

Assignment

Teaching English: Secondary School

CTE 105

Maximum marks 100

Answer all questions.

I. Write short notes on the following:

1. The autonomous learner and materials to encourage autonomous learning.
2. Developing critical reading skills at the secondary level.
3. 'Gathering skills' with reference to study skills.
4. The three stages involved in designing listening tasks for assessment of learners at the secondary level.

(4x5=20)

II. Describe the techniques widely used to evaluate writing. Which of these would you, as a teacher, prefer to employ? Give reasons supporting your answer.

(20)

III. What aspects should be kept in mind while designing speaking tests for learners at the secondary level?

(20)

IV. Discuss the major hard spots in English grammar that a student who learns English as a second language is likely to encounter?

(20)

V. What kind of strategies can be used by a teacher to help learners become active readers of discipline-based texts?

(20)

ASSIGNMENT REFERENCE MATERIAL (July 2024- January 2025)

CTE-105

Teaching English: Secondary School

Answer all questions.

I. Write short notes on the following:

Q1. The autonomous learner and materials to encourage autonomous learning.

Ans: -The autonomous learner is characterized by their ability to take ownership of their learning process, make informed decisions, set goals, and engage in self-directed learning activities. To support autonomous learning, educators can provide materials and resources that empower learners to take control of their learning journey and develop essential skills for lifelong learning. These materials should be diverse, accessible, and designed to foster independence, critical thinking, and active engagement. Here are some examples of materials that encourage autonomous learning:

Self-Study Guides and Workbooks: Provide learners with self-study guides and workbooks that offer structured activities, exercises, and practice opportunities aligned with their learning objectives. These materials allow learners to work independently at their own pace, review key concepts, and track their progress over time.

Online Learning Platforms and Resources: Offer access to online learning platforms, digital libraries, and educational websites that provide a wealth of resources, including interactive lessons, video tutorials, quizzes, and educational games. These platforms enable learners to explore diverse topics, access up-to-date information, and engage with multimedia content tailored to their interests and learning preferences.

Authentic Materials and Real-World Tasks: Introduce authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, podcasts, videos, and websites that expose learners to real-world language use and cultural contexts. Encourage learners to engage with authentic texts, media, and tasks that reflect their personal interests and goals, fostering motivation and relevance in their learning experiences.

Language Learning Apps and Software: Incorporate language learning apps and software that offer personalized learning experiences, adaptive feedback, and interactive exercises. These tools allow learners to practice language skills, receive

instant feedback, and track their performance, promoting autonomy and self-regulated learning habits.

Project-Based Learning Materials: Provide project-based learning materials and resources that encourage learners to explore topics of interest, conduct research, and collaborate with peers on meaningful projects. Offer guidance and support as learners design, plan, and execute their projects, allowing them to take ownership of their learning process and apply their knowledge in real-world contexts.

Reflective Journals and Portfolios: Encourage learners to keep reflective journals or portfolios where they can document their learning experiences, set goals, track their progress, and reflect on their achievements and challenges. These reflective practices promote metacognitive awareness, self-assessment, and goal setting, empowering learners to take responsibility for their learning journey.

Q2. Developing critical reading skills at the secondary level.

Ans: - Developing critical reading skills at the secondary level is crucial for students to become discerning, analytical, and reflective readers who can engage thoughtfully with a variety of texts. To foster critical reading skills, educators can implement targeted strategies and activities that encourage students to actively analyze, evaluate, and interpret texts. Here are some effective approaches:

Close Reading: Teach students to engage in close reading practices where they carefully examine the details, language, and structure of a text to uncover deeper meanings and nuances. Encourage students to annotate texts, ask probing questions, and make connections between ideas, themes, and literary devices.

Textual Analysis: Provide opportunities for students to analyze texts across different genres, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and multimedia sources. Guide students in identifying authorial intent, point of view, bias, tone, and rhetorical strategies employed in the text. Encourage students to consider the historical, cultural, and social context of the text to deepen their understanding and interpretation.

Critical Thinking Prompts: Use critical thinking prompts to stimulate discussion and reflection on texts. Pose open-ended questions that challenge students to evaluate arguments, identify evidence, detect logical fallacies, and consider alternative perspectives. Encourage students to support their interpretations with textual evidence and engage in respectful debate with their peers.

