

GESE Intermediate steps

Guide for teachers, Grades 7-9



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Trinity College London

Trinity College London is an independent international exams board, fully accredited in England as an awarding body. Trinity provides qualifications in the English language, music and performing arts throughout the world.

Trinity has been examining since the 1870s and now over half a million people take one of our exams each year.

At Trinity, we believe in recognising the achievements of every learner. Each journey starts with a first step – including the journey of learning English. In this booklet, you will find out how Trinity recognises the achievements of learners of English at the Intermediate stage of their journey.

The Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE)

The Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE) are designed for all learners of English. There are 12 grades in total, so whatever your students' level of English there is an exam they can take – and should pass!

Learners of English like to know that they are progressing and that the language they have learnt can be used in a real-life situation. The GESE exams encourage learners to develop and progress in small steps.

Each GESE exam is conducted in person by a Trinity examiner. All Trinity examiners are highly trained and experienced. They will travel to your country – normally to your school – to meet your students. The exam consists of a one-to-one interaction with the examiner.

The 12 grades are divided into four stages:

Grade 1 Pre-A1 (CEFR)	Grade 2 A1 (CEFR)	Grade 3 A2.1 (CEFR)	Grade 4 A2.2 (CEFR)	Grade 5 B1.1 (CEFR)	Grade 6 B1.2 (CEFR)	Grade 7 B2.1 (CEFR)	Grade 8 B2.2 (CEFR)	Grade 9 B2.3 (CEFR)	Grade 10 C1.1 (CEFR)	Grade 11 C1.2 (CEFR)	Grade 12 C2 (CEFR)
5-7 minutes			10 minutes			15 minutes			25 minutes		
Conversation			Conversation			Conversation			Conversation		
			Topic discussion			Topic discussion			Topic discussion		
						Interactive task			Interactive task		
									Topic presentation		
									Listening task		

Full details of all Trinity's ESOL exams can be found in the latest editions of our exam information booklets or on our website www.trinitycollege.com

This booklet has been prepared to help teachers prepare their students for the Intermediate stage, Grades 7-9.

The GESE Intermediate stage (Grades 7-9)

The Intermediate stage (Grades 7-9) has been mapped to the level Independent User B2, in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Candidate profile

This profile is based on the level Independent User B2, in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

By the end of the Intermediate stage, the candidate can:

- ▶ understand complex and extended speech used in the discussion of reasonably familiar subjects
- ▶ communicate with some spontaneity and engage in extended conversation by giving clear descriptions and expressing and explaining views on most general subjects
- ▶ initiate, maintain and end the discourse with effective turn-taking
- ▶ demonstrate a sufficient range of language to produce stretches of discourse, using some complex sentence forms and without much searching for words, while correcting most of his or her mistakes.

Intermediate exam format

		Assessed	Not Assessed
1	Greetings and setting at ease		✓
2	Candidate-led discussion of a prepared topic	✓	
3	Interactive task	✓	
4	Conversation task	✓	
5	End of exam and leave taking		✓

Overview of the Intermediate Stage

The Intermediate stage exams last up to 15 minutes. The exams have three tasks. In the first task, the **Candidate-led discussion of a prepared topic**, the candidate talks to the examiner about a topic of personal interest which they have prepared before the exam. The discussion is led by the candidate. This task lasts no more than five minutes.

In the second task, the **Interactive task**, the examiner reads out an oral prompt. The candidate needs to ask questions to find out more information and make comments. The candidate is responsible for maintaining the interaction. This task lasts no more than four minutes.

In the third task, the **Conversation task**, the candidate and examiner have two short discussions about two of the subject areas listed for the conversation. The examiner starts the conversation, but the candidate needs to share responsibility for maintaining the interaction. This task lasts no more than five minutes.

Assessment of the Intermediate stage

At the Intermediate stage, the examiner assesses the candidate's performance by awarding a letter grade A, B, C or D for Task fulfilment for each of the Topic, Interactive and Conversation phases. These letter grades can be described as follows:

- ▶ A – Distinction (an excellent performance)
- ▶ B – Merit (a good performance)
- ▶ C – Pass (a satisfactory performance)
- ▶ D – Fail (an unsatisfactory performance)

The combination of the three letter grades i.e. the one awarded for the Topic phase, the one awarded for the Interactive phase and the one awarded for the Conversation phase provides the overall level of achievement.

The final result is confirmed by the issue of a certificate (or otherwise) six to eight weeks after the exam.

The Topic phase

Introduction

The purpose of the Topic phase is to give the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to use the language of the grade while talking about a personally relevant topic.

Before the exam, the candidate chooses and prepares a topic of his or her own choice. The topic is then used in the exam as a basis for the candidate-led discussion.

By selecting a topic of personal interest, the candidate has a degree of control over the interaction. Pre-selection and preparation also allow the candidate to feel more confident during the exam.

The Topic phase provides candidates with the opportunity to:

- ▶ show what they can do in English
- ▶ use the communicative skills, language functions and language items of the grade
- ▶ link sentences together to talk about a subject at some length
- ▶ lead a discussion on a topic they are personally interested in.

The Topic phase lasts no more than five minutes.

Choosing the topic

A good choice of topic is very important. Candidates can choose any topic they like, but it is best to select a topic that they are personally interested in and feel confident talking about.

