

The National Curriculum Standards for Grade 5 and Grade 6 at Elementary School

Section 10 Foreign Languages

I. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To develop pupils' competencies that form the base of communication as outlined below through language activities of listening, reading, speaking and writing in a foreign language while activating the *Approaches*<sup>1</sup> in communication in foreign languages.

- (1) To notice the differences between the Japanese language and foreign languages such as the sounds and letters, vocabulary, expressions, sentence structures and functions of foreign languages, understand this knowledge, become familiar with reading and writing, and acquire basic skills that can be utilized in communication when listening, reading, speaking and writing.
- (2) To cultivate the base for the ability to communicate their own thoughts and feelings etc. by listening to and speaking about simple and familiar topics in accordance with the purpose, scene and situation in which the communication is taking place, reading while guessing the meaning and writing with an awareness of word order for vocabulary and basic expressions of foreign languages which the pupils are sufficiently familiar with the sounds of.
- (3) To deepen the pupils' understanding of the underlying cultures of foreign languages and foster an attitude of attempting to proactively communicate in foreign languages while giving consideration to the people they are communicating with.

II. OBJECTIVES AND CONTENTS OF EACH LANGUAGE

English

1. Objectives

To develop the competencies specified in I. (1) and (2) in an integrated manner, through instruction that aims for realization of the goals set in the five skill areas of listening, reading, speaking [interaction], speaking [production] and writing specified below, and to develop the competencies specified in I. (3) through this process, based on the characteristics of learning English.

(1) Listening

- a. Enable pupils to listen to and understand simple words and phrases and basic expressions about themselves as well as simple and familiar topics if spoken

<sup>1</sup>*Approaches* discipline-based epistemological approaches emphasizing the contextualizing of language

slowly and clearly.

- b. Enable pupils to listen to and understand concrete information regarding simple and familiar topics in everyday life if spoken slowly and clearly.
- c. Enable pupils to grasp an outline of brief talks about simple and familiar topics in everyday life if spoken slowly and clearly.

(2) Reading

- a. Enable pupils to identify letters of the alphabet written in block letters and pronounce the names of the letters.
- b. Enable pupils to understand the meanings of simple words and phrases and basic expressions for which they are sufficiently familiar with the sounds.

(3) Speaking [Interaction]

- a. Enable pupils to give instruction, make requests and respond using basic expressions.
- b. Enable pupils to exchange their own thoughts and feelings etc. regarding simple and familiar topics in everyday life by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.
- c. Enable pupils to communicate through asking and answering questions about themselves, the person they are communicating with and their surroundings by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions on the spot.

(4) Speaking [Production]

- a. Enable pupils to talk about simple and familiar topics in everyday life by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.
- b. Enable pupils to talk about themselves after organizing the contents they are attempting to communicate by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.
- c. Enable pupils to talk about their own thoughts and feelings etc. regarding simple and familiar topics after organizing the contents they are attempting to communicate by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.

(5) Writing

- a. Enable pupils to write upper and lower cases in block letters. Furthermore, ensure they are able to transcribe simple words and phrases and basic expressions for which they are sufficiently familiar with the sounds, with an awareness of the word order.

- b. Enable pupils to write about themselves and simple and familiar topics while referring to example sentences using simple words and phrases and basic expressions of which they are sufficiently familiar with the sounds.

2. Contents

[Grade 5 and Grade 6]

[Knowledge and skills]

(1) Items related to the characteristics and rules of English

Through language activities using English, give instruction to enable pupils to acquire skills they will be able to utilize in communication while understanding which of the language materials specified below are suitable to achieve the goals for each of the five skill areas specified in 1 and effectively link the language materials and language activities.

a. Sounds

Handling the basic words, phrases and sentences in the items specified below.

