

Introduction

Introduction

I. The Course

The Coursebooks for Grades 11 and 12 of the *Engage With English* course were originally designed to reflect the more mature status of students of this age, and to maintain motivation and interest. In 2011, the original materials in Grade 11 were further revised and updated in response to feedback and suggestions offered by teachers and students in schools throughout Oman.

The new course materials include a wide range of topics, thus increasing the chances of students finding subjects of interest to engage with. Furthermore, many of the themes and topics are related to international issues or other countries. It is recognized that in today's fast-changing world, it is important to raise young Omanis' awareness and understanding of other cultures, while still maintaining their own values.

I.1 Course Structure

At the request of teachers, the number of themes in the Grade 11 materials has been reduced from five to four. This allows the course to be completed at a more comfortable pace, and particularly for teachers to be able to devote more time to writing activities in class. Each theme consists of five two-page units, each of which focuses on a specific language and skills area. This format gives coherence to the overall theme, but also allows for a greater variety of topics and vocabulary to be introduced.

I.2 Course Aims

The general aims of the course are to raise students' language level to a good general standard so that they are prepared to enter the career area they have chosen and develop their specific language skills further.

The curriculum design is meant to serve the needs of all Omani students during their last years of secondary education, not just those going on to further education.

The overall aims of the English Language Curriculum for Grades 11 are as follows:

1. To provide students with a functional command of English as preparation for work or further studies
2. To develop and consolidate functional skills in English.
3. To give students the skills and confidence to use English outside the classroom.
4. To develop students' awareness of learning strategies they can apply to further their learning of English both inside and outside school.
5. To enable students to acquire active mastery of the core grammar of English.
6. To establish a basis for both fluency and accuracy within specified domains.
7. To use English as a medium for learning about other cultures and contrasting it with their own.

In addition to the linguistic aims, there are also a range of non-linguistic objectives embedded in the course.

Learning Strategies

Lifelong, independent learning strategies are an important objective of the curriculum. The course materials provide opportunities for students to become familiar with self-help strategies, the appropriate use of a range of resources for independent learning and reflection and monitoring strategies.

Study Skills

Study skills are a key feature of the curriculum to help students to become more self-directed. Basic study skills such as dictionary skills, library and research skills, paraphrasing, referencing and accurate citation of sources are built into the class materials in Grades 11 and 12.

Culture

English is presented as an international language that provides a means of communicating with other users of English both inside and outside Oman.

International Perspectives

The themes and topics of the course provide an international outlook and cover a range of issues which have a global impact. Students will be encouraged to reflect on these issues and relate the subject matter and its implications to their own, specifically Omani experience.

Vocational

A number of themes link either directly or indirectly to the various vocational fields that many of the students will be entering. Examples of these are the travel and tourism industry, and the retail industry. Many of the language functions that are reviewed or newly introduced are transferable across several vocational fields.

Cross-Curricular Links

Many of the themes are linked to other subject areas of the curriculum, such as Science and Technology and the Social Sciences. Language and concepts introduced in one subject are recycled, reviewed and extended in other subject areas. For example, science concepts taught in science classes are revisited in English, adding English terminology to the Arabic vocabulary already introduced. A summary of the cross-curricular links is given on pages vi – ix of this Teacher's Book.

Learner Training

During the course, teachers should encourage students to use strategies which will help them become more independent and self-directed. Students will learn general planning and organisational skills, and self-monitoring skills. For example, they will continue to be encouraged to plan, draft, check and re-draft pieces of writing until they are satisfied with a final draft.

Methodology

The curriculum is based on a communicative and skills-based methodology which encourages active student participation and collaboration, rather than a teacher-fronted and dominated classroom methodology.