Candidates should avoid very general subjects, e.g. the environment, technology. Instead, they should prepare a personalised topic.

Candidates should not choose their topic directly from the list of subject areas for the conversation phase. However, it is acceptable to talk about a personal aspect of one of the subject areas. For example:

	Subject area for the Conversation phase	Personal aspect
Grade 7	Education	A particular course or subject the candidate has studied
Grade 8	Public figure past and present	A particular public figure the candidate admires
Grade 9	Design	The candidate's interest in local architecture

Preparing the Topic

It is very important to prepare the topic before the exam. Candidates are advised to:

- ▶ plan and prepare the areas of the topic they would like to inform the examiner about and discuss
- ▶ prepare enough material to sustain a discussion of the topic for up to five minutes (but no more)
- ▶ make sure the topic allows them to use the communicative skills of the grade (e.g. engage the examiner in a discussion of the topic)
- ▶ make sure the topic allows them to use the language of the grade (candidates need to use language items of the grade in their contributions)
- ▶ think of questions the examiner may ask, as well as, questions they can ask the examiner.

Recitation

Candidates must not prepare their topic as a written script to memorise and recite. Please remember that the Topic phase should be a spontaneous discussion between the examiner and candidate, not a monologue.

Other points about recitation:

- ▶ it is clear to the examiner that it is not natural spoken English
- ▶ reciting can make a candidate nervous
- ▶ the examiner will gently interrupt if the candidate recites
- ▶ recitation is taken into account in the assessment.

Candidate notes

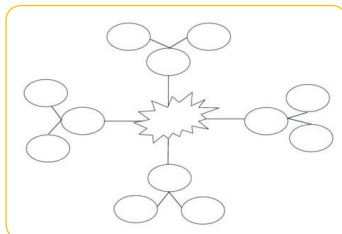
Candidates should produce some brief notes to help them remember what they want to discuss with the examiner in the Topic phase. The notes will also help the candidate and examiner to make relevant contributions. Candidates should bring their notes to the exam room and give a copy to the examiner. The notes do not form part of the assessment.

Candidates can present their notes in a variety of ways. Some ideas are given below:

Note cards



Mind maps



Pictures and diagrams



(Images: Saginaw Future/Flickr CC BY, Hans Musil/Wikipedia CC BY SA, South Africa The Good News/Wikipedia CC BY SA)

Other points about using notes:

- ▶ don't include too much information – put only key words and phrases, not paragraphs of text
- ▶ include any quotes, statistics or lists that are needed
- ▶ pictures, diagrams and visual aids can help you remember what you want to say
- ▶ practise using your notes.

Exam procedure

- ▶ The examiner invites the candidate to introduce his/her topic by saying:

We'll start with the topic. What are we going to talk about?

- ▶ The examiner will ask for a copy of the candidate's notes.
- ▶ The candidate initiates the discussion by giving information on their topic.
- ▶ The discussion is led by the candidate. He or she provides most of the input in the form of long turns.
- ▶ The candidate needs to engage the examiner in the discussion, ask and answer questions, handle interruptions and respond to requests for clarification.
- ▶ After five minutes, the examiner will end the Topic phase by saying:

Thank you. Now we'll move on to the Interactive task phase.

The Interactive phase

Introduction

The purpose of the Interactive phase is for the candidate to demonstrate their ability to control and maintain an interaction while using the language functions of the grade.

The examiner provides an oral prompt to the candidate. The candidate responds by asking questions to find out more information and making comments. Once the examiner has set up the situation, it is the candidate's responsibility to maintain the interaction.

The interaction takes the form of multiple turns, with the examiner's turns being shorter than those of the candidate. The discussion may involve some role-play, but the candidate is free to be themselves.

In this phase, the candidate's ability to use the functional language of the grade is more important than grammatical accuracy.

The Interactive phase provides candidates with the opportunity to:

- ▮ demonstrate their independence as users of English
- ▮ understand and use the language functions of the grade
- ▮ take control over and maintain an interaction
- ▮ participate in an authentic exchange of information and opinions.

The Interactive phase lasts up to four minutes.

Preparing for the Interactive phase

It is very important to prepare for the Interactive phase. Candidates are advised to:

- ▮ practise different question forms and techniques
- ▮ learn how to express the language functions of the grade in a variety of ways
- ▮ develop strategies to maintain a conversation
- ▮ practise taking the initiative and controlling the direction of a conversation
- ▮ hold conversations which allow them to use of language functions of the grade.

Strategies for the Interactive phase

Do	Don't
Ask the examiner to repeat the prompt if necessary	Interrupt the examiner when he/she is reading the prompt
Ask questions to find out more about the situation	Immediately make comments before asking questions
Ask questions and make comments about the whole situation	Ask questions and make comments about one small part of the prompt
Use multiple, longer turns	Use short questions and comments
Focus on the language functions of the grade	Focus on the grammar of the grade
Engage the examiner by inviting opinions and comments	Provide a four-minute monologue response to the prompt

Exam procedure

- ▮ The examiner introduces the Interactive phase by saying:

For the next part, I'll tell you something. Then you have to ask me questions to find out more information and make comments. You need to keep the conversation going. After four minutes, I'll end the conversation. Are you ready?