- (a) Modern standard pronunciation
- (b) Change in the sounds of letters due to the connection of one word to another
- (c) Basic stresses in words, phrases and sentences
- (d) Basic intonation in sentences
- (e) Basic pauses in sentences

b. Letters and symbols

- (a) Upper and lower cases in block letters
- (b) Basic symbols such as periods, question marks and commas

c. Words, collocations and idiomatic expressions

- (a) About 600-700 words are necessary to achieve the goals for each of the five skill areas specified in 1, including the words learned when taking Chapter 4 Foreign Language Activities for Grade 3 and Grade 4
- (b) Basic collocations with a high use frequency such as get up, look at, etc.
- (c) Basic idiomatic expressions with a high use frequency such as excuse me, I see, I'm sorry, thank you, you're welcome, etc.

d. Sentences and sentence structures

Regarding the items specified below, become aware of the differences between the Japanese language and English such as word order and utilize them as basic expressions through repeatedly experiencing them in communication in a

meaningful context.

(a) Sentences

a Simple sentences

b Affirmative and negative declarative sentences

c Affirmative and negative imperative sentences

d Interrogative sentences that begin with the *be* verb, begin with an auxiliary verb (can, do, etc.) or begin with an interrogative (who, what, when, where, why, how)

e Pronouns that include basic pronouns such as I, you, he, she, etc.

f Gerunds and past forms that include basic gerunds and past forms with a high use frequency

(b) Sentence structures

a [Subject + verb]

b [Subject + verb + complement] with the structure

$$\text{Subject} + \textit{be} \text{ verb} + \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{noun} \\ \text{pronoun} \\ \text{adjective} \end{array} \right\}$$

c [Subject + verb + object] with the structure

$$\text{Subject} + \text{verb} + \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{noun} \\ \text{pronoun} \end{array} \right\}$$

[Abilities to think, make decisions and express oneself]

(2) Items related to forming thoughts while organizing information, expressing oneself and communicating.

By setting specific tasks, give instruction to enable pupils to acquire the following through organizing and expressing information and forming their own thoughts etc., in accordance with the purpose, scene and situation in which the communication is taking place.

a. Exchanging their own thoughts and feelings etc. by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions after organizing the contents they are attempting to communicate regarding simple and familiar topics.

b. Reading about simple and familiar topics while guessing the meaning of simple words and phrases and basic expressions which they are sufficiently familiar with

the sounds of, and writing about such topics with an awareness of word order.

(3) Items related to language activities and language functions

(i) Items related to language activities

Give instruction about the items specified in (2) by utilizing the items specified in (1), for example, through the following language activities.

a. Listening

(a) Activities in which pupils listen to simple words and phrases and basic expressions about familiar people and their surroundings such as themselves and school life, etc. and to match the words and phrases and expressions with illustrations and photographs, etc. representing them.

(b) Activities in which pupils listen to concrete information regarding simple and familiar topics in everyday life such as dates, times and prices, etc.

(c) Activities in which pupils listen to brief conversations and explanations spoken using simple words and phrases and basic expressions and to obtain necessary information regarding simple and familiar topics such as friends, family and school life etc. while referring to illustrations and photographs, etc.

b. Reading

(a) Activities in which pupils look at letters written in block letters and identify what letters they are and whether they are upper or lower case.

(b) Activities in which pupils look at letters written in block letters and properly pronounce the names of the letters.

(c) Activities in which pupils obtain necessary information from notices and leaflets, etc. with contents consisting of simple and familiar topics in everyday life.

(d) Activities in which pupils identify simple words and phrases and basic expressions which they are sufficiently familiar with the sounds from picture books, etc.

c. Speaking [Interaction]

(a) Activities in which pupils exchange greetings with strangers and acquaintances, give instruction and make requests to the person they are communicating with and respond to or refuse them.

(b) Activities in which pupils communicate their own thoughts and feelings etc.

and ask and answer simple questions regarding simple and familiar topics in everyday life.

