

Functional Skills English- Best Practice Grid

<p style="text-align: center;">What should we see in Functional Skills English lessons as best practice?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either retrieval or introduction of new spellings which forms part of the main lesson as starter activity e.g. do now activity. Retrieval can be from previous lesson/s grammar, punctuation, key vocabulary or exam style questions based. • Expert teacher explaining key concepts/ideas through direct instruction e.g. word classes, vocabulary, sentence structure through modelled writing • Use of key information on PowerPoints. Dependent on the amount of information students may be given handouts in order to highlight and annotated key information or may be asked to write down summaries of this key information. The class teacher will usually provide and model summaries. • Modelling using Principles of Instruction e.g. I do, we you, you do activities. This can take form of model answers, scaffolded writing frames etc. This may not be seen in every lesson. • The use of scaffolded tasks, written and oral sentence openers as appropriate • Addressing misconceptions through targeted questioning, whiteboard responses and quizzes. • Use of Dual coding and demonstration through “acting out” vocabulary or situations where appropriate • Questioning: Cold Calling sometimes hands up depending on the nature of the question, targeted, probing, bouncing questions and no opt out if appropriate. • Class/Group/Paired discussion tasks such as Think – pair – share. This may not be seen in all sessions depending on the objectives covered. • Where possible, links are made with other curriculum areas such as English, Maths and Science when developing vocabulary. • Links are also made with events in students own lives e.g. work experience and college applications and with wider life skills such as learning and spelling addresses, holding discussions and speaking with a greater level of formality. 	<p style="text-align: center;">What does effective questioning and scaffolding look like in Functional Skills English?</p> <p><u>Questioning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paired/group discussion task: Think – pair – share e.g. Students may be assigned number in their pair/ group to give feedback of their discussion. Prevents one student taking over and other students becoming ‘passive’. Motivates all students to be involved in discussion as may be called for feedback. Teacher can listen in as discussions are taking place, and support, guiding discussions. • Cold Calling and targeted questioning • Development of questioning using ‘ABC’ strategy: Add, build, challenge as appropriate. • Mixture of questioning: identify, explain, compare, give an example, finish the sentence, can you use that word in a sentence, ABC strategy etc. • Probing questions e.g. Give reasoning, why do you say that, Can you show me the evidence from the text that backs your answer up. • Students build on answers of others and consider the ‘why’ for their opinion. • Provide pause time when posing questions. Allow time to reflect and if needed return to student. • Students record answers to low stakes questioning on whiteboards. • Instead of students opting out of questioning, teacher will give aid to support, if still struggling – come to them later in lesson and check they now know the answer or get answer from another member of class and get original student to repeat correct answer. <p style="text-align: center;">Scaffolding: May not see all in all lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffolded activities as and when required, this can involve whole class/ groups • Scaffolded writing frames, and use of model answers. • Scaffolded / selective questioning – see above. • Prompts to encourage students to draw information from previous knowledge.
<p style="text-align: center;">What does great modelling and exposition look like in Functional Skills English?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons will model Principle of Instruction e.g. ‘I do, we do and you do’ activities to support students. This will include demonstration of how to do activities, model answers and most frequently instant feedback to student tasks. • Practice of all ‘types’ of exam questions- using model answers • Expert teacher explaining key concepts/ideas through clear direct instruction This can be done sometimes using 	<p style="text-align: center;">What does retrieval practice look like in Functional Skills English?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starter Activity could be in the form of retrieval practice activity. Activity covering prior learning from previous lessons/skills taught. • Retrieval activity/ questions could be focused on misconceptions identified through formative / summative assessment. • True or false quizzes. • Multiple choice questions that include plausible distractors, that can expose misconceptions.