- The examiner provides the candidate with an oral prompt.
- The candidate may ask the examiner to repeat the oral prompt if necessary.
- The candidate responds to the prompt by asking questions to find out more information and making comments.
- The candidate controls and maintains the interaction. If he/she does not the phase will not last the full four minutes.
- After four minutes, the examiner will end the Interactive phase by saying:

Thank you. Now we'll move on to the Conversation phase.

The Conversation phase

Introduction

The purpose of the Conversation phase is for the candidate to participate in a genuine exchange of information, ideas and opinions while using the language of the grade. It is not a formal question and answer interview.

The conversation phase consists of a discussion of two subject areas listed for the grade and chosen by the examiner.

The Conversation phase provides candidates with the opportunity to:

- exchange information, ideas and opinions with the examiner
- take more responsibility for maintaining and sustaining a conversation
- display their ability to use the communicative skills, language functions and language items of the grade.

The Conversation phase lasts up to five minutes.

Preparing for the Conversation phase

It is very important to prepare for the Conversation phase. Candidates are advised to:

- prepare to talk about all the subject areas listed for the grade
- develop strategies to maintain a conversation
- practise using the communicative skills of the grade
- practise using the language functions and items of the grade
- think of questions the examiner may ask, as well as, questions they can ask the examiner.

Please note candidates should not recite information they have learnt about the subject areas (see page 5).

Exam procedure

- The examiner chooses one subject area listed for the grade and says:

Let's talk about...

- The candidate and examiner exchange ideas, opinions and information about the subject area. After approximately 2-2.5 minutes the examiner changes the subject for discussion by saying:

Thank you. Now let's talk about...

- The candidate and examiner exchange ideas, opinions and information about the second subject area. After about 2-2.5 minutes the examiner brings the Conversation phase and the exam to an end.

GESE Grade 7 – Introduction

Overview

At Grade 7, candidates are independent communicators in English. They can start and maintain a conversation in English and are able to ask questions and exchange opinions on a range of subjects. The Grade 7 exam is a stimulating and interactive experience. The examiner and candidate have a real conversation, where they listen and respond to each other's questions, comments and requests for clarification.

Grade 7 is mapped to **B2.1** in the CEFR.

Exam format

Total exam time: 15 minutes

The exam consists of three assessed phases:

- ▶ Candidate-led discussion of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to five minutes)
- ▶ Interactive task (up to four minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to five minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the communicative skills listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Topic phase

- ▶ Show understanding by responding appropriately to the examiner
- ▶ Communicate a variety of facts, ideas and opinions, and account for these, about a chosen topic linked across a series of extended turns
- ▶ Engage the examiner in discussion of the topic
- ▶ Be prepared to ask and answer questions about the content of the topic
- ▶ Handle interruptions or requests for clarification throughout the discussion of the topic

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Take control of the interaction
- ▶ Maintain the discourse by asking for information and making comments
- ▶ Help the discussion along by inviting comment from the examiner
- ▶ Take and give up turns when appropriate to do so
- ▶ Where appropriate to the individual task, make use of the language functions listed opposite

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Show understanding by responding appropriately to the examiner
- ▶ Share responsibility for the maintenance of the interaction with the examiner
- ▶ In case of a breakdown in communication, show awareness and take basic steps to remedy it

GESE Grade 7 – Language requirements

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following language requirements during the exam.

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▮ Giving advice and highlighting advantages and disadvantages
- ▮ Making suggestions
- ▮ Describing past habits
- ▮ Expressing possibility and uncertainty
- ▮ Eliciting further information and expansion of ideas and opinions
- ▮ Expressing agreement and disagreement

Grammar

- ▮ Second conditional
- ▮ Simple passive
- ▮ *Used to*
- ▮ Relative clauses
- ▮ Modals and phrases used to give advice and make suggestions, e.g. *should/ought to, could, you'd better*
- ▮ Modals and phrases used to express possibility and uncertainty, e.g. *may, might, I'm not sure*
- ▮ Discourse connectors, e.g. *because of, due to*

Lexis

- ▮ Vocabulary specific to the topic area
- ▮ Vocabulary specific to the subject areas
- ▮ Appropriate words and expressions to indicate interest and show awareness of the speaker, e.g. *Really? Oh dear! Did you?*
- ▮ Simple fillers to give time for thought, e.g. *well..., um...*
- ▮ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▮ The correct pronunciation of vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▮ Rising intonation to indicate interest and surprise as appropriate
- ▮ Falling intonation to indicate the end of a turn
- ▮ Intonation and features of connected speech beyond sentence level

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the list below.

- Education
- National customs
- Village and city life
- National and local produce and products
- Early memories
- Pollution and recycling

Please note Grade 7 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see page 5).

GESE Grade 7 – Example preparation activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare your students for a Trinity Grade 7 exam.

Please note the example activities given in this booklet are only suggestions of some of the many ways of practising for the real exam. The activities are **not** models to be memorised. Please note examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help candidates demonstrate the requirements of Grade 7.

Teachers can find further support materials at www.trinitycollege.com

Activity 1 – Thinking of ideas for the topic

- ▶ Show your students some objects or large pictures of things that interest you. For example, a person you admire, a place that is important to you, a personal achievement.
- ▶ In pairs/small groups ask students to come up with questions they would like to ask you about the pictures/objects.
- ▶ Invite students to ask you questions about the pictures/objects.
- ▶ Ask students to think about at least five topics that they are interested in. You can write some ideas on the board to help them get started:

- *An object that is important to me*
- *A person I admire*
- *An important activity in my life*
- *A social issue that interests me*
- *What I would like to do in the future*

- ▶ In pairs or small groups students ask each other questions about their own topic ideas.

