



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

**BOTSWANA GENERAL CERTIFICATE
OF
SECONDARY EDUCATION**

TEACHING SYLLABUS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Ministry of Education

Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation

FOREWORD

The Ministry of Education is pleased to authorise the publication of this senior secondary syllabus which marks a watershed in the development of the public education system in Botswana and signals another milestone of progress in fulfilment of the goals set by the Revised National Policy on Education, Government Paper No. 2 of 1994.

In this era of widespread and rapid technological change and an increasingly inter-dependent global economy, it is essential that all countries foster human resources by preparing children adequately for their future. Survival in

the coming millennium will depend on the ability to accommodate change and to adapt to environmental needs and emerging socio-economic trends. It is the wish of government to prepare Batswana for future growth and adaptation to ongoing change in the socio-economic context; specifically the transition from an agro-based economy to the more broadly based industrial economy which we are aiming at.

The senior secondary programme builds on the Ten Year Basic Education programme and seeks to provide quality learning experiences. It aims to prepare our students for the world of work, further education and lifelong learning.

However, secondary education must also pay attention to the all round development of the individual. It should provide not only for the acquisition of those skills needed for economic, scientific and technological advancement. It should also provide for the development of cultural and national identity and the inculcation of attitudes and values which nurture respect for one's self and for others.

Critical to the success of our secondary education programme is the recognition of individual talents, needs and learning

styles. Hence, the role of the teacher in the classroom has changed. S/he must be a proficient manager and facilitator; a director of learning activities. S/he should be conscious of students' needs to take on board a measure of accountability and responsibility for their own learning. S/he must also take into account the widening range of ability of the student body and the different levels of achievement which they aspire to. This means active participation for all and the creation of rich and diverse learning environments.

It is important then that we value the students' own experiences, build upon what they know and reward them for positive achievement. At the same time,

we must be prepared to offer them guidance and counselling at all levels; assisting them to make the best decisions in keeping with their own interests, career prospects and preferences. In that way we shall prevail in nurturing at the roots of our system, the national ideals of democracy, development, self-reliance, unity and social harmony.

This syllabus document is the outcome of a great deal of professional consultation and collaboration. On behalf of the Ministry, I wish to record my appreciation and thank sincerely those who contributed to and were involved in the production of this syllabus.



P. T. Ramatsui
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Curriculum Development Division wishes to express its thanks to all colleagues who contributed in any way to the planning, development and production of this senior secondary English Language syllabus.

Particular thanks must go to all members of the original working party, the Senior Secondary English Task Force (whose names are listed below) and its sub-committee.

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Thanks are also due to all the education officers - from Examinations, Research and Testing Division; the Department of Non-formal Education; the Department of Secondary Education and the Department of Teacher Training and Development, particularly the secondary in-service section - who co-operated with this division from the early planning stages.

Special thanks are due to the representatives from the University of Botswana, the English Departments of Molepolole and Tonota Colleges of Education and the four primary Colleges of Education who participated fully in the development of the syllabus and made many helpful contributions.

Our thanks also go to the heads of senior secondary schools (both government and private) who encouraged the participation of colleagues from their respective English departments. We also thank the teachers of English who participated in the two consultative workshops held in Gaborone and Francistown and who represented their own views and those of school colleagues so articulately. Thanks are also extended to those persons who made individual submissions.

The division feels that this English Language syllabus document reflects the outcomes of a genuinely collaborative discourse across a broad educational spectrum and re-iterates its thanks to all who contributed in any way to guide the process and shape the document.

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Introduction

The senior secondary English Language programme is designed to follow on from the three year junior secondary English programme.

Thus, it is intended for students who should normally have completed the ten years of basic education in Botswana or have equivalent experience. It provides the English language skills necessary for employment, the world of work and adult life. It also provides a language foundation for continuing education as offered by tertiary institutions within Botswana and elsewhere. The subject is one of the core subjects within the framework of the entire senior secondary programme, but it is also available as a single subject for those wishing to obtain a recognised language qualification in English.