Socratic Seminars: Facilitate Socratic seminars where students engage in dialogue-based discussions focused on a specific text or topic. Encourage students to ask probing questions, respond thoughtfully to peers' comments, and defend their interpretations with reasoned arguments. Socratic seminars promote active listening, critical thinking, and collaborative inquiry skills.

Literary Analysis Essays: Assign literary analysis essays where students analyze a text in-depth, exploring themes, character development, symbolism, and literary techniques. Encourage students to formulate a thesis statement, provide textual evidence to support their claims, and engage in close textual analysis to craft well-reasoned arguments.

Comparative Analysis: Encourage students to compare and contrast multiple texts on a similar theme or topic. Guide students in identifying similarities and differences in perspective, style, and thematic elements across texts. Encourage students to consider how different authors approach similar themes and issues, fostering a deeper understanding of literary conventions and diversity of perspectives.

By implementing these strategies and activities, educators can effectively develop critical reading skills in secondary students, equipping them with the ability to analyze complex texts, evaluate arguments, and engage critically with the world around them. These skills are essential for academic success, informed citizenship, and lifelong learning.

Q3. 'Gathering skills' with reference to study skills.

Ans: - "Gathering skills" in the context of study skills refers to the ability to effectively collect, organize, and synthesize information from various sources to support learning and academic endeavors. These skills are essential for students to acquire, especially in today's information-rich and digitally connected world. Here are some key components of gathering skills:

Research Skills: Developing strong research skills is fundamental for gathering information effectively. Students need to learn how to use libraries, databases, and online resources to access relevant information. They should be able to formulate research questions, conduct searches using appropriate keywords, and evaluate the credibility and reliability of sources.

Note-Taking: Effective note-taking is another critical aspect of gathering skills. Students should learn strategies for capturing key ideas, main points, and supporting details while reading or listening to lectures. They should also practice summarizing information in their own words and organizing notes in a clear and coherent manner for future reference.

Critical Reading Skills: Critical reading skills are essential for gathering information from written texts. Students need to be able to analyze and evaluate texts critically, identifying main ideas, author's arguments, evidence, and underlying assumptions. They should also learn to recognize bias, logical fallacies, and rhetorical devices used in texts.

Information Literacy: Information literacy encompasses the ability to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively and ethically. Students need to develop skills in evaluating the credibility, relevance, and currency of information sources. They

should also understand copyright laws, plagiarism, and how to cite sources properly in their academic work.

Digital Literacy: With the proliferation of digital technologies, students must develop digital literacy skills to gather information online. This includes navigating websites and online databases, evaluating the reliability of online sources, and understanding issues related to privacy and digital security.

Effective Communication: Gathering skills also involve the ability to communicate information effectively. Students should learn how to summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize information from multiple sources in their own writing or presentations. They should also practice citing sources appropriately and adhering to academic conventions in their communication.

Overall, gathering skills are essential for students to become independent learners who can effectively access, evaluate, and use information to support their academic success and lifelong learning endeavors. By developing these skills, students can become more confident and resourceful in their ability to gather information from diverse sources and engage critically with the world around them.

Q4. The three stages involved in designing listening tasks for assessment of learners at the secondary level.

Ans:- Designing listening tasks for assessment of learners at the secondary level typically involves three main stages to ensure the tasks are effective, engaging, and aligned with learning objectives. These stages are:

Pre-Assessment Planning: The initial stage involves planning and preparation before implementing the listening tasks. Educators need to identify the specific learning objectives, language skills, and content areas to be assessed through listening. They should consider the proficiency level of the learners, their prior knowledge, and their interests to design tasks that are appropriate and engaging. Additionally, educators need to select suitable listening materials, such as audio recordings, videos, or spoken texts, that are relevant to the learners' age, background, and learning needs. They should also ensure that the materials are authentic, diverse, and aligned with the curriculum objectives. Finally, educators need to determine the format and structure of the assessment tasks, whether they will be multiple-choice questions, short-answer responses, or extended tasks requiring written or oral communication.