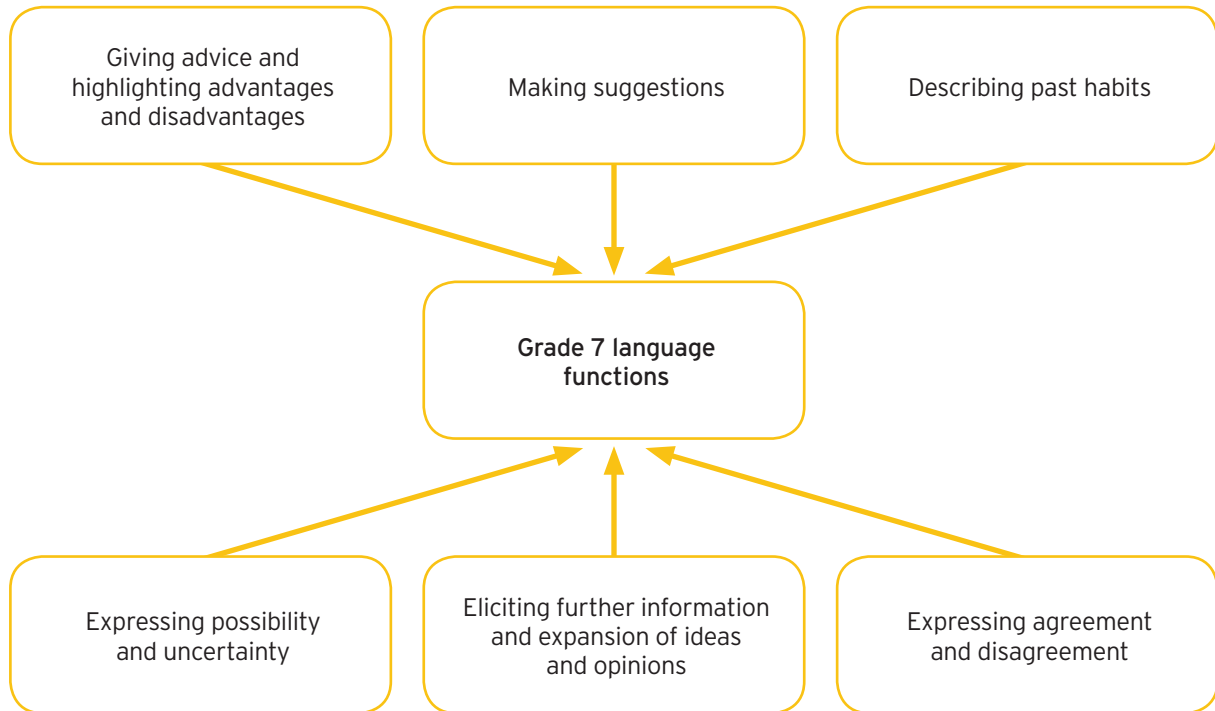
Activity 2 – Choosing the topic

- ▶ After brainstorming in Activity 1, your students will have lots of topic ideas, but they only need one for the exam.
- ▶ Trinity recommends that candidates choose a topic that they are personally interested in, knowledgeable about and able to talk about. The topic should not be chosen directly from the list of subject areas for the conversation (see page 12).
- ▶ In order to choose the best topic, tell students to answer the questions below.
- ▶ Students reject the topic ideas which are unsuitable. Give your students some time to choose the best topic for them.

1. Do I enjoy talking about this topic?
2. Am I enthusiastic about this topic?
3. Will the topic be interesting for me?
4. Will the topic be interesting for the examiner?
5. Is the topic of personal interest to me?
6. Is the topic exactly the same as one of the subject areas for conversation?
7. Do I really know anything about this topic?
8. Can I find out anything about this topic?
9. Is the topic too complicated or technical?
10. Is the topic too simple?

Activity 3 – Using Grade 7 language functions

- Present students with the language functions for Grade 7 using a diagram like this:



