Junior Cycle English

Specification for the school-based assessment component
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Collection of the Student’s Texts task
   Student Reflection Note
1. Oral Communication Task

The description of the oral communication task indicates two priorities – the development of basic research skills and the communication of findings.

**ORAL COMMUNICATION**

Students are given an opportunity to choose a topic or issue that is of interest or importance to them and to carry out an exploration over time. The development of basic research skills will be central here, e.g. searching for information, reading and note-making, organising material, using key questions to give shape to ideas, developing a point of view, preparing a presentation, using props and hand-outs. This task provides useful opportunities for the study of a range of oral presentation styles. In addition, the task offers students opportunities, where appropriate, to collaborate with classmates and others in gathering and developing materials, leading to the individual's oral communication of findings for summative assessment.

(Specification for Junior Cycle English, 2013)

The main learning outcomes to be assessed through oral communication are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Language</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OL 1, 5, 7, 9, 13</td>
<td>R 3</td>
<td>W 3, 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two areas of activity to the assessment of the Oral Communication Task: Communication (45 marks) and Preparation (15 marks).

Students will be credited for preparation for the oral communication assessment. The evidence of this preparation will be demonstrated during the oral communication itself.

The Oral Communication Task promotes student engagement through:

- Choice about the topic on which to focus
- Choice about communication formats
- The possibilities for student collaboration, including a group presentation in which each group member has a part to play. While students may communicate as part of a group, each individual will be awarded a mark. There is no provision for awarding a group mark.
Guidelines for completion of the Oral Communication Task

**CHOOSING THE TOPIC**

The student (group of students) will identify a topic. Topics may range from school-based or course-related topics (e.g. a response to a text being read), to surveys regarding matters of interest to students, to investigations of issues outside school.

Topics may include:

- An interesting:
  - sports person
  - pastime
  - writer, musician, or film director
  - hobby
- An organisation the student is involved with
- An investigation of a text or writer
- An activity or interest the student is involved in e.g. music, sport, fashion, reading, drama, film, etc.

Topics might involve choosing a question and finding the answer, e.g. *Video Games: how much is too much?*

Topics might arise from interests of a cross-curricular nature, e.g. from history, CSPE, SPHE, and so on.

**PREPARATION**

It is recommended that the preparation be done over a maximum of three school weeks.

Preparation might include some original investigative work by the student e.g. interview, survey, emailing, letter writing, and so on. Where sources are used, the use of more than one source will give students scope to cross-reference. This is particularly important where students use internet-based sources, where they should be encouraged to search effectively, evaluate and synthesise material prior to the creation of their own work, or prior to forming their own opinions.

In preparation for the assessment each student must complete and submit a Student Reflection Note (See page 9). The content of the Student Reflection Note will not be assigned a mark; completion of the note is the student’s declaration of the part that he or she has played in the task.

Although this phase of the task is monitored by the teacher, the preparation is the student’s own work, carried out individually or in active, meaningful collaboration as part of a group.

**COMMUNICATION**

As a guideline, the Oral Communication should last about three minutes including time set aside for engagement with the listener/audience. Teacher support for the student’s communication, in the form of questions or interventions, may be part of the Oral Communication.

A student may speak with or without notes, and a reading of a prepared script is allowable. A range of approaches, e.g. interview, performance, or response to stimulus material may be used.
The oral communication may make use of illustrations or props where appropriate.

The communication can be completed by the student as an individual or as a member of a group. The number of students in each group should be such as to allow each group member to make a meaningful contribution to the task.

**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

Where a school judges that a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, reasonable accommodations may be put in place to remove as far as possible the impact of the disability on the student’s performance in the assessment task, so that he or she can demonstrate his or her level of achievement. The accommodations (e.g. the use of Irish Sign Language, support provided by a Special Needs Assistant, or the support of assistive technologies) should be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student’s learning throughout the school year.

**Oral Communication Task: Advice for students**

The *preparation* part of this assessment task will be monitored by your teacher. **Work which cannot be authenticated by your teacher will not be accepted for assessment purposes.**

As part of your preparation for the oral communication you must complete a written Student Reflection Note. This will include:

- A title
- A brief account of the materials or sources you accessed
- An account of the part you played in the preparation
- A brief personal reflection.