<p>dual coding / information on Powerpoints, flip charts and videos.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffolded writing frames (sentence starters) available to all students to develop skill of extended writing and ensuring success criteria for different levels of Functional Skills qualification is met. • Allow thinking time and discussion e.g. for student to articulate their response. • Reading material or looking over how to improve extended answers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning of students-cold calling, targeted and probing questioning. • Retrieval homework activities. Currently homework consists of practicing key spellings and associated definitions. • In class verbal questioning during lesson to check understanding – verbal feedback.
<p>What will you see in pupils' workbooks and folders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling and definition of key vocabulary • Exam practice papers or questions taken from exam papers which students have worked on as a guided/and/or independent task • Summaries of key information • Shared reading texts, comprehension tasks and follow up written activities. • Discrete grammar and sentence structure activities • Planned and completed writing tasks • Notes for speaking, listening and communication tasks • Spelling assessments • Worksheets where responses to learning objectives are structured 	<p>What formative assessment and feedback will you see in Functional Skills English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class verbal questioning during lesson to check understanding of content– verbal feedback. • Different forms of retrieval activities during lesson where appropriate e.g. multiple choice, retrieval starter activities, true or false questions etc. (see above for different retrieval activities). Feedback can be verbal or students correcting answers in exercise books following feedback from teacher. • Answering exam questions in lessons. Feedback -provide sample answers/ share mark schemes for students to improve answers. Teacher will also read students work and provide verbal feedback and key marking annotations for students to act upon in the moment. For longer writing tasks as students work on EL3/L1 tasks student's tasks may need to be marked outside the lesson and time will be given for students to discuss these with the teacher act upon feedback. Often generic misconceptions identified in students work will be identified as a teaching point and follow up activities in subsequent lessons. • Circulating around the room so that formative assessment are live and can be reactive to the situation.
<p>What questions are useful to ask the students about their learning to elicit understanding?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you learning and why are you learning about this? • Why do you think it is important to be learning about this? • How does this theme/idea/term link to work we did in this other topic? • Tell me three things you have learned in Functional Skills English in the last 2 weeks? • Can you describe or explain keywords/ skills you have learned in the last 2-week block? 	<p>How does the Functional Skills teacher engage with the subject community?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pearson Functional skills training “Festival of Functionality” • Chris Briggs – Blog • Beginning to build connections with Leicester College/YEP as other providers of Functional Skills qualifications
<p>How is Literacy taught in your subject?</p> <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the level of the qualification reading is taught and practiced in different ways. This is adapted based on class and often individual need for students working on EL qualifications but in general terms the following applies <p>EL1 – Early words, Abigail Steel B1, Switch on, explicit teaching of exam technique using past papers</p> <p>EL2 – Abigail Steel B2, Penguin readers as a guided reading Session, shared reading lessons at least 1 per 2 week-block, explicit teaching of exam technique using past papers</p>	

EL3 – Abigail steel B3, shared reading lessons at least 1 per 2 week- block when working on reading skills moving to 1 per half term when working on writing and speaking and listening skills, CGP book used as a basis to practice reading skills required to achieve EL3, explicit teaching of exam technique using past papers

L1/2 -CGP book used as a basis to practice reading skills required to achieve L1, explicit teaching of exam technique using past papers

- Teacher to usually read extended text to students using High Five technique. Students will then be asked to re-read independently depending on the task to allow fluency practice
- Students will be asked to read and if necessary, supported to read short pieces of text. The expectation is all students participate in this with no opt out

What does meeting the needs of SEND, NTE, emerging readers and PP students look like?

Due to the nature of FS English being a directed option for students classed as being at risk of leaving RMA without English GCSE at level 4, all students tend to all into SEND, NTE or emerging readers. The correlation between these groups and those who come from a disadvantaged background means that many FS English students are also classed as PP. Many of the strategies are applied to all identified groups but below I have identified specific strategies that will more often be applied

SEND

- Read and action advice cards often this is building opportunities for students to practice organising ideas verbally, working with a peer and building confidence and self-belief.

NTE

- Dependent on the needs of a cohort a member of the RLDT is often timetabled in FS lessons to support individuals or groups working at a differing level to the main group. This member of staff will work under the direction of the teacher to provide additional support, scaffolds, repetition of I do, We do, You do cycles etc.
- Collaborate tasks with the intention of building communication skills as well as subject knowledge. Students are encouraged to speak in a mixture of home language and English in order to consolidate and build skills and understanding
- Scaffolding oral and written sentence starters – applied and gradually reduced or increasing in complexity over time, with the ultimate aim of students internalising and automatically using these
- Pre-teaching and explicit teaching of key vocabulary including the examination of root words, prefixes and suffixes
- Picture dictionary or frequent use of images, pictures and visuals
- Staff modelling or acting out situations using everyday items e.g. to teach the word variety show a mixed pot of pens
- Students to put new vocabulary into verbal sentences applying to everyday situations
- Use of multilingual dictionaries where appropriate
- Explicit modelling planning for and writing essay style answers with modelling of thought processes
- Explicit teaching and modelling of regular grammar features which differ from the predominant home language (Gujarati) articles, plurals, subject/verbal etc
- Explicit teaching of formal and informal language and how and when to apply
- In lesson adaptations and adjusting for future planning
- Extended thinking time for oral responses and opportunities for further questioning or explanation

Emerging readers

- The RLDT provides targeted reading intervention for individuals or small groups during the Entry Task at the beginning of lessons.

Through the nature of the subject the reading demands are lower than those in GCSE classes however the following are applied in class reading

- Fortnightly shared reading sessions with emphasis on predicting, clarifying, summarising, identifying writing features, summary and applying knowledge gained from writing to a written outcome
- All longer texts are first read to students; an opportunity is then given for clarifying vocabulary and discussing any words students are not then able to pronounce
- Students are then asked to read short parts of text to the class

PP

- Due to size of classes and nature of students all students are targeted for questioning and sat in close proximity to the teacher