The teaching methodology contains the following characteristics:

1. There is a consistent focus on learning English in order to develop practical and functional skills, rather than as an end in itself.
2. Students are involved in practical activities which relate to real-world uses of English.
3. Realistic and communicative uses of language are given priority.
4. Maximum opportunities for students-student interaction are provided.
5. Maximum use is made of pair and group activities where students undertake tasks collaboratively.
6. There is a balance between accuracy-based and fluency-based activities.
7. The course materials contain less teacher-centred teaching and more learner-directed activities. Teachers are expected to act as facilitators of learning rather than as presenters of information.

1.3 Overview of course materials

1.3.1 The Coursebook

The Coursebook is divided into four themes, which are each divided into five units. Each unit focuses on one particular language skill – Reading (Unit 1), Grammar (Unit 2), Vocabulary (Unit 3), Listening and Speaking (Unit 4), and Writing (Unit 5). However, this main skill is not practised in isolation, as the activities are designed to relate it to other skills.

At the end of each theme, there are two two-page spreads entitled *Across Cultures* and *Reading for Pleasure*. These are designed as 'stand-alone' units which can either be used in class, or if the teacher prefers, allocated for self-study at home.

There is a *Review and Reference* page at the end of each theme which summarises the skills which have been covered, and lists a glossary of 12 – 14 key words introduced in the theme. This glossary replaces the vocabulary lists in the previous versions of Grade 11. Communication activity and role play materials are also provided at the back of the Coursebook.

Introduction

It is very important for teachers to tell students not to write in the Coursebook. All written work is to be done in the Workbook, or in students' exercise books. From time to time, for example after the *Time to Talk* activities, students are given the task of writing paragraphs based on the ideas generated by their group discussions. The first drafts of these paragraphs should be done in class, so that the teacher can monitor students and offer guidance. Students should edit their work, and produce a second or final draft at home. They should attach their final drafts to previous drafts, and put everything into their portfolios. This ensures that a record is kept of the stages which led to the final version produced by students.

1.3.2 The Workbook

The format of the Workbook mirrors that of the Coursebook. The Workbook provides practice and consolidation activities for each of the five skills-based units within the theme. At the end of each theme, there is a page of *Across Cultures* activities which can be done in class or as self-study activities. An answer key is provided both in the Workbook and the Teacher's Book. There is also one page of *Reading for Pleasure*, which is related to the *Reading for Pleasure* material in the Coursebook.

There are two *Review and Reference* pages at the end of each theme which provide revision activities for the grammar introduced in that theme, as well as a vocabulary activity based on the words and phrases in the Glossary at the end of each theme in the Coursebook.

The end material of the Workbook consists of:

- Communication Activities
- Grammar Practice Activities
- a Writing Guide Section for each theme
- a Grammar Reference Section for each theme
- a Word List for each theme
- a Functional Language Review for each theme
- Answers to the *Across Cultures* and *Review and Reference* activities.

The Grammar Practice activities are a new feature of the Grade 11 course, and provide students with further opportunities to practise the grammar

presented in Unit 2 of each theme.

1.3.3 The Teacher's Book

The Teacher's Book provides an introduction to the curriculum for Grades 11 and 12, an outline of the course components and detailed suggestions about how to use the course materials. Listening scripts are provided throughout the teaching notes.

1.3.4 Course CD

All recordings used during the course are included on a CD supplied with the other course components.

2. Course Materials

2.1 The Coursebook

The Coursebook opens with a contents map, which outlines the syllabus. This is followed by a two-page spread with the learning objectives for each theme, for students' easy reference.

2.1.1 Overview page

The overview page for each theme is intended to introduce the topic, and activate students' prior knowledge about the subject. Students are usually asked to look at a number of photographs or pictures and discuss their content and/or some questions associated with the general theme. There is also a short text that introduces the sub-themes and which contains relevant vocabulary. A number of words and phrases are presented in bold lettering, all of which will occur in the theme. These words can be used for spelling practice, in addition to the 12 – 14 words presented in the Glossary in the *Review and Reference* section at the end of each theme in the Coursebook.