Task Development and Implementation: In this stage, educators develop the listening tasks based on the identified objectives and materials. Tasks should be designed to assess various listening skills, including comprehension, vocabulary recognition, inference, and critical thinking. Tasks may include listening to conversations, interviews, lectures, or narratives, followed by questions or activities that require learners to demonstrate their understanding of the content. Tasks should be clear, concise, and well-sequenced to guide learners through the listening process effectively. Educators may also consider incorporating pre-listening activities to

activate prior knowledge, set context, and preview key vocabulary or concepts. During the implementation phase, educators administer the listening tasks in a controlled environment, providing clear instructions and support as needed to ensure learners understand the tasks and feel comfortable completing them.

Post-Assessment Evaluation and Feedback: After learners have completed the listening tasks, educators evaluate their performance and provide feedback to support their learning and development. This involves analyzing learners' responses, identifying areas of strength and weakness, and determining whether learning objectives have been met. Educators may use scoring rubrics, checklists, or standardized criteria to assess learners' listening skills objectively. They should provide constructive feedback to learners, highlighting their achievements and areas for improvement. Feedback may include specific suggestions for further practice, additional resources, or strategies to enhance listening skills. Educators should also reflect on the effectiveness of the listening tasks and consider adjustments or revisions for future assessments based on learner performance and feedback received.

II. Describe the techniques widely used to evaluate writing. Which of these would you, as a teacher, prefer to employ? Give reasons supporting your answer.

Ans. Writing can be evaluated in a variety of ways. Among the techniques most widely used are the holistic method, the analytic method, and the single focus method. Each method has its own advantages.

Holistic evaluation: This method is based on the premise that writing is an integrated process; therefore its parts can be evaluated in relation to the whole. This method evaluates writing comprehensively by gauging the overall quality or general impression that a piece of writing makes on a reader. Many teachers find that the holistic method allows them to evaluate a piece of writing without getting lost in the particulars of spelling, usage and mechanics.

One of the benefits of the holistic technique is its efficiency. By allowing teachers to evaluate the thoughts expressed in a piece of writing without getting lost in particulars, this method saves time. Writing samples can be read quickly and ranked on a three point or five point scale. While this method does not evaluate individual language needs, it is a good method for assessing the overall language demands of the class as a whole.

Analytic evaluation: This method involves the isolation of specific traits or aspects of writing, such as, organisation, word choice, usage, and mechanics. The teacher then evaluates the writing sample several times – once for each trait on a scale ranging from low to high. The analytic method helps the teacher to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. However, since it is very time consuming, teachers would perhaps need to modify it to suit the requirements and constraints of a large class.

Single focus evaluation: This method involves the review of a piece of writing to determine the extent to which it exhibits a specific characteristic or trait. In general, this approach is most useful when students are asked to write for a specific purpose. Evaluation is then based on the extent to which the writing fulfils its purpose. This method may also be used to evaluate other aspects of writing such as spelling or sentence structure. This method uses the same numerical scale as the holistic method, with the criteria for each score related to a specific trait. It is useful for teachers to develop their own criteria depending on the specific focus.

As teachers, we need to respond to their writing in such a way that the learners do not consider writing drafts a “laborious process”. Instead, they should view writing in terms of responding to the feedback and restructuring ideas. This is particularly important for ESL students because as English is a learnt language, it is possible that they may have limited vocabulary, incomplete mastery of grammatical structures or they may use incorrect mechanical devices. Teachers, while responding, should take into consideration the language resources of the learners. The cultural meanings that manifest in their writing should not be ignored. Teacher responses therefore, should help them to look beyond lexical level concerns towards global concerns so that they can make the transition from the “writer based structure” (mental mode) to a “reader oriented one” (Flower 1979).

III. What aspects should be kept in mind while designing speaking tests for learners at the secondary level?

Ans:- Designing speaking tests for learners at the secondary level requires careful consideration of various aspects to ensure that the assessment is valid, reliable, fair, and aligned with learning objectives. Here are several key aspects to keep in mind when designing speaking tests:

Clear Learning Objectives: Begin by identifying clear learning objectives for the speaking test. Determine the specific language skills and communicative competencies that you want to assess, such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary usage, grammar accuracy, and discourse coherence. Align the speaking test tasks with the curriculum standards and learning goals for the secondary level to ensure that the assessment accurately measures students' language proficiency and progress.

Task Variety: Incorporate a variety of speaking tasks to assess different aspects of oral communication. Include tasks that require students to engage in spontaneous conversation, give presentations, participate in role-plays or simulations, respond to prompts or questions, and express opinions or viewpoints. By including diverse task types, you can evaluate students' ability to communicate effectively in various real-life situations and contexts.