Subject Statement

While the subject aims at a high level of proficiency in the use of Standard English, the teaching methodology acknowledges that English is not the first language of the majority of the learners.

The features of the course are as follows : -

- **The subject is skills based, focusing on the development of the basic language skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing with the emphasis on developing the communicative competence of learners in real life situations.**
- **These skills are taught in an integrated way to bring about the development of positive attitudes, values and an extension of knowledge.**
- **Grammar is taught as an integrated component of the subject and not in isolation.**
- **The subject caters for a wide range of ability, providing equality of opportunity for all so that learners are able to realise and fulfil their potential.**
- **The content is drawn from other subjects and a variety of sources in order to facilitate learning and provide meaningful and creative experiences in all aspects of language.**
- **Language development is supported by an extensive reading programme that demands the use of the library as a major resource centre.**

Teaching Methodology

The teaching methodology is based on a COMMUNICATIVE approach.

Features of this approach include : -

- **Integration of the basic language skills**
- **Using the language without ‘code switching’**
- **Using the language in real life situations**
- **Teaching grammar in context**
- **Use of authentic teaching materials in supporting the curriculum**
- **Use of varied learner-centred communicative activities including : -**
 - **Simulations and role play**
 - **Project work**
 - **Creative activities such as drama**
 - **Information gap & opinion gap activities**
 - **Information transfer activities**
 - **Problem solving**
 - **Varied language stimuli in the learning environment**
 - **Use of multi media technology e.g. audio tapes, videos, films and computers**
 - **Promotion of a reading culture**
 - **Pair and group activities to promote interaction**

- **Use of differentiated materials in recognition of different learning needs and preferred learning styles.**

Assessment Procedures

The importance of appropriate assessment procedures reflecting the teaching methodologies is recognised. A balance between school-based assessment (coursework) and external tests will be drawn. Both are desirable and there is a place for each. All four skills will be tested when the facility for this is available. Ultimately, school-based assessment, particularly coursework in writing and oral proficiency, will count towards a terminal mark.

Access

The programme of study should be taught to the learners in ways appropriate to their abilities, whether physical or cognitive. Adequate provision will be made by the various

relevant departments of the Ministry of Education for the use of special aids or equipment and for those learning out of school.

Information Technology

Students should be given opportunities where appropriate, to develop and apply their information technology (IT) capabilities in their study of the language.

Rationale

The role of English in Botswana is a necessary and very important one.

English is an official language in the country and a medium of instruction in schools as well as institutions of higher learning. It is a major language of communication within the country, the region, the continent of Africa and throughout the world. It is also an access language in technology and information services facilitating acquisition, creation and documentation of knowledge. It is the language through which a great deal of learning

takes place and thus has a significant and prominent place in the curriculum.

Aims Of The Senior Secondary Programme

On completion of the 2 year Senior Secondary programme, learners should have : -

- **acquired knowledge, developed confidence and ability to assess their personal strengths and weaknesses and be realistic in choosing appropriate career/employment opportunities and/or further education and training.**
- **developed skills to assist them in solving technical and technological problems as they relate to day-to-day life situations.**
- **developed desirable attitudes and behavioural patterns in interacting with the environment in a manner that is protective, preserving and nurturing.**
- **acquired attitudes and values, developed basic skills and understanding to allow for execution of rights and responsibilities as good citizens of Botswana and the world.**
- **developed information technology skills as well as an understanding and appreciation of their influence in day-to-day activities.**
- **acquired knowledge, attitudes and practices that will ensure good family and health**

practices, including awareness and management of epidemics (such as HIV/AIDS), that prepare them for productive life.