2.1.2 Reading

The focus of Unit 1 in each theme is reading. Students read a variety of reading texts using a range of strategies and reading skills. The materials in this unit focus on different reading micro-skills, such as 'recognising topic sentences' or 'inferring information'.

Realistic purposes for reading are developed with naturalistic texts being used in a variety of text types. Both informational reading and reading for pleasure are developed with a focus on both intensive and extensive reading.

The final activity in each unit is a discussion activity, *Time to Talk*, which picks up on a topic associated with the content of a reading text. This gives students the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions in small discussion groups, and then present the results of their discussion to the rest of the class.

As mentioned in 1.3.1, the ideas generated by each *Time to Talk* activities are used as the basis for extra writing practice. Students are asked to write a paragraph, details of which are given in each theme. Suggestions and guidelines for paragraph structure are given in the Teacher's Book.

2.1.3 Grammar

Unit 2 in each theme has a focus on grammar. This unit provides the opportunity to review and consolidate specific areas of grammar which have been encountered earlier in the *English for Me* course. The grammar items are presented in clear contexts with a balance of inductive and deductive tasks. The practical function of grammar is demonstrated through an equal emphasis on meaning and form.

The grammar tasks are discussed and analysed orally, and this is followed up by a pair/group speaking activity *Activate your Grammar*. This activity focuses on the accurate oral production of the grammar items being revised, through creating a dialogue.

2.1.4 Vocabulary

The focus of Unit 3 in each theme is vocabulary development. In addition to the acquisition of vocabulary through a wide variety of reading and listening texts, there is a focus on the teaching of high-frequency vocabulary used in different contexts. Opportunities are created to help students make their receptive vocabulary productive through the process of recycling.

Students are exposed to word-building activities

which involve them in working out how words are put together and how to work out the meaning of unknown vocabulary using clues such as context, cohesive devices and word endings. There is a wide variety of activities to maintain students' interest, including crosswords.

2.1.5 Listening and Speaking

Unit 4 in each theme focuses on oral skills. It aims to develop fluency and accuracy within specified functional areas and with acceptable standards of pronunciation. There is a focus throughout on developing realistic purposes for listening, including both listening for pleasure and listening for information. The listening tasks can be dialogues between two or more speakers, or just one speaker talking about a topic. They simulate interviews, radio shows and short presentations.

In each unit there is a *Soundbites* activity which highlights the functional language highlighted in the unit, such as 'asking questions' or 'making and responding to suggestions'. This both revises and extends previous work covered, providing more options for students to use in conversation. *Soundbites* is followed by an activity where the focus is on the fluent use of the functional language highlighted in the *Soundbites* box.

2.1.6 Writing

The emphasis in Unit 5 is on developing purposeful and practical writing skills, rather than writing for its own sake or in order to practise grammatical structures. A wide variety of writing tasks is given, but teachers should also look for opportunities to create more, for example, writing tasks based on a discussion. The focus is on the processes involved in writing with a balance between fluency-based and accuracy based tasks. Different genres of writing are highlighted in each theme, building up a solid foundation of writing skills. In Grades 11 and 12, there is practice in both vocational and academic genres of writing.

Students are exposed to the stages of writing from reading a model text, through discussion of language and features associated with different genres and the writing of a structured text, to free writing practice of the particular genre practised in each theme.

Introduction

2.1.7 Across Cultures and Reading for Pleasure

These are optional two-page spreads which teachers can choose either to do in class with students or ask students to complete in their own time. There are no detailed activity notes in the Teacher's Book.

Each of the *Across Cultures* spreads focuses on a different country, particularly on aspects of interest to Omani students who might be going to study in that country. At the end of each spread, students discuss questions which compare an aspect of the culture they have read about with Oman - for example, sports or food. They discuss the questions and then write a paragraph giving particular information about Oman to a visitor, based on the ideas generated in their discussions.

The *Reading for Pleasure* spread introduces a range of text types and genres, which it is hoped that students will enjoy. Interested students can find additional information about the topic on the *Reading for Pleasure* page in the Workbook. Although there are no specific activities for *Reading for Pleasure*, teachers might like to ask students to do a short piece of writing – for example, a short summary, or to say whether they found what they read interesting, and give their reasons.