- (c) Activities in which pupils have brief conversations by answering simple questions about themselves on the spot and asking simple questions about the person they are communicating with on the spot.

d. Speaking [Production]

- (a) Activities in which pupils talk about simple and familiar topics in everyday life such as times, dates and places, etc.
- (b) Activities to introduce themselves including their hobbies and things they are good at, etc. by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.
- (c) Activities in which pupils talk about their own thoughts and feelings etc. regarding simple and familiar topics such as school life and things related to their local community, etc. by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.

e. Writing

- (a) Activities in which pupils listen to the names of pronounced letters and write upper and lower cases in block letters.
- (b) Activities in which pupils transcribe simple words and phrases which they are sufficiently familiar with the sounds of, in relation to simple and familiar topics, for the purpose of communicating to another person.
- (c) Activities in which pupils transcribe basic expressions which they are sufficiently familiar with the sounds of in relation to simple and familiar and simple topics while focusing on spaces between one word and another, for the purpose of communicating to another person.
- (d) Activities in which pupils choose and write words from examples using simple words and phrases and basic expressions which they are sufficiently familiar with the sounds in relation to simple topics about themselves such as their names, age, hobbies, likes and dislikes, etc. for the purpose of communicating to another person.

(ii) Items related to language functions

Choose language use situations and language functions mainly from the following items when engaging in language activities.

a. Examples of language use situations

- (a) Situations related to pupils' everyday lives
  - Life at home      • Learning and activities at school
  - Local events      etc.
- (b) Situations where typical expressions are often used
  - Greetings      • Self-introductions      • Shopping
  - Having meals      • Asking and giving directions      • Traveling      etc.
- b. Examples of language functions
  - (a) Facilitating communication
    - Greetings      • Speaking to someone      • Giving agreeable responses
    - Asking someone again      • Repeating      etc.
  - (a) Communicating feelings
    - Expressing gratitude      • Praising      • Apologizing      etc.
  - (b) Stating facts and information
    - Explaining      • Reporting      • Announcing      etc.
  - (c) Communicating thoughts and intentions
    - Offering      • Stating opinions      • Agreeing
    - Accepting      • Refusing      etc.
  - (d) Encouraging someone to do something
    - Asking questions      • Requesting      • Ordering      etc.
- 3. Syllabus planning and lesson delivery
  - (1) In planning the syllabus, consideration should be given to the following while taking care to ensure connections with the instruction in Grade 3 and Grade 4, with the instruction in junior high school and senior high school.
    - a. Anticipate the unity of contents and lessons such as units and aim for realization of the proactive, interactive, and authentic learning of pupils toward development of the competencies fostered in those contents and lessons. In working toward these goals, set specific tasks and aim for the enhancement of learning so that pupils are able to carry out the activities with an awareness of the communication purpose, scene and situation while also activating the *Approaches*<sup>1</sup> in communication using foreign languages, and utilize knowledge of English sounds, vocabulary, expressions, etc. in communication in the five skill areas to enrich learning.
    - b. Properly set goals for each grade and aim for realization of the objectives of

Foreign Languages through the two grades.

- c. Give instruction as necessary for understanding and practicing the language materials specified in 2 (1) when actually engaging in language activities in English such as exchanging each other's thoughts and feelings etc. Furthermore, give instruction repeatedly and consolidate learning contents such as simple words and phrases and basic expressions handled when taking Chapter 4 Foreign Language Activities for Grade 3 and Grade 4.
  - d. Devise ways to improve the effects of instruction by picking up specific items and giving the instruction stated in Chapter 1, General Provisions, II. 3 (2) c. (b) as necessary, based on the characteristics of English learning whereby it is expected that pupils will frequently come into contact with English. In cases of giving this kind of instruction, clarify the aims of this instruction and the relationship to the items for which instruction is given as linked to the aims and give systematic instruction so that the competencies are developed without imbalance, anticipating the unity of the contents and lessons such as units.
  - e. Devise ways to ensure that the topics in the language activities match the interests of the pupils, utilize what the pupils learned in other subjects such as Japanese language, music and arts and crafts, etc. and ensure links with what pupils do at school events, etc.
  - f. For pupils with disabilities etc., come up with instruction contents and instruction methods in accordance with the difficulties that arise in learning activities in a systematic and institutional way.
  - g. Homeroom teachers or teachers in charge of foreign language should develop teaching plans and enhance instruction formats, for example, by obtaining the cooperation of native speakers of English and local people who are fluent in English, etc. to develop more effective instruction methods.
- (2) Consideration should be given to the following items when teaching the contents specified in 2
- a. Give instruction with regard to the language materials specified in 2 (1) in stages starting with easy materials and moving on to more difficult ones. Furthermore, while taking into account the developmental stages of the pupils, note the fact that there are items in which instruction should be given to enable pupils to understand the meanings through listening and reading, and items in which