- **developed pre-vocational knowledge and manipulative skills that will enable them to apply content learnt and attitudes and values developed to practical life situations in the world of work.**
- **developed an understanding of and acquired basic skills in business, everyday commercial transactions and entrepreneurship.**
- **developed foundation skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, communication, enquiring, team work / interpersonal skills to help them to be productive and adaptive to survive in a changing environment.**
- **developed study skills required for further study and training.**

Subject Aims For English Language

The aims set out below describe the educational purposes of the English Language course at senior secondary level, enabling the students to : -

- 1. develop the ability to use English for effective communication.**
- 2. develop knowledge of the structure and form of the language as used in a range of situations.**
- 3. facilitate access to knowledge and conceptual awareness in relation to other subjects across the curriculum.**
- 4. establish a sound base for the language skills required for further study and employment.**
- 5. develop positive attitudes of responsibility and co-operation through discussion, enquiry and groupwork.**
- 6. develop self-confidence through use of the language in adapting to real life situations.**
- 7. develop attitudes and skills, including study skills, that are necessary for independent learning and the acquisition of knowledge.**
- 8. develop a more personal involvement with the language leading to increased proficiency which will promote independent and creative thinking.**
- 9. develop skills in thinking, enquiring, problem solving, creating, performing, judging, evaluating and communicating.**
- 10. prepare for their personal, social and economic future so that they can make a full contribution to a democratic society.**

11. understand and appreciate a range of literature for pleasure.

12. develop an interest in using English.

Subject Content

(i) The subject content is drawn from a range of sources and addresses the basic language skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, which are interactive.

Grammar and usage are to be taught in an integrated way rather than in isolation and thus, they are infused into the General and Specific Objectives for the language skills and not itemised separately.

(ii) Teachers are encouraged to use resource materials in their teaching which are drawn from broad areas of experience such as : -

- **Everyday activities**
- **Personal and social life**
- **The world around us**

- **The world of work**
- **The international world**
- **The world of Science and Technology**

Resource materials should also address current and emerging issues such as : -

- **HIV/AIDS**
- **Population and Family Life Education**
- **Human Rights**
- **Environmental issues**
- **Awareness of prejudice and bias (e.g. gender, race, age and disability)**

(iii) The subject will involve the students in a variety of skills-based tasks and activities which include but are not limited to the following: -

Listening and Speaking

Narration and Speechwork

- listening to stories, reading aloud and telling stories, informal discussions, asking and answering questions, asking for and giving directions & instructions, dialogues, speeches, role play and dramatisation; voice projection and clarity of speech.

Conversation and Debate

- expressing opinion, listening & responding to the views of others, summarising.

Group activities

- problem solving, information gap & opinion gap tasks, language games, project work and oral presentations.

Reading

Research and Study skills

- use of the dictionary, library skills, reference skills.

Wider reading to include a range of texts and genres

- fiction and non-fiction, biography, newspapers, magazines and pamphlets.

Comprehension and Summary

- main ideas, key points, specific details, opinion and vocabulary.

Interpretation of graphic information

- charts, tables, diagrams, maps and manuals.

Writing

Composition

- narrative, descriptive, factual, argumentative, speculative and situational writing to include specialised forms such as : - formal and informal letters, articles, reports, speeches, notices, reviews, CVs, memos, note-making and summaries, presentations of individual and group projects.

General And Specific Objectives

In taking account of individual differences in levels of achievement, it is expected that every student should aim to reach the highest level of performance of which s/he is capable in every aspect of language use represented in the lists of General and Specific Objectives which follow.

The objectives are listed in categories under the headings of the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These do not necessarily represent a sequence for teaching. In any given lesson or unit of work, objectives would be addressed from all four skills areas and from several different topics, either simultaneously or in a natural teaching sequence.

All skills, “topics” and objectives must be practised continually on a cyclic and spiral basis - i.e. at increasing levels of difficulty, complexity and proficiency. From time to time, teachers may wish to lay particular emphasis on specific objectives.

The purpose of the lists is to ensure that all the necessary skills will have been developed by the end of the two year programme. The exact sequence and combination will vary according to the needs and interests of the students; the availability of materials and

resources; and, to some extent, the schemes of work and programmes of study undertaken by English departments and individual teachers.

It is understood that language activities will cover several objectives placing emphasis on the integration of skills.