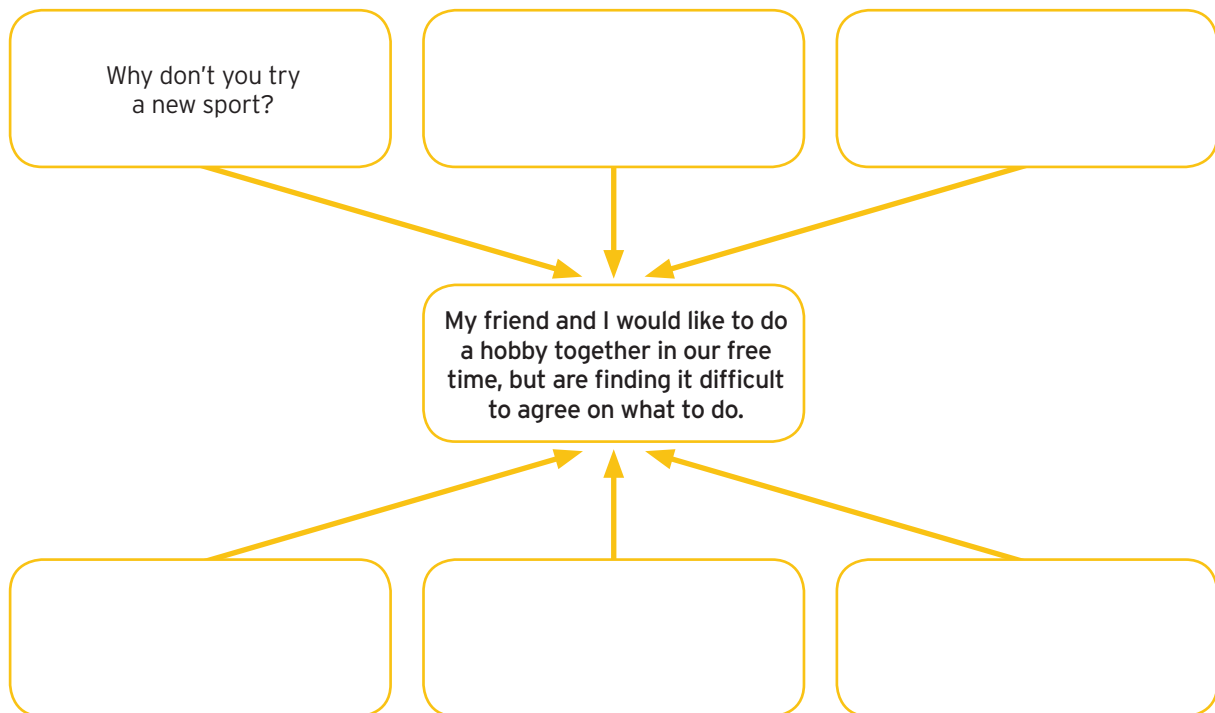
- In pairs or small groups students suggest language related to the functions. Here are some ideas:

Giving advice and highlighting advantages and disadvantages	You should... If I were you... On the one hand/on the other hand...
Making suggestions	Why don't you _____? Have you thought about _____?
Describing past habits	What did you used to _____? I used to/I would _____?
Expressing possibility and uncertainty	That might be a good idea... That might help... I'm not sure about that
Eliciting further information and expansion of ideas and opinions	Can you tell me more about _____? What's your opinion on _____?
Expressing agreement and disagreement	That's true/I see what you mean I'm not sure that's right/I'm not sure I agree

- Students share their ideas with the class.

Activity 4 – Looking at sample Interactive tasks

- Draw a mind map on the board. Write an example interactive task in the middle of the mind map.
- Ask students what questions they could ask and what comments they could make based on the Grade 7 language functions (see page 11). The first one is an example.



- In pairs or small groups students draw their own mind maps for the example interactive tasks below:

About six months ago, some new neighbours moved in next door to us. They're very friendly, but we've had a few problems and I'm not sure what to do.

I've always been on holiday with my family and friends, but now I'm thinking of going by myself.

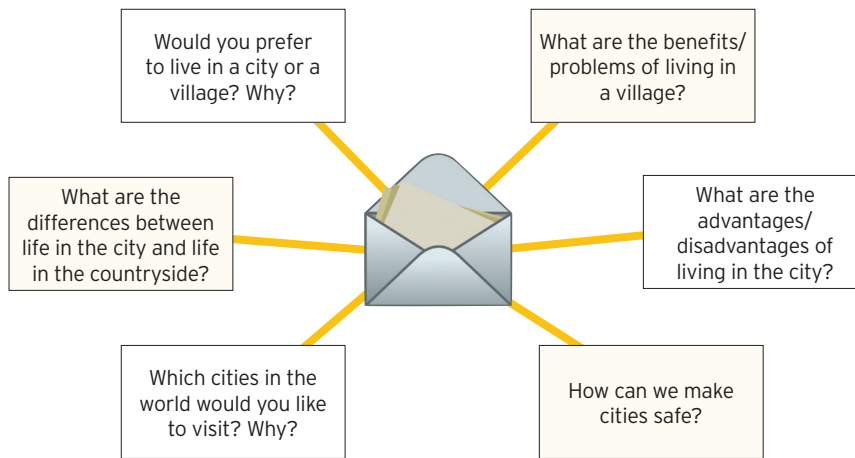
It's my nephew's seventh birthday next week and he's asked for a mobile phone. I'm not sure if this is a good idea.

- Students share their ideas with the class.

More example Grade 7 interactive tasks can be found at www.trinitycollege.com

Activity 5 – Discussion envelopes for the Conversation phase

- Prepare some envelopes with different discussion questions inside them for each of the Grade 7 conversation subject areas. Here are some examples for Village and City life:



- Divide the class into small groups.
- Each group selects an envelope. They work through the discussion questions in their groups, taking it in turns to read the questions out loud and inviting comments and opinions.
- Repeat the activity. Each group choose a new envelope and topic.

GESE Grade 8 – Introduction

Overview

At Grade 8, candidates are able to communicate with some spontaneity and engage the examiner in an extended conversation. They can express and explain their viewpoint on a wide range of subjects and follow up on comments from the examiner to develop the conversation. The Grade 8 exam is a motivating and interactive experience, where the examiner and candidate participate in a genuine conversation.

Grade 8 is mapped to **B2.2** in the CEFR.

