a prepared speech proposing or opposing a motion. However, as there is an expectation that the candidate has prepared in advance, a spontaneous contribution to an informal class discussion would not meet the requirements for the Spoken Language presentation.

Q2. How “formal” does the presentation have to be?

- The **degree of formality will vary**, depending on the candidate, the topic and the format chosen.
- However, in helping candidates prepare, teachers should consider the following points which will contribute to the formal nature of the task:
 - the need to prepare their material in advance and consider to how best to deliver it;
 - the requirement to “meet the needs of the audience”;
 - the importance of using Spoken Standard English.

Q3 What type of audience is required?

Centres can take a **flexible approach** to the composition of audiences so that teachers can be sensitive to individual candidates, rather than imposing the same set-up on all learners.

The audience could be:

- the whole class or an even larger group of peers, as in an assembly;
- a smaller group of classmates;
- adults, such as some of the school's SLT, governors or other visitors/guests;
- classmates in specific roles, such as the SLT, local councillors, etc.;
- a teacher as in some of the exemplar materials².

¹ **JOSH, PHOEBE and HOLLY** all give their presentations to a teacher who is not their actual English teacher.

² However, when the audience is a sole English teacher, the task should be set up so that there is the sense or understanding of a wider audience. For instance, **PHOEBE** speaks to a visiting monitor but is actually recommending *Mr Pip* to a wider audience of teenage listeners to a radio chat show called ‘Book of the Week’.

Q4 Is the question and answer component compulsory?

- Yes. **All candidates are required to listen to questions and respond** in an appropriate way in order to address assessment objective 8 (AO8).
- However, the **number and complexity of questions will vary** and teachers will need to consider the appropriate degree of challenge:
 - Candidates aiming at Merit level will need to respond “formally and in some detail” and for a Distinction, the criteria are “perceptive” and “elaborating with further ideas and information”.
 - In order to facilitate this, some centres have prepared by **teaching questioning techniques**³ so that candidates have a chance to respond to **sufficiently challenging questions**.
 - If this is not possible, then it is important that the **teacher**, who will inevitably be part of the audience, asks **appropriately probing questions** of candidates aiming at Merit or Distinction.
 - There is no restriction on the **number of questions** asked, although it is recommended that the entire presentation, including the Q and A section, **should not exceed 10 minutes in total**⁴.
- It is worth noting how beneficial the follow-up Q and A session will be in many candidates’ individual presentations. Some candidates feel more comfortable in responding to questions, which will allow them to access more challenging criteria. It also teaches a valuable life skill.

Q5 How much advance preparation is required?

- Candidates are expected to **agree their topic and the format** of their presentation with their teachers and to **prepare their ideas and material** in advance.
- To help candidates, teachers should give **guidance** on:
 - selecting an appropriate topic;
 - wording the task to give candidates the opportunity to meet Merit and Distinction criteria⁵, where appropriate;
 - effective delivery and presentational skills.
- Naturally, some candidates will not prepare adequately in advance but this will also be self-penalising and may affect their overall grade.

Q6 Are candidates allowed to use notes and/or visual aids during their presentations?

- Candidates are definitely **allowed to use notes** to help them during their presentations if they wish, and there are **no restrictions** on how detailed these notes are.
- Candidates can even write a script in advance if they find this useful but they should be **strongly discouraged from simply reading their presentation**. Experience from the legacy specification demonstrates very clearly that merely reading from a formal script will make it more difficult for candidates to demonstrate the presentation skills needed for the higher levels; for Distinction, the criteria refer to “an effective

³ BETH’s peers offer sufficiently probing questions to allow her to respond perceptively and in detail.

⁴ There is no minimum time requirement but very brief presentations will obviously be self-penalising and are unlikely to move beyond Pass criteria.

⁵ See advice on task setting

range of strategies to engage the audience". It might be worthwhile encouraging candidates aiming above Pass level to use cards with key words as memory aids so that they are able to make eye contact and use gesture where appropriate.

- Candidates **can use visual aids** including PowerPoint but there is no requirement that they do so. It would be worthwhile advising candidates choosing to use PowerPoint not to read from their slides as this would make it just as difficult to engage effectively with the audience; some candidates who do this actually turn their backs on their listeners! Experience from the legacy specification suggests that the most effective use of PowerPoint is to restrict material to visual images rather than words; too much text is actually a distraction for the audience and a temptation for the candidate to rely too heavily on reading from the screen.

Q7 What is meant by a competency model for assessment?

- Rather than having to fine-tune a best-fit mark within a band as at present, the teacher has only to decide **whether or not the candidate has met all the criteria** for each level.
- If the candidate has met **most but not all the criteria** for a level, then he or she cannot be awarded that level.⁶
- The assessment criteria are common to all examining bodies and there are fewer criteria for each grade than at present. There are also clear strands across all the grades which should make assessment relatively straightforward.
- In addition to the basic requirements to be **audible** and **use Spoken Standard English**, candidates are assessed on their ability to:
 - express ideas/information/feelings using a range of vocabulary
 - organise and structure the presentation
 - meet the needs of the audience
 - achieve the purpose of the presentation
 - listen and respond to questions/feedback
- The qualifying terms in the criteria outline **a clear sense of progression** in these strands:

e.g.	Express ideas/information/feelings	Listen to questions/feedback and respond
PASS	<i>straightforward</i>	<i>appropriate straightforward</i>
MERIT	<i>challenging</i>	<i>formally in some detail</i>
DISTINCTION	<i>sophisticated</i>	<i>perceptively elaborating with further ideas and information where appropriate</i>



What is meant by “Spoken Standard English”?

