Classes IX-X

Background

Traditionally, language-learning materials beyond the initial stages have been sourced from literature: prose, fiction and poetry. While there is a trend for inclusion of a wider range of contemporary and authentic texts, accessible and culturally appropriate pieces of literature should play a pivotal role at the secondary stage of education. The English class should not be seen as a place merely to read poems and stories in, but an area of activities to develop the learner's imagination as a major aim of language study, and to equip the learner with communicative skills to perform various language functions through speech and writing.

Objectives

The general objectives at this stage are:

- to build greater confidence and proficiency in oral and written communication
- to develop the ability and knowledge required in order to engage in independent reflection and inquiry
- to use appropriate English to communicate in various social settings
- to equip learners with essential language skills to question and to articulate their point of view
- to build competence in the different registers of English
- to develop sensitivity to, and appreciation of, other varieties of English, Indian Englishes, and the culture they reflect
- to enable the learner to access knowledge and information through reference skills (consulting a dictionary/thesaurus, library, internet etc.)
- to develop curiosity and creativity through extensive reading
- to facilitate self-learning to enable them to become independent learners
- to review, organise and edit their own work and work done by the peers

At the end of this stage learners will be able to do the following:

- give a brief oral description of events/incidents of topical interest
- retell the contents of authentic audio texts (weather reports, public announcements, simple advertisements, short interviews, etc.)
- participate in conversations, discussions, etc. on topics of mutual interest in non-classroom situations
- narrate the story depicted pictorially or in any other non-verbal mode
- respond in writing to business letters, official communications
- read and identify the main points/significant details of texts like scripts of audio-video interviews, discussions, debates, etc.
- write without prior preparation on a given topic and be able to defend or explain the position taken/views expressed
- write a summary of short lectures on familiar topics by making/taking notes
- write an assessment of different points of view expressed in a discussion/debate
- read poems effectively (with proper rhythm and intonation)
- grasp the theme of the poem and appreciate the creative uses of language
- to transcode information from a graph/chart to a description/report

Language Items

In addition to consolidating the grammatical items practised earlier, the courses at secondary level will seek to reinforce the following explicitly:

- sequence of tenses
- reported speech in extended texts

- modal auxiliaries (those not covered at upper primary)
- non-finites(infinitives, gerunds, participles)
- conditional clauses
- complex and compound sentences
- phrasal verbs and prepositional phrases
- cohesive devices
- punctuation (semicolon, colon, dash, hyphen, parenthesis or use of brackets and exclamation mark)

Methods and Techniques

The methodology will be based on a multi-skill, activity based, learner centred approach. Care would be taken to fulfil the functional (communicative), literary (aesthetic) and cultural (sociological) needs of the learner. In this situation the teacher is the facilitator of learning, s(he) presents language items, contrives situations which motivate the child to use English for the purposes of communication and expression. Aural-oral teaching and testing is an integral feature of the teaching-learning process. The electronic and print media could be used extensively. The evaluation procedure should be continuous and comprehensive. A few suggested activities are:

- Role playing
- Simulating real-to-life situations
- Dramatising and miming
- Problem solving and decision making
- Interpreting information given in tabular form and schedule
- Using newspaper clippings
- Borrowing situations from the world around the learners, from books and from other disciplines
- Using language games, riddles, puzzles and jokes
- Interpreting pictures/sketches/cartoons
- Debating and discussing
- Narrating and discussing stories, anecdotes, etc.
- Reciting poems
- Working in pairs and groups
- Using media inputs — computer, television, video cassettes, tapes, software packages.