Exam format

Total exam time: 15 minutes

The exam consists of three assessed phases:

- ▶ Candidate-led discussion of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to five minutes)
- ▶ Interactive task (up to four minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to five minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the communicative skills listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Topic phase

- ▶ Show understanding by responding appropriately to the examiner
- ▶ Communicate a variety of facts, ideas and opinions, and account for these, about a chosen topic linked across a series of extended turns
- ▶ Engage the examiner in a discussion of the topic
- ▶ Be prepared to ask and answer questions about the content of the topic
- ▶ Handle interruptions or requests for clarification throughout the discussion of the topic

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Take control over the interaction
- ▶ Maintain the discourse by asking for information and making comments
- ▶ Help the discussion along by inviting comment from the examiner
- ▶ Take and give up turns when appropriate to do so
- ▶ Where appropriate to the individual task, make use of the language functions listed opposite

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Show understanding by responding appropriately to the examiner
- ▶ Share responsibility for the maintenance of the interaction with the examiner
- ▶ In case of a breakdown in communication, show awareness and take basic steps to remedy it

GESE Grade 8 – Language requirements

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following language requirements during the exam.

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▮ Expressing feelings and emotions
- ▮ Expressing impossibility
- ▮ Reporting the conversation of others
- ▮ Speculating
- ▮ Persuading and discouraging

Grammar

- ▮ Third conditional
- ▮ Present perfect continuous tense
- ▮ Past perfect tense
- ▮ Reported speech
- ▮ Linking expressions, e.g. *even though*, *in spite of*, *although*

Lexis

- ▮ Vocabulary specific to the topic area
- ▮ Vocabulary specific to the subject areas
- ▮ Cohesive devices, e.g. *so to continue*, *in other words*, *for example*
- ▮ Reporting verbs, e.g. *say*, *tell*, *ask*, *report*, *advise*, *promise*
- ▮ Appropriate words and expressions to encourage further participation
- ▮ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▮ The correct pronunciation of vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▮ Rising and falling intonation to indicate giving up and offering turns
- ▮ Stress, intonation and pitch relevant to the language functions listed above
- ▮ Stress and intonation to indicate emotion

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the list below.

- ▮ Society and living standards
- ▮ Personal values and ideals
- ▮ The world of work
- ▮ Unexplained phenomena and events
- ▮ National environmental concerns
- ▮ Public figures past and present

Please note Grade 8 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see page 5).

GESE Grade 8 – Example preparation activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare your students for a Trinity Grade 8 exam.

Please note the example activities given in this booklet are only suggestions of some of the many ways of practising for the real exam. The activities are **not** models to be memorised. Please note examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help candidates demonstrate the requirements of Grade 8.

Teachers can find further support materials at www.trinitycollege.com

Activity 1 - Developing ideas for the topic

- Show students a mind map on the board.
- Ask the class to suggest a topic idea. Write the title of the topic in the middle of the mind map.
- Ask students to suggest different ideas connected to the topic. Here is an example:



Students make a mind map with ideas for their own topic.

In pairs or small groups students discuss which ideas are the most interesting.

Activity 2 – Matching the topic with language of the grade

- ▶ Tell students that they need to use a wide range of language of the grade in their topic.
- ▶ Look at the Grade 8 language requirements (see page 18).
- ▶ Ask students to look at the points on their mind maps from Activity 1. How can they change these points to demonstrate the language functions and items of the grade? What vocabulary will be useful?
- ▶ Tell students to select the best four or five points on their mind maps. The best ones are the ones that will generate the most ideas and most language of the grade.
- ▶ Students draw a new mind map with the best topic points on it.

Activity 3 – Strategies for the Interactive phase

Cut out the cards below.

Listen to the examiner explaining the task
Ask for more information
Ask about things you don't understand
Identify the main problem or situation
Express your own ideas and opinions
Ask for the examiner's ideas and opinions
Comment on the examiner's responses
Discuss alternative options

- ▶ Divide the class into groups of three. Give one set of cards to each group.
- ▶ The groups take the cards and discuss the best order for them in an Interactive task. There is no definite correct answer, but certain things do need to be done logically in order. For example, your students need to listen to the examiner explain the task before they can ask for more information.

Activity 4 – Interactive task role-play

- ▶ In groups of three, tell students they are going to do an Interactive task role-play.
- ▶ Student 1 is the examiner and should read aloud the example interactive prompt below:

My friend, who lives in a village, told me the local teenagers have been complaining that there is nothing for them to do. Perhaps something should be done about it.

- ▶ Student 2 is the candidate and should maintain the conversation. Tell them to use the Interactive phase strategies they discussed in Activity 3.
- ▶ Student 3 is the listener and should make a note of what Interactive phase strategies Student 2 uses.
- ▶ After four minutes stop the role-play. Students should discuss how successful the task was.
- ▶ Swap roles.