instruction should be given to enable pupils to express themselves by speaking and writing.

- b. Give instruction in the language materials specified in 2 (1) a. through pronunciation practice, etc. while noting the differences with the Japanese language when giving instruction in sounds. Furthermore, give instructions linking sounds to letters.
  - c. Take care regarding the following items when giving instruction about sentences and their structures.
    - (a) Devise ways to give effective instruction so that pupils are able to recognize the differences in word order, etc. between the Japanese language and English and the correlation of related sentences and their structures.
    - (b) Give instruction that is effectively linked to language activities while giving consideration to ensure that there is no excessive focus on instruction of grammar terms and usage.
  - d. Devise learning styles (or activities) such as pair-work, group work, etc. as needed so that pupils develop the ability to ask questions to their friends and answer questions from them regarding simple and familiar topics. In working towards these goals, with regard to pupils who have problems communicating with other people, come up with instruction contents and instruction methods in accordance with the characteristics of the individual pupil.
  - e. Effectively utilize audio-visual teaching materials, computers, information and communication networks and educational devices, etc. to further increase the interests of the pupils, to streamline instruction and to further enhance the language activities, in accordance with the competencies that the pupils are to acquire, the circumstances of the pupils and the contents of the teaching materials, etc.
  - f. Enable pupils to anticipate and reflect on the learning by clearly establishing the purpose, scene and situation in which the communication is taking place and by clearly specifying the competencies that should be developed through the language activities when engaging in the instruction of each unit and in each lesson.
- (3) Concerning teaching materials, care should be taken with regard to the following points.

- a. Regarding the teaching materials, clearly indicate the relationship between the goals for each of the five skill areas specified in 1 and the contents specified in 2 for each unity of contents and lessons such as units in each of the teaching materials and select topics giving sufficient consideration to language use situations and language functions, in order to comprehensively develop the competencies for the foundation of communication such as listening, reading, speaking [interaction], speaking [production] and writing.
- b. Select suitable and various topics about everyday life, manners and customs, stories, geography, history, traditional culture and nature, etc. of the people of the world, mainly people who use English and Japanese people, in accordance with pupils' developmental stages and interests and give consideration to the following perspectives.
  - (a) Teaching material useful for deepening the pupils' understanding of diverse ways of thinking and developing their rich humanity while cultivating their ability to make fair judgments.
  - (b) Teaching material useful for cultivating pupils' attitudes towards raising interest in the culture of Japan and the underlying cultures of the English language and attempting to deepen understanding of those cultures.
  - (c) Teaching material useful for increasing their awareness of themselves as members of Japanese society, which is required to deepen international understanding from a broad perspective and to engage with the global community, and cultivating the spirit of international cooperation.

#### Other foreign languages

Give instruction in other foreign languages in accordance with the objectives regarding English for each of the five skill areas specified in 1, the contents specified in 2 and the syllabus planning and lesson delivery specified in 3.

### III. SYLLABUS PLANNING AND LESSON DELIVERY

1. In principle, have pupils take English in Foreign Languages lessons.
2. Give proper instruction in accordance with the characteristics of Foreign Languages, regarding the contents specified in Chapter 3 Special Subject Morals Studies, II, while also giving consideration to links with the Morals lessons, etc., based on the objectives of moral education specified in Chapter 1, General Provisions, I. 2 (2).