LISTENING

Topics	General Objectives	Specific Objectives
	Learners should:-	Learners should: -

Active listening	Listen actively to information for a variety of purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ask questions and make comments to demonstrate understanding- ask questions for clarification or confirmation- identify sequence- identify cause and effect- apply information heard (<i>such as</i> in following directions or completing a table)- interpret and synthesise information (<i>such as</i> in establishing similarities and differences, advantages and disadvantages)- predict likely outcomes in spoken text
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<p>Comprehension</p>	<p>Distinguish between different types of questions and respond appropriately</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respond to both objective and open ended questions appropriately - respond to 'Yes' or 'No' questions & question tags appropriately - respond precisely and relevantly to questions that require further information (<i>such as</i> illustrations, analogies, examples, explanations, arguments, etc.) - recognise rhetorical questions
<p>Identifying gist</p>	<p>Identify the gist of a speech or discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - take notes of what they are listening to - recall the main points of an oral presentation (<i>such as</i> a radio broadcast or a sermon) - select relevant key points

Evaluation	Evaluate what they hear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- infer what a speaker is implying- make deductions based on what is heard- distinguish between important and less important information in what is heard- form an opinion about what they hear- justify an opinion based on aural evidence
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<p>Social Interaction</p>	<p>Listen sensitively and attentively to maintain communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate empathy with a speaker as appropriate to the communication - use body language appropriate to the situation - interject at an appropriate time in a discussion - focus listening to obtain specific information
<p>Discussion and debate</p>	<p>Listen to an exchange of ideas and opinions to respond appropriately</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - follow the thread of an argument - recognise the strengths and inconsistencies in argument or discussion

SPEAKING

Topics	General Objectives	Specific Objectives
	Learners should:-	Learners should: -
Communication	Communicate information and ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- convey information and facts clearly- develop ideas in a logical way- present ideas in a coherent manner
Articulation, Intonation and stress	Speak clearly using appropriate intonation and word stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- project the voice when speaking to other people- use pronunciation of words and the rhythm of speech to make meaning clear- express mood through the use of correct intonation and word stress

Vocabulary	Use appropriate vocabulary in different situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use a wide range of vocabulary - explain words and phrases in context
Awareness of audience	Adapt speech for different purposes and audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use Standard English in official or formal situations (<i>such as</i> talking to authorities, at ceremonies and in interviews) - use informal English in appropriate situations (<i>such as</i> conversing with family or friends) - use language registers appropriate to the situation or environment (<i>such as</i> medical terms in a hospital or clinic)

Relevancy	Make appropriate verbal responses in different contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ask relevant questions to clarify what has been heard- respond appropriately in a dialogue or conversation- express a point of view on a discourse
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Presentation	Develop skills of oral presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- use appropriate body language and eye contact for effective delivery- speak clearly and audibly as appropriate- use appropriate pitch, tone and speech in all forms of oral communication (<i>such as</i> in telling a story, role play & drama)- deliver a short speech before a group (<i>such as</i> classmates, club members, etc.)- deliver a speech in a more formal situation (<i>such as</i> in debate or at school assembly)- give an impromptu talk on a given topic
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Discussion and debate	-Resolve issues through discussion and debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- articulate ideas in discussion- ask for necessary information or explanation- introduce a topic- defend an opinion- challenge a viewpoint- conclude an argument- explore solutions to real or simulated problems
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Negotiation	-Use negotiation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- express one's own views clearly- restate accurately other people's views to show understanding- suggest alternative views where appropriate- acknowledge other people's opinions- synthesise views and suggestions to reach agreement or compromise
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Grammar and usage	-Use grammatical structures correctly in speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- use articles correctly- use pronouns appropriately- use singular and plural subjects with the correct verb form- use correct verb tenses- use appropriate prepositions- use adjectives and adverbs correctly- use conjunctions and connectives correctly in compound and complex sentences- use elisions, contractions, repetitions and interjections as appropriate in speech
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READING

Topics	General Objectives	Specific Objectives
	Learners should:-	Learners should: -
Instructions and directions	Follow written instructions and directions	- follow written directions & instructions - perform tasks as per written instructions

