

PROGRAMMES D'ÉTUDE **S**

English as a
Second Language
Elementary Education

Québec 

English as a Second Language

Elementary Education

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This English as a second language program has been developed for Elementary, Cycle Two, in compliance with section 461 of the Education Act (R.S.Q., c. I-13.3). It will be compulsory in all schools as of July 1, 1998.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Marois', followed by a period.

Pauline Marois
Minister of Education

Foreword

This program for English as a second language is intended for second-cycle elementary students in the French sector of the Québec school system. This new version replaces the program published in December, 1981.

The new program contains certain features already established in the old program, such as the emphasis on learning English as a second language for the purposes of oral communication, an approach that has the support of a broad consensus among those most closely involved.

Other aspects of the old programs have been brought up to date in light of new developments in the field of second-language teaching. Modifications have also been made to the nature and number of objectives and to their distribution in each year of the second cycle of elementary school. This updating has entailed some changes in the importance accorded to reading and writing in the new program.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Guiding Principles	3
• Learning is to be acquired in a spirit of curiosity, openness to the world and broadening of cultural horizons	3
• An active teaching/learning approach is an integral part of the knowledge and skills to be acquired	3
• Learning is to be acquired in varied contexts of communication and experience	4
Organization of the Program	5
• Distribution of terminal objective components	6
General Outline of Terminal Objectives	7
• Terminal objective 1	7
• Terminal objective 2	8
• Terminal objective 3	9
• Terminal objective 4	10
• Terminal objective 5	11
Weighting of Skills	13
Outcome Profile	15
Appendix - Proposals for topics to be approached with students	17

Introduction

Knowledge of a second language is now recognized as a necessity in all countries where there is a need to understand the language of one's neighbours, whether to become acquainted with their culture or to facilitate various kinds of trade which require increasing mobility. This is especially true of English, which is used daily all over the world.

Given the geographic situation of Québec, English is a major avenue of communication between francophones and their anglophone neighbours. The quantity of cultural and economic exchanges carried out in English is proof of its importance.

The classroom is an ideal place to acquire proficiency in the basics of English as a second language. The learning acquired there serves to support students' interest and confidence, while providing the groundwork for advanced study later on. The classroom context also enables the teacher to act as a mediator between the student and the world of English-language communications accessible outside of class time.

Learning a second language gives students a chance to construct a new network of references through which to interpret messages received from their environment. By comparing the structures of their mother tongue with those of the second language, they will gain a better understanding of the nature and basic principles of language as a medium of communication.

This program is a tool designed to teach English as a second language to elementary-school students in the French sector. For many of these children this will be their first acquaintance with English. In these circumstances, and considering the time allotted to this subject, the first step is to stimulate students' interest in learning English. Teachers must also help students become familiar with different aspects of second-language communication. To accomplish this, it is important that teachers enable students to acquire the confidence needed to sustain their efforts at understanding and expression, and that they keep in mind the students' individual abilities according to their development, experience and focuses of interest.

Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles

The study of English as a second language is based on the following guiding principles:

LEARNING IS TO BE ACQUIRED IN A SPIRIT OF CURIOSITY, OPENNESS TO THE WORLD AND BROADENING OF CULTURAL HORIZONS

Cultivating children's natural curiosity is a time-tested pedagogical principle. As they approach the study of English as a second language, a number of important resources are available to sustain their curiosity: classroom guests; various art forms, such as cinema, literature, comic strips and songs; technology, in particular game software and video cassettes; the media, including television programs, newspapers and magazines for children.

Knowledge of a second language is also a mark of personal and social