- For the purposes of Spoken Language assessment, this means that a candidate must:
 - be intelligible
 - generally use language appropriate to the formal setting of the presentation

⁶ For instance, **BETH** meets some but not all of the Distinction criteria, meaning that she is awarded a Merit.

- It is distinct from written Standard English where candidates have more time and opportunity to edit and refine their language⁷.

Q8 How will the centre's assessment be monitored by WJEC/EDUQAS?

- Each year a sample of the centre's candidate presentations will be recorded and **submitted to a WJEC EDUQAS Spoken Language Monitor**.
- These sample presentations will be standardised by the centre's designated monitor to check:
 - the centre's **assessment is accurate** and in line with the standards as exemplified in the exemplar material
 - the **tasks are appropriate**, i.e. that the candidates are giving a "presentation" with the appropriate level of formality and challenge
- **No report** on the sample will be sent to the centre unless the monitor has indicated concern about the accuracy of the assessment or the appropriateness of the task setting.
- Centres will **no longer be visited by a consultative moderator** once every three years. However, if there are any concerns about either assessment or task setting, WJEC EDUQAS can put in place additional support for the following year which might include a visit from a monitor.

Q9 What will the assessment sample consist of?

- In most centres where the entry exceeds 30 candidates, a sample of **30 presentations** will be required.
- These must be **audio-visual recordings** and will ideally include **10 from each level**:

10 PASS; 10 MERIT; 10 DISTINCTION

- If the centre does not have 10 presentations in each level, then the sample of 30 could be **made up accordingly** e.g. in a centre where there are only judged to be 6 at DISTINCTION level, the sample could comprise:

12 PASS; 12 MERIT; 6 DISTINCTION

- In centres where with **smaller entries** totalling fewer than 30 candidates, all the presentations should be recorded and included in the sample.
- It is advisable to record slightly **more than 10 at each level** in case there are problems with the actual filming or the centre's internal standardising process means an alteration to the original level awarded by the class teacher.
- There is **no requirement to include a representative from all teaching groups** but it is very important that the sample submitted is an accurate reflection of the centre's assessment overall.

⁷ See the commentaries for **JIBREEL** and **JOSH** for further guidance on use of fillers and regional accents.

Q10 What if recording some candidates' presentations would be problematic?

- As the **centre selects the candidates** for the sample, it should be possible in most centres to avoid recording the work of those candidates whose nervousness or lack of confidence would seriously affect the quality of their presentations.
- In smaller centres with fewer than 30 candidates, where teachers are concerned that individuals might be adversely affected by filming, it may be possible to **apply for an exemption** for such candidates. This might apply particularly to centres where candidates have **special communication needs**. As a first step, centres should consult the **inter-board document** outlining arrangements for candidates who qualify for exemption on the EDUQAS website.⁸
- If there are specific circumstances relating to exemption of individuals not fully outlined in this document, centres can **contact the GCSE English Language Subject Officer** for advice.

Q11 What documents should be included in the sample?

- There is **no need to submit any candidates' records** either electronically or as hard copies.
- However, **a simple record sheet for each candidate should be kept** for the department's records and in case of inspection.
- Unlike in the legacy specification, there is **no requirement to include comments** on the candidates' presentations to justify marks awarded; the recorded sample will be sufficient evidence of the centre's adherence to the agreed standards.
- There are **suggested proformas** for the individual candidate and whole class record sheets prepared by an inter-board panel available on the WJEC/EDUQAS open website⁹. Centres do not have to use these proformas and can devise their own.
- There is further advice on how to label each candidate's presentation and how to submit the sample on the website.

Q12 Where can we find the exemplar material and how should it be used?

- There are now **12 exemplar presentations** available to centres, each with a full commentary, 6 released in 2015/6 and a further 6 in 2016/7.
- These 12 exemplars exemplify the **full range of achievement** from Pass to Merit and Distinction and also raise important issues relating to different formats and audiences, the importance of questioning techniques, the use of notes/prompt cards and Spoken Standard English.
- All 12 exemplars can be found on the **WJEC secure website** www.wjecservices.co.uk
- It is expected that **all teachers watch and discuss the exemplars before awarding a level for their own candidates' presentations**. As with the legacy specification, this discussion should inform their assessment of their own candidates and ensure it is in line with agreed standards.
- As the sample submitted is the only evidence of the centre's standards, it is very important that all teachers involved in assessment have taken part in this **internal standardisation procedure**.

⁸ See 'Spoken Language Endorsement Guidance: Arrangements for learners with communication issues and/or hearing needs' available on the EDUQAS open website under All Course Materials then VIEW ALL DOCUMENTS

⁹ See EDUQAS GCSE English Language: VIEW ALL DOCUMENTS

- As in the past, it is advisable to have **one member of the department with overall responsibility** for Spoken Language.
- The exemplars can also be used as a **teaching aid with candidates** when discussing presentational skills, response to questions, etc.

Q13 When should the Spoken Language component be carried out?

- The candidates can give their presentations **at any time in Years 10 or 11** as long as the final level for each candidate is ready to be officially submitted using the internal assessment mark input system on the WJEC secure website in the summer term of Year 11.
- Centres will need to ensure the sample of 30 candidates is ready for submission by early May of Year 11.

Q14 What if candidates are absent or actively avoid taking part in the Spoken Language endorsement?

- If a candidate is absent then he or she has to be given **another chance** to give the presentation.
- It is the **head of centre's responsibility** to ensure that all candidates are given every chance to complete the endorsement and he or she must sign a declaration to that effect each year.
- However, in the case of a candidate who is absent long-term and does not give a presentation, he or she will be awarded '**not classified**'.