2.1.8 Review and Reference Page

The Review and Reference page outlines the main learning activities/objectives the students have covered in the theme. In addition, there is a Glossary containing 12 – 14 of the core words. This Glossary replaces the Word Lists from the previous version of the Grade 11 books. Teachers should tell students to learn the spellings of the words in the Glossary, and check these spellings at the end of the theme.

2.1.9 Communication Activities

In Themes 3 and 4, there are communication activities which require students to turn to specific pages in the back of the book. All materials for these activities are fully cross-referenced.

2.2 The Workbook

The Workbook opens with a contents map, which outlines the syllabus. This is followed by a two-page spread with the learning outcomes for each theme.

2.2.1 Reading

The two-page reading spread provides practice activities for a reading text from the Coursebook or a second reading text, plus further practice of the activity type connected to the text. In addition, there may be vocabulary activities connected to the topic of the unit or activities which require students to complete an activity with personal information.

2.2.2 Grammar

The grammar pages provide further consolidation and practice activities related to the language focus areas of the unit. Students also work on vocabulary activities related to the topic of the unit.

2.2.3 Vocabulary

The vocabulary pages provide opportunities for students to use the vocabulary introduced in the listening or reading texts of the units. Students also complete word-building and vocabulary extension activities.

2.2.4 Listening and Speaking

The listening and speaking pages give students the opportunity to complete their answers to a listening activity and to work on the functional language contained in the *Soundbites* box in the Coursebook. Students also work on vocabulary activities connected to the topic of the unit.

2.2.5 Writing

The writing pages give students practice with a variety of writing tasks such as writing an informal e-mail. There may also be activities connected to the features of a particular text or genre. Students also work on vocabulary activities connected to the topic of the unit.

2.2.6 Across Cultures and Reading for Pleasure

The *Across Cultures* page provides activities linked

to the *Across Cultures* spread in the Coursebook. The activities can be worked on in class or by individual students in their own time. In response to requests from teachers, answer keys to the *Across Cultures* activities have been provided in the Teacher's Book at the end of each theme, as well as in the Workbook.

The *Reading for Pleasure* page is related to the topic of the *Reading for Pleasure* two-page spread in the Coursebook. It provides areas for further discussion, or for students to think about.

2.2.7 Review and Reference Pages

The *Review and Reference* pages at the end of each theme contain a self-assessment activity, a copy of the *Grammar Recall* box and practice activities for grammar and vocabulary revised in the theme. In response to requests from teachers, answer keys to the *Review and Reference* activities are provided in the Teacher's Book at the end of each theme, as well as at the back of the Workbook.

Note: The Word Lists and categorisation activities from the previous version of the Grade 11 books have been replaced by Glossaries and activities based on the words from these Glossaries.

In addition, students personalise their learning by choosing 15 words from the theme that they would like to remember – 5 nouns, 5 verbs and 5 adjectives. The last activity of the *Review and Reference* section is a *Personalise It* activity, in which students choose two things that interested them, two things that were new and two things that they wished to find out more about in each theme.

2.2.8 Communication Activities

In Themes 1 and 3, there are communication activities which require students to turn to specific pages in the back of the book. All materials for these activities are fully cross-referenced.

2.2.9 Grammar Practice

The *Grammar Practice* pages are a new feature of the Grade 11 books. There are four *Grammar Practice* activity pages – one for each theme. They provide the opportunity for further practice of the main grammar point focused on in the theme,

plus other points.

2.2.10 Writing Guide

The *Writing Guide* section focuses on the main writing task for that theme. Guidance is given concerning layout and language, and models provided for students to follow.

2.2.11 Grammar Reference

The *Grammar Reference Section* sets out the form of the main language structures introduced in each theme. It is intended to provide a reminder and further support for those students who may need more help.