Authenticity: Use authentic materials and contexts in the speaking test to make the assessment relevant and meaningful for students. Select topics, prompts, and tasks that are age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and engaging for secondary learners. Use real-life scenarios, multimedia resources, and current events to create authentic speaking

opportunities that reflect students' interests, experiences, and everyday communication needs.

Task Clarity and Instructions: Provide clear instructions and task prompts to ensure that students understand what is expected of them in the speaking test. Clearly outline the objectives of each task, the time limit, and any specific criteria for evaluation. Use simple language and visual aids if necessary to support comprehension, especially for students with diverse linguistic backgrounds or learning needs.

Scoring Rubrics and Criteria: Develop scoring rubrics and criteria to assess students' speaking performance objectively and consistently. Clearly define the criteria for evaluation, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, coherence, and communicative effectiveness. Use a rating scale or checklist to assign scores for each criterion, with descriptors indicating different levels of proficiency or achievement. Train assessors to use the scoring rubrics reliably and provide examples or benchmark performances to ensure consistency in scoring.

Opportunities for Preparation: Provide students with opportunities to prepare for the speaking test, including practice sessions, feedback, and guidance from teachers. Offer guidance on effective speaking strategies, such as organizing ideas, using appropriate language structures, and managing speaking anxiety. Encourage students to practice speaking outside of the classroom through activities such as peer practice, language exchanges, or online speaking forums.

Appropriate Timing and Logistics: Consider the timing and logistics of the speaking test to ensure a smooth and efficient administration process. Schedule the test during a suitable class period or designated time slot, allowing sufficient time for each student to complete the tasks. Provide appropriate facilities and equipment, such as audiovisual aids, microphones, or recording devices, to support the speaking test activities. Ensure that the testing environment is conducive to speaking tasks, with minimal distractions and sufficient privacy for students to feel comfortable and confident.

Feedback and Follow-Up: Offer constructive feedback to students after the speaking test to help them understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Provide specific feedback on pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammar accuracy, fluency, and coherence, using examples or recordings to illustrate key points. Encourage students to reflect on their performance, set goals for improvement, and practice speaking skills independently or in small groups. Follow up with additional speaking activities and opportunities for practice to reinforce learning and support continued development.

By considering these aspects when designing speaking tests for learners at the secondary level, educators can create meaningful, authentic, and effective assessments that accurately measure students' oral communication skills and promote language proficiency growth. A well-designed speaking test provides students with

opportunities to demonstrate their speaking abilities in diverse contexts, receive constructive feedback, and develop confidence and competence as communicators.

IV. Discuss the major hard spots in English grammar that a student who learns English as a second language is likely to encounter?

Ans:- For students learning English as a second language (ESL), navigating the complexities of English grammar can pose significant challenges. Several grammar concepts often present hard spots, or areas of difficulty, for ESL learners due to differences between English and their native languages, irregularities in English grammar rules, and various exceptions to those rules. Here are some major hard spots in English grammar that ESL learners commonly encounter:

Verb Tenses and Aspect: English verb tenses and aspect can be particularly challenging for ESL learners due to the complexity of English verb conjugation and the nuances of tense usage. Learners often struggle with distinguishing between simple, continuous, perfect, and perfect continuous tenses, as well as understanding when to use each tense appropriately in different contexts. Additionally, irregular verbs pose difficulty as they do not follow regular conjugation patterns.

Articles (a, an, the): The use of articles in English can be perplexing for ESL learners, especially for languages that do not have articles or have different rules for article usage. Determining when to use "a" (indefinite article), "an" (indefinite article used before words starting with vowels), or "the" (definite article) requires an understanding of context, specificity, and countability, which can be challenging for learners.

Word Order and Sentence Structure: English sentence structure, including word order and sentence formation, differs from many other languages. ESL learners may struggle with placing words in the correct order, understanding subject-verb-object (SVO) structure, and using appropriate punctuation marks. Additionally, sentence complexity, such as using subordinate clauses or conditional sentences, can pose difficulties for learners.

Prepositions: Prepositions in English often present challenges for ESL learners due to their varied usage and lack of one-to-one translation equivalents in other languages. Learners may struggle with selecting the appropriate preposition to convey spatial relationships, time expressions, or other meanings accurately.

