

Meeting of the English Development Group
4th February 2013 – the fifth meeting of the group.

<p>Agenda: Rationale and Aim</p>	<p>Discussion: The group discussed a draft rationale and aim for English. Essentially, the aim is to support students to build on their prior learning, to develop thinking, and express ideas and feelings. Through a variety of language experiences—oral language, reading, and writing—students will deepen their critical awareness of language. As the draft document says, the study of English will <i>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. Engagement with non-fiction and digital texts will also encourage the enjoyment of the world of knowledge that reading offers.</i></p>
<p>Learning outcomes – draft</p>	<p>The learning outcomes aim to set out clear expectations for learners. The approach in the current draft has been to articulate those expectations in broad terms that will be helpful for teachers and learners.</p> <p>An example from the draft outcomes for Oral Language is: <i>Students should be able to...</i> choose appropriate language and style for specific audiences and chosen purposes, e.g. persuading, informing, relating an anecdote, describing a process, and so on...</p> <p>An example from Writing is: <i>Students should be able to...</i> write for a variety of different and/or related purposes e.g. to imagine or explore, to inform or explain, to argue with or persuade, to criticise or comment on what they have seen or read.</p> <p>To date, the draft learning outcomes describe what students should be able to do on completion of the three years of junior cycle. It is expected that a set of outcomes that will reflect student achievement at the end of first year will also be developed.</p>
<p>Prescription of texts</p>	<p>Submissions to the consultation on the background paper suggest that many teachers would welcome some form of prescription of texts, to replace the current open course. The development group is considering a number of options here, with the model used for text lists at Leaving Certificate providing a useful starting point.</p>
<p>Towards assessment components</p>	<p>A Framework for Junior Cycle published by the Department of Education and Skills in October 2012 (Section 3. Assessment in junior cycle) provides important reference points in the development of assessment components for junior cycle English. The development group is currently considering a specification for the school assessment component.</p>

Ongoing and emerging issues:

- Continuing the work of establishing clear links between the primary language curriculum and junior cycle English (especially for first year)
- The focus on the development and assessment of oral language skills in junior cycle, especially their potential to contribute to the development of thinking skills, reading and writing.
- How to develop approaches to assessment that will establish a strong focus on assessment in support of learning.

Consultation:

A draft specification will be offered for consultation in April/May 2013 with a view to publication in September.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the development group will be held on **26th February 2013**.