You will have freedom to choose the topic bearing in mind the following suggestions:

- The topic should be interesting for you but remember you need to complete your preparation within the time allowed.
- Ask yourself one or more key questions about the topic or issue to help you organise your preparation and communication.
- Even at the start of your preparation remember that this is an oral communication task, so think about how you will communicate with your audience.

With the agreement of your teacher you may collaborate with classmates in the following ways:

- Choosing a topic
- Planning and preparation
- Finalising the communication
- Participating in the communication as part of a group in which each member has a part to play

Even if you collaborate with classmates in any of these ways you must complete your own Student Reflection Note.

The *communication* part of this assessment task consists of a short communication with support from the preparation part of the task.
Assessing Oral Communication

FEATURES OF QUALITY

Key features of quality in support of student and teacher judgement are presented here for Oral Communication. The features of quality are the criteria that will be used to assess the pieces of student work.

Oral communication

**Achieved with Distinction (90-100%)**
- Communication is clear and convincing, showing a comprehensive knowledge of the subject.
- The line of thought is logical and perfectly sequenced with supporting evidence pointedly chosen.
- Engagement with the audience/listener is effective and sustained. Communication is fully shaped to its intended purpose.
- Support materials are used to clear purpose and effect.

**Achieved with Higher Merit (75-89%)**
- Communication is clear and convincing, showing a thorough knowledge of the subject. The line of thought is logical and sequenced to good effect, with supporting evidence well chosen.
- Engagement with the audience/listener is effective and sustained. Communication is fully shaped to its intended purpose.
- Support materials are used to clear purpose and effect.

**Achieved with Merit (55-74%)**
- Communication is clear and convincing for the most part, showing a good knowledge of the subject.
- The line of thought is logical and clear, supported by evidence.
- Engagement with the audience/listener is reasonably well sustained and communication is clearly shaped to a purpose.
- Support materials are used to good effect.

**Achieved (40-54%)**
- Communication is clear for the most part, showing some knowledge of the subject.
- The line of thought is reasonably clear but may be lacking in logical sequence and order. Some evidence supports the argument.
- Engagement with the audience/listener is established but not always adequately sustained. The purpose of the communication may be unclear at times.
- Support materials are used to some effect.

**Not Achieved (0-39%)**
- Communication is unconvincing although some knowledge of the subject is shown.
- The line of thought is unclear and lacking in sequence and order. There is little evidence to support the argument.
- Engagement with the audience/listener is haphazard and poorly sustained. The purpose of the communication may be unclear and vague.
- Support materials, where used, achieve little effect.
MARKING

The Oral Communication Task is marked at a Common Level out of a total of 60 marks. The areas for judgement set out here are based upon and drawn from the features of quality above. Students will complete the Oral Communication Task towards the end of second year and recognition of their emotional and personal development will inform expectations as to the standard of performance of the task. The following grids should be used as reference points when allocating marks for Oral Communication.

Grid showing breakdown of marks for Oral Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Achieved with Distinction (90-100%)</th>
<th>Achieved with Higher Merit (75-89%)</th>
<th>Achieved with Merit (55-74%)</th>
<th>Achieved (40-54%)</th>
<th>Not Achieved (0-39%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>(54-60)</td>
<td>(45-53)</td>
<td>(33-44)</td>
<td>(24-32)</td>
<td>(0-23)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear and convincing communication</td>
<td>(13-15)</td>
<td>(11-12)</td>
<td>(8-10)</td>
<td>(6-7)</td>
<td>(0-5)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line of thought / use of evidence</td>
<td>(13-15)</td>
<td>(11-12)</td>
<td>(8-10)</td>
<td>(6-7)</td>
<td>(0-5)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with / impact upon the audience / listener</td>
<td>(13-15)</td>
<td>(11-12)</td>
<td>(8-10)</td>
<td>(6-7)</td>
<td>(0-5)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>(13-15)</td>
<td>(11-12)</td>
<td>(8-10)</td>
<td>(6-7)</td>
<td>(0-5)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Template for marking Oral Communication

<table>
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</tbody>
</table>
MODERATION

The process will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines included in the Assessment and Moderation Toolkit produced by the NCCA.

In the particular case of the Oral Communication Task it may be necessary to record the students’ oral communication pieces for assessment and moderation.