Comprehension	Understand what is read	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- determine the overall meaning of a text- identify specific details in context- infer the meaning of words & phrases in different contexts- recognise what is explicitly stated- interpret correctly information presented in tabulated, diagrammatic or graphic form- infer what is implied in a text- predict likely outcomes in a text- visualise situations in a text- recognise style through diction, imagery, figures of speech and idiomatic expressions
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Extensive reading	Develop a culture of wider reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- read and understand a range of material for pleasure (<i>such as</i> novels, short stories, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, etc..)- read for specific information and general knowledge- give feedback on material read (<i>such as</i> storyline, characters, message & setting.)- show understanding of the basic elements of different genres- distinguish aspects of cultural similarities and differences
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<p>Critical reading</p>	<p>Read critically materials from different sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - distinguish between information which is true, false or a matter of opinion - form an overall impression of what is read - analyse text read and advance logical, constructive argument
<p>Flexible reading speeds</p>	<p>Apply specific reading skills for different purposes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - skim texts for gist and general understanding - scan texts for specific information - recognise and interpret discourse markers for improved understanding (<i>such as</i> linking words, punctuation & graphics)

Reference	Use reference material effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- use a dictionary for a variety of purposes (<i>such as</i> for definitions, checking spelling, understanding idioms)- use encyclopaedia for general knowledge and specific information- use a thesaurus to find synonyms and alternative expressions- locate appropriate material in the library
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Language registers	Recognise the difference between formal and informal register in any text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- distinguish between spoken and written language- distinguish between colloquial and formal writing- differentiate between formal and informal register- differentiate between different types of formal writing- differentiate between different types of informal writing
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WRITING

Topics	General Objectives	Specific Objectives
	Learners should:-	Learners should: -
Spelling and punctuation	Spell and punctuate competently	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- use basic punctuation marks correctly (<i>such as</i> full stops, commas, speech marks, question marks, exclamation marks, apostrophes and capital letters)- use colons, semi-colons, dashes and hyphens appropriately and correctly to punctuate advanced writing- use punctuation marks appropriately to achieve effect- use correct spelling in their writing

Grammar and usage	Use appropriate grammatical structures in writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- use articles correctly- distinguish between proper and common nouns- use pronouns appropriately- use the correct form of the verb with singular & plural nouns and pronouns- apply the correct verb tense as appropriate- use the Active or Passive voice as appropriate- use different prepositions correctly- use and place adjectives and adverbs correctly- structure and use phrases and simple sentences in writing- use conjunctions and connectives correctly to write compound and complex sentences
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<p>Cohesion and coherence</p>	<p>Develop and organise ideas into coherent sentences, paragraphs and whole texts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use sentences in a paragraph to describe or explain a particular idea or theme - write paragraphs which reflect a logical development of a narrative, thought or argument - structure and develop a piece of writing
<p>Vocabulary</p>	<p>Use appropriate vocabulary in different contexts and situations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use vocabulary which is direct and unambiguous - use appropriate vocabulary for a variety of personal, social and academic purposes - use rich and varied vocabulary to describe, explain and argue - use technical terms and specialised vocabulary for specific purposes

Style	Differentiate between written and spoken forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- use contracted forms of writing in appropriate situations(<i>such as</i> in a friendly letter)- apply stylistic devices in writing (<i>such as</i> using quotations/citations, in the layout of a dialogue or poem, or in short stories or articles)
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Clarity and conciseness	Demonstrate the ability to express fact, feeling and opinion with clarity and precision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- give factual information in writing (<i>such as</i> in completing forms or questionnaires)- express thoughts and feelings using different types of register- express and defend ideas and opinions in a logical and convincing manner- use skills of analysis and interpretation in responding to text read
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Writing for specific purposes

Write appropriately for a wide range of purposes, situations and audiences

- adapt form, style and vocabulary for different purposes
- use figurative language and imagery where appropriate
- show a sense of purpose and awareness of audience in their writing
- interpret numerical, pictorial & graphical information in continuous writing
- write letters, speeches, notices, memos and CVs for formal and informal purposes as appropriate
- write different types of reports (*such as* a witness statement, a newspaper report/article, a press release, a report of a club's activities or a report to authorities)
- write a project presentation resulting from research
- write compositions to include