Pronouns (Subject/Object Pronouns): English pronouns, including subject pronouns (e.g., I, you, he, she, it, we, they) and object pronouns (e.g., me, you, him, her, it, us, them), can be confusing for ESL learners, particularly when distinguishing between subject and object pronouns or using pronouns in compound sentences.

Modal Verbs: Modal verbs (e.g., can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would) present challenges for ESL learners due to their multiple meanings, functions, and usage in expressing possibility, necessity, permission, obligation, and intention.

Understanding the subtle differences between modal verbs and using them appropriately in context can be difficult for learners.

Relative Clauses: Relative clauses, which provide additional information about nouns in a sentence, can be challenging for ESL learners to master. Understanding when to use relative pronouns (e.g., who, whom, whose, which, that) and how to form relative clauses correctly can pose difficulties, especially in complex sentences.

Phrasal Verbs: Phrasal verbs, consisting of a verb followed by one or more particles (e.g., prepositions or adverbs), are common in English but can be confusing for ESL learners due to their idiomatic meanings and varied usage. Learners may struggle with understanding the meanings of phrasal verbs and using them appropriately in context.

To address these hard spots in English grammar, ESL instructors can employ various strategies, such as explicit instruction, contextualized practice activities, authentic language use in communicative tasks, error correction and feedback, and incorporating learners' native languages and cultural backgrounds into instruction. By recognizing and addressing these challenges, ESL learners can develop a deeper understanding of English grammar and enhance their overall language proficiency.

V. What kind of strategies can be used by a teacher to help learners become active readers of discipline-based texts?

Ans. There are many kinds of strategies can be used by a teacher to help learners become active readers of discipline-based texts. These are as follows:

Understanding Text Features

Text features and reading comprehension are closely linked. Text features enable the readers to determine what is in the text and what is important to them. Imagine a textbook without title page, table of content, a caption, graphics, pictures, glossary or labels. Text features contain the title, page, table of content, index, glossary, heading, sub-heading, keywords, illustrations, diagrams, etc. In fact, everything except the main body of the text.

Functions of a Text

Being aware of the function of a passage is important to comprehend it. Students need to be trained to find out whether the text aims at convincing the reader, giving information or asking for something. The reason or goal for writing or speaking could be to

- persuade: by using arguments to influence the reader to accept his/her point of view on an issue.
- inform: to give instructions, compare/contrast, share cause and effects, give new information

- entertain: using narrative, anecdotes, description, or humour, to amuse, delight, and appeal to imagination.

The teacher can invite the students to read and think what the author expects or wants as a result of others reading the text, or why the author might be sharing this information.

Scanning and Skimming

Scanning and skimming are two types of reading techniques used to assimilate information from different sources quickly. Scanning enables a person to look up specific information from a text from any source (documents, maps, books, poems, newspaper, pamphlets, posters, etc.) while skimming allows the person to quickly read through something to get the basic idea.

Organisation of the Text

This refers to the method of presentation of information in any passage, which is mostly in the form of

- Main idea and supporting details
- Sequence
- Comparisons
- Logical sequence

Prediction

'Prediction', also referred to as 'hypothesis testing' or informally as 'guessing', is an activity that is essential for reading, at all stages of the reading process. Making predictions is a strategy used by readers to anticipate what they are about to read. This strategy works for all types of texts and subject areas. Prediction is also a process-skill used in Science. Teachers can help students develop proficiency in this skill by encouraging students to make predictions while reading the textbook and predicting in Science.

Teaching Text Structures

The term "text structure" refers to how information is organized in a passage. Within different disciplines, texts mostly conform to certain set structure types. For example, in fictional literature, there are a range of narrative genres and expository texts. Scientific texts have expository structures, often containing description, comparison, cause and effect. A recognition of text structure types aids learners in forming text-to-text connections for a particular story genre, which will help them make meaning more easily.

Questioning and Challenging your Beliefs and Values

It is likely that the text you are reading might challenge your attitudes, your unconsciously held beliefs, or your positions on current issues. Thinking critically, in the academic sense, involves being open-minded - using judgement and discipline to process what you are learning about without letting your personal bias or opinion detract from the arguments. Critical thinking involves being rational and aware of your own feelings on the subject - being able to reorganize your thoughts, prior knowledge and understanding to accommodate new ideas or viewpoints.