In advance of the moderation meeting the teacher:

- Marks all of the students’ texts by reference to the features of quality for Oral Communication and the relevant marking grid
- Ensures that the completed marking grid for each marked text is available for the moderation session
- Brings two examples at or just above each grade boundary (Not Achieved, Achieved, Achieved with Merit, Achieved with Higher Merit, Achieved with Distinction). Where no text has been awarded Not Achieved the teacher selects the text with the lowest mark as one of the examples; where no text has been awarded Achieved with Distinction the teacher selects the text with the highest mark as one of the examples.
# Oral Communication Task

## Student Reflection Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>STUDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## MATERIAL USED/ACCESSED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The part I played in the communication and preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Personal reflection on the task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One important thing I learned from doing the task:</th>
<th>Things I would change or try to improve on:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
2. Collection of the Student’s Texts Task

Creative writing is a vital part of English, but students are not ‘born’ writers. They need to develop a voice and an identity, a good sense of audience, and an awareness of the process of writing – making notes from their reading and personal experience, trying things out, revising, and polishing for ‘publication’. This is best done over time, with supportive feedback and scaffolding from the teacher. This assessment task offers students a chance to celebrate their achievements as creators of texts by compiling a collection of their texts in a variety of genres over time and choosing a number of pieces to present for summative assessment.

(Specification for Junior Cycle English, 2013)

The main learning outcomes to be assessed through the Collection of the student’s texts are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral Language</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OL 1</td>
<td>R 6, 8</td>
<td>W 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the majority of cases, the work done by the student will arise from material and tasks encountered during normal classwork. So a student might write a report having studied report writing and then select that piece of work for the collection. If, at a later date, the student considers another piece of work to be of better standard, then that piece can replace the former. The development of the student’s skills and appreciation of writing, as well as attendant skills of oral communication and reading, is the main purpose of the process.

The Collection of the Student’s Texts task promotes student engagement when students:

- think about and choose the subject matter
- choose the formats in which to create texts, including digital texts
- can develop texts through engagement with and creative imitation of a wide variety of texts encountered in junior cycle
- collaborate through the discussion and exploration of topics and texts, along with their responses to them.

Guidelines for completion of the Collection of the Student’s Texts task

The focus of activity will be on the creation of a range of student texts which might include pieces in the following genres: opinion piece, descriptive piece, a functional writing piece, autobiography, humorous piece, media piece, critique, narrative, an expressive piece (including a poem), drama or film script, etc. Note. The list of text types or genres suggested is not intended to be exhaustive, but to suggest that the student’s collection of texts should be a varied one.
For the purposes of this assessment students will, during their second and third years up to Christmas of third year, plan to complete and retain at least four pieces of work (texts) in at least four genres. Underlying and informing this task is a focus on the developmental nature of writing and on developing the student’s understanding of the writing process. This will be best supported by consistent student practice in the art and craft of writing.

In preparation for marking and moderation at Christmas of third year, the student will choose two texts to submit for assessment. A Student Reflection Note must be included with each of the texts but it will not be assigned a mark.

THE STUDENT REFLECTION NOTE

A template for a Student Reflection Note is provided in page 15. The Note provides space for the student to set out a very brief aim or intention for the piece of work and spaces to include some reflection on what has been learnt from creating the text and what might be done differently on another occasion.

The Note is used in the following ways:

- Students use it as a support for their ongoing practice in the art and craft of writing
- A completed Reflection Note and a previous draft should accompany each text to be included in the student’s collection of texts
- A completed Reflection Note and a previous draft must accompany each of the two texts submitted for assessment in the Collection of the Student’s Texts.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Where a school judges that a student has a specific physical or learning difficulty, reasonable accommodations may be put in place to remove as far as possible the impact of the disability on the student’s performance in the assessment task, so that he or she can demonstrate his or her level of achievement. The accommodations (e.g. the use of Irish Sign Language, support provided by a Special Needs Assistant, or the support of assistive technologies) should be in line with the arrangements the school has put in place to support the student’s learning throughout the school year.

The Collection of the Student’s Texts task: Advice for students

Work on this assessment task will be monitored by your teacher. Work which cannot be authenticated by your teacher will not be acceptable for assessment purposes.

In choosing your two texts you must complete a written Student Reflection Note for each text. This will include:

- The title or genre
- A brief note as to why you chose this genre
- A reflection on the piece of work.

You are free to choose to include any two texts you have worked on over the time period, bearing in mind the following:

- Choose those texts that you think represent your best work
- Consult with your teacher as to which texts represent your best work.
Assessing the Collection of the Student’s Texts

FEATURES OF QUALITY

Key features of quality in support of student and teacher judgement are presented here for the Collection of the Student’s Texts. The features of quality are the criteria that will be used to assess the pieces of student work.