2.2.12 Word List

This is arranged by theme, and comprises the key vocabulary presented in the Glossary at the end of each theme in the Coursebook. There is a phonetic transcription for each word.

2.2.13 Functional Language Review

This contains the phrases from the *Soundbites* function boxes presented in each theme of the Coursebook, set out on one page for students' easy reference.

2.3 The Teacher's Book

2.3.1 Contents Map and Learning Objectives

A contents map is provided at the front of the Teacher's Book which outlines the syllabus. This is followed by a two-page spread with the learning objectives for each theme. It should be noted that these objectives are not exhaustive and may not represent each separate activity.

For example, in the writing units the key objective is the writing of a text in a specific genre. The activities associated with each stage of building up to writing the text – reading a model, analysing language, structured writing – are not included in the contents map.

The learning objectives are followed by cross-curricular links which relate the material presented in the course to other areas of the school curriculum.

Introduction

2.3.2 Approach

The teacher's notes are written in units, rather than lessons. Although no specific timings for activities have been given, it is expected that, with the reduction of the Grade 11 books from five themes to four, teachers will be able to cover most of the material. However, it is also recognized that some classes may work faster and others may progress at a slower rate if students have difficulty with a particular language point or skill. It is therefore up to individual teachers to allocate the time they spend on individual activities, according to the ability of their class.

Summary of Activities

In response to requests from teachers, there is more freedom for teachers to work through the course materials. To help teachers, on the introductory page to each theme, a summary is given so that teachers can see at a glance the activities which the theme contains. It is therefore essential for teachers to read through each theme thoroughly before they start it in class, to familiarise themselves with the activities.

The activities are laid out in a suggested order, alternating between Coursebook and Workbook, but it is up to individual teachers to decide if they want to follow that order. Some themes contain additional activities. Again, it is up to individual teachers to decide whether they wish to make use of these extra activities, and if so, whether to do them in class or give them as homework.

Pair/Group work

Pair and group work is included throughout the course. These activities are intended to give students more practice in oral skills. With many activities, it is up to the teacher to decide if they should be done only orally, or whether students should also write the answers in their exercise books.

In addition, there are many discussion activities throughout each theme to give students the chance to work together and engage with the content of a unit which may have been introduced in a written form. Teachers should use these activities as an opportunity to monitor and assess

students continuously and informally.

Feedback and Monitoring

Within the detailed teaching notes there is often only a brief mention made to obtaining class feedback in the interests of space and constant repetition. However, there are a number of ways in which feedback can be given, depending on the type of activity, the students and time.

Simple checking of answers can be teacher-led by choosing individual students to answer.

Feedback from group discussions can be done in a number of ways:

- The discussion can be opened up so that the whole class gets a chance to participate.
- A spokesperson from each group can be asked to provide feedback from their group. Once all the groups have spoken, then the discussion can be refocused to pick up on points arising from the discussion.
- One group can lead the feedback, facilitating the discussion in place of the teacher. This gives students valuable practice in facilitation skills which is useful in many career areas.
- Two groups can work together and summarise to each other the points arising from their discussions.

Teachers are advised to use the opportunities provided by the more independent learning activities to monitor and assess students' oral skills while they work in groups, or their written work throughout the drafting and checking process.

2.3.3 Teaching Notes

Detailed teaching notes are provided for each unit outlining what the students are required to do in each activity. Listening scripts are provided in the detailed teaching notes.

2.3.4 Course CDs

The course CDs feature a variety of native speakers of English. This is to familiarise students with the range of voices and accents they are likely to meet in their future education and/or

future careers. It is up to teachers to decide how many times it is necessary to play each recording, although it is expected that most recordings will need to be played more than once.

Each listening script is identified by a series of numbers. These refer to the theme, the unit and the number of each recording within the unit. For example, 'Listening Script 3.2.2' means that the recording comes from Theme 3, Unit 2 (*Travellers and Tourists – Getting There*) and is the second recording in the unit.