More example Grade 8 interactive prompts can be found at www.trinitycollege.com

Activity 5 – Creating interest in the subject areas for the Conversation phase

- Bring in objects, pictures or even show video clips that represent the Grade 8 subject areas for the conversation. Ask students to decide what each picture/object or video clip represents. Here are some ideas:

Society and living standards: pictures or video clips of different lifestyles, places to live

Personal values and ideals: pictures representing honesty, love or respect

The world of work: pictures of people doing different jobs; objects relating to equipment needed for different jobs

Unexplained phenomena and events: pictures or video clips of crop circles or UFOs

National environmental concerns: pictures of pollution, a power station

Public figures past and present: pictures of actors, sports stars, politicians, historical figures



Photos (clockwise from left): Ian Britton CC BY, Seattle Municipal Archives CC BY 2.0, US Library of Congress (Wikipedia)

Activity 6 – Question prompts for the Conversation phase

- Give the student the question prompt cards below:

How does ____ make you feel?	What does your family say about ____?	What do you think your friends would say about ____?
Has anyone told you about ____?	How could you persuade someone to ____?	How could you persuade someone not to ____?
Why might that be?	How do you think it might change in the future?	What might be the reason for this?
What had you done before ____?	How long have you been ____?	If you hadn't ____ what would you have done?

- Tell students to write down two or three questions for each conversation subject area. Students can use the question prompt cards to help them. Please remember these are only example prompts. Encourage students to add their own ideas using the language of Grade 8 (see page 18).
- In pairs, students ask each other the questions they have made.

GESE Grade 9 – Introduction

Overview

At Grade 9, candidates can communicate in English fluently, accurately and effectively. They can start, maintain and develop a conversation, with effective turn-taking on a wide range of reasonably familiar subjects. The Grade 9 exam is an authentic conversation, in which the examiner and candidate exchange information, opinions and attitudes.

Grade 9 is mapped to **B2.3** in the CEFR.

Exam format

Total exam time: 15 minutes

The exam consists of three assessed phases:

- ▶ Candidate-led discussion of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to five minutes)
- ▶ Interactive task (up to four minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to five minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the communicative skills listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Topic phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately
- ▶ Communicate facts, ideas, opinions and attitudes about a chosen topic sustained across a series of extended turns
- ▶ Maintain coherence and cohesion throughout the phase by organising the discourse
- ▶ Highlight significant points
- ▶ Paraphrase where necessary in order to maintain the discourse
- ▶ Engage the examiner in discussion of the topic
- ▶ Handle interruptions without undue effort by recapping and recovering

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Take control over the interaction
- ▶ Maintain the discourse by asking for information and expanding on the responses obtained
- ▶ Develop the discussion by encouraging comment and opinion from the examiner
- ▶ Take, keep, give up and offer turns when appropriate to do so
- ▶ Where appropriate to the individual task, include exponents of the language functions as listed opposite

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately
- ▶ Share responsibility for the maintenance of the interaction with the examiner
- ▶ Follow up on comments from the examiner in order to develop the conversation
- ▶ In case of a breakdown in communication, use paraphrasing and circumlocution

GESE Grade 9 – Language requirements

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following language requirements during the exam.

Language requirements

Language functions

- Expressing abstract ideas
- Expressing regrets, wishes and hopes
- Expressing assumptions
- Paraphrasing
- Evaluating options
- Hypothesising
- Evaluating past actions or course of events

Grammar

- Mixed conditionals
- Verbs followed by gerund and/or infinitive, e.g. *forget, stop, go on, remember*
- More complex forms of the passive with modals
- *Should/must/might/could* + perfect infinitive
- Correct verb patterns after *wish* and *hope*

Lexis

- Vocabulary specific to the topic area
- Vocabulary specific to the subject areas
- Cohesive devices to recap and recover, e.g. *As I was saying, anyway...*
- Hesitation fillers, e.g. *I mean, you know*
- Stock phrases to gain time for thought and keep the turn, e.g. *well, let me think...*
- Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- The correct pronunciation of vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- Rising and falling intonation for keeping, giving up and offering turns
- Stress and rhythm to highlight and emphasise main points and ideas
- Intonation and pitch to convey attitude

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the list below.

- Dreams and nightmares
- Crime and punishment
- Technology
- Habits and obsessions
- Global environmental issues
- Design

Please note Grade 9 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see page 5).

GESE Grade 9 – Example preparation activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare your students for a Trinity Grade 9 exam.

Please note the example activities given in this booklet are only suggestions of some of the many ways to practise for the real exam. The activities are **not** models to be memorised. Please note examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help candidates demonstrate the requirements of Grade 9.

Teachers can find further support materials at www.trinitycollege.com

Activity 1 – Preparing the topic

- Ask students to complete the grid below for their topic.

What language functions of Grade 9 can I use in my presentation? (Give examples)	
What language items of Grade 9 can I use in my presentation? (Give examples)	
What questions might the examiner ask me?	
What questions can I ask the examiner?	
Can I give examples of ideas/issues mentioned in my topic?	
Can I explain my points of view?	
What notes or diagrams will I use?	
Am I going to take other materials into the exam?	
Timing: can I talk about my topic for about five minutes (but no more)?	

- Remind your students not to prepare their topic as a written script to memorise (see page 5).

Activity 2 – Practising the topic

- Students work in groups of three.
- Ask students to think of 5-10 questions they can ask about each other's topics. They should look at each other's notes, mind maps or diagrams (see page 19) to get ideas for questions. They should try to use Grade 9 language (see page 23).
- Each student is given a role:

Student 1 = Candidate, Student 2 = Examiner, Student 3 = Listener

- Student 1 (Candidate) presents their topic.
- Student 2 (Examiner) asks questions throughout.
- Student 3 (Listener) completes the table below:

Timing	Does the topic last five minutes?	
Delivery	Does the topic sound natural (not memorised)?	
Content	Are the facts, ideas and opinions clear?	
Language	What Grade 9 language items and functions are used? (see page 23)	
Questions	Does student 1 answer the examiner's questions well? Does student 1 ask the examiner questions?	

At the end students talk about what worked best/what didn't work. Students change roles and repeat the activity until they have all talked about their topics.

Activity 3 – Demonstrating Grade 9 language functions

Cut up the cards below:

Expressing abstract ideas	Perhaps it's a question of... Let's discuss the concept of...
Expressing regrets, wishes and hopes	Do you wish you hadn't _____? Do you hope you will _____?
Expressing assumptions	I assume that...
Paraphrasing	So what you're saying is...
Evaluating options	It's a choice between _____ and _____. The difference is...
Hypothesising	I imagine that if you.... In theory it should be...
Evaluating past actions or course of events	I guess you wish you hadn't...

In pairs, students match the example language (white cards) to the Grade 9 language functions (yellow cards).

Explain there are many different ways to express language functions. Ask students to think about other phrases and language they could use.

Activity 4 – Interactive task role-play

In pairs, tell students they are going to do an Interactive task role-play. Student 1 is the examiner and should read out the example interactive prompt below:

Recently my local government decided to close down the swimming pool. I think there should have been more consultation about it.

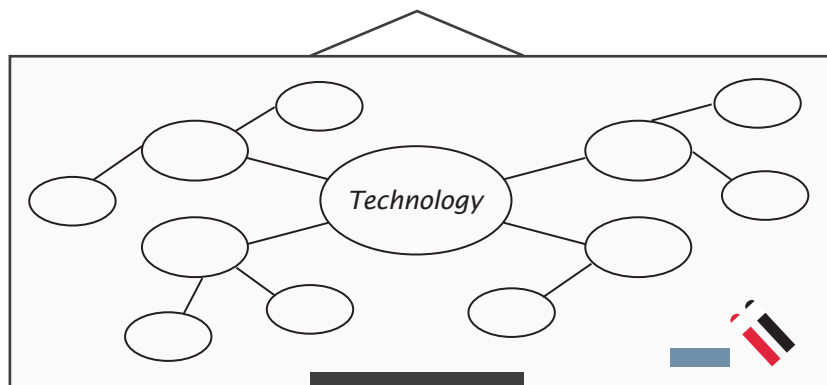
Student 2 is the student and must develop the conversation using the language functions and phrases they prepared in Activity 3.

After four minutes stop the role-play and tell students to discuss what language they used.

Swap roles. More example Grade 9 interactive prompts can be found at www.trinitycollege.com

Activity 5 – Preparing for the Conversation phase

Choose a subject area for the conversation. On the board draw a mind map and write the subject area in the middle. For example:



Ask students what themes they could discuss and what Grade 9 language they could use (see page 23). Add their ideas to the mind map.

In pairs or small groups students make their own mind maps for the other Grade 9 conversation subject areas.

The next steps – GESE Advanced stage

Introduction

Exams at the Advanced stage (Grades 10–12) demand an extremely high level of language proficiency and conversational ability. The Advanced stage has been mapped to the level Proficient User, C1 and C2, in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Candidate profile

By the end of the Advanced stage, the candidate can:

- ▶ understand arguments, inferences, changes in register and emphasis in extended, complex and sometimes unstructured speech, even when delivered at fast, native speed
- ▶ express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely differentiating finer shades of meaning
- ▶ control the direction of a spoken interaction and maintain its flow with ease, relating skilfully to the contributions of the listener
- ▶ exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of complex language structures, vocabulary and language functions
- ▶ produce speech at word, sentence and discourse level which rarely deviates from an internationally intelligible model.

Advanced exam format

		Assessed	Not Assessed
1	Greetings and setting at ease		✓
2	Formal presentation of a topic prepared by the candidate	✓	
3	Discussion of the topic presentation with the examiner	✓	
4	Interactive task	✓	
5	Listening task	✓	
6	Conversation task	✓	
7	End of exam and leave taking		✓

Overview of the Advanced stage

The Advanced stage exams last up to 25 minutes. The exams have five tasks. In the first task, the **Formal topic presentation**, the candidate delivers a formal presentation on a discursive topic of his/her choice which they have prepared before the exam. The examiner does not interact with the candidate during the presentation. This task lasts up to five minutes.

In the second task, the **Discussion of the topic presentation**, the candidate and examiner participate in an authentic discussion of the ideas and opinions given in the Formal topic presentation. This task lasts up to five minutes.

In the third task, the **Interactive task**, the examiner reads out an oral prompt. The candidate needs to ask questions to find out more information and make comments. The candidate is responsible for maintaining the interaction. This task lasts no more than four minutes.

In the fourth task, the **Listening task**, the examiner reads three short pieces of discourse to the candidate. The candidate needs to suggest a suitable ending or answer a question. This task lasts up to three minutes.

In the final task, the **Conversation task**, the candidate and examiner have two short discussions about two of the subject areas listed for the conversation. At Grade 12, there are no specific subject areas and the examiner will select two appropriate subjects relating to the previous subject areas as well as subjects of general interest. This task lasts no more than six minutes.

Full details of the Advanced stage exams can be found in the latest editions of our exam information booklets or on our website www.trinitycollege.com