Collection of the Student’s Texts

**Achieved with Distinction (90-100%)**

- Shows creative manipulation of all aspects of the chosen genre.
- Writes with full awareness of the effects that can be achieved through imaginative word choice and development of ideas.
- Fully shapes the work for its intended audience.
- Writes with creativity and flair throughout the work in order to achieve desired effects.

**Achieved with Higher Merit (75-89%)**

- Shows full control of chosen genre.
- The writing fully achieves the writer’s intended purpose.
- Shows full audience awareness in content and development of ideas.
- Writes competently and fluently showing sophisticated awareness of word choice and sentence structure to achieve desired effects.

**Achieved with Merit (55-74%)**

- Shows control of chosen genre.
- The writing is clearly shaped to the intended purpose.
- Development of content and ideas is managed effectively with the receiver/audience in mind.
- Writes with competence, showing awareness of word choice and sentence structure to achieve desired effects.

**Achieved (40-54%)**

- Shows a basic awareness of genre.
- The writing has recognisable shape and reasonable development of content and idea. Writes with basic competence showing an awareness of appropriate word choice and sentence structure in order to achieve an effect.

**Not Achieved (0-39%)**

- Shows little awareness of the chosen genre.
- Writes with little attention to structure and has negligible development of content or ideas.
- Displays little or no intention to achieve a desired effect.
- The student does not display basic writing competence and lacks attention to word choice and basic sentence structure.
The Collection of the Student’s Texts is marked at a Common Level out of a total of 100 marks. Two texts will be chosen for assessment and each one will be marked out of 50 marks. The student’s finished texts will be marked by reference to the four areas for judgement set out here, drawn from the features of quality for the Student’s Collection of Texts.

The following grids should be used as reference points when allocating marks for the Collection of the Student’s Texts.

| Grid showing breakdown of marks for the Collection of the Student’s Texts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Achieved with Distinction (90-100%) | Achieved with Higher Merit (75-89%) | Achieved with Merit (55-74%) | Achieved (40-54%) | Not Achieved (0-39%) | Total |
| STUDENT TEXT | (45-50) | (37-44) | (27-36) | (20-26) | (0-19) | 50 |
| Control of chosen genre | (9-10) | (7-8) | (5-6) | (4) | (0-3) | 10 |
| Lively language and interesting content | (18-20) | (15-17) | (11-14) | (8-10) | (0-7) | 20 |
| Audience awareness | (9-10) | (7-8) | (5-6) | (4) | (0-3) | 10 |
| Competence in writing | (9-10) | (7-8) | (5-6) | (4) | (0-3) | 10 |

| Template for marking the Collection of the Student’s Texts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Achieved with Distinction (90-100%) | Achieved with Higher Merit (75-89%) | Achieved with Merit (55-74%) | Achieved (40-54%) | Not Achieved (0-39%) | Total |
| STUDENT TEXT | (45-50) | (37-44) | (27-36) | (20-26) | (0-19) | 50 |
| Control of chosen genre |  |  |  |  |  | 10 |
| Lively language and interesting content |  |  |  |  |  | 20 |
| Audience awareness |  |  |  |  |  | 10 |
| Competence in writing |  |  |  |  |  | 10 |
| Total |  |  |  |  |  | 50 |
MODERATION

The process will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines included in the Assessment and Moderation Toolkit produced by the NCCA.

In the particular case of Junior Cycle English: Collection of the Student’s Texts, the following will apply.

In advance of the moderation meeting the teacher:

- Marks all of the students’ texts by reference to the features of quality for the Collection of the Student’s Texts and the relevant marking grid
- Ensures that the completed marking grid for each marked text is available for the moderation session
- Brings two examples at or just above each grade boundary (Not Achieved, Achieved, Achieved with Merit, Achieved with Higher Merit, Achieved with Distinction). Where no text has been awarded Not Achieved the teacher selects the text with the lowest mark as one of the examples; where no text has been awarded Achieved with Distinction the teacher selects the text with the highest mark as one of the examples.
### Collection of the Student’s Texts task

**Student Reflection Note**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>STUDENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE / Genre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**I chose this genre because...**

**My assessment of my work...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I learned from creating this text:</th>
<th>What I would do differently next time:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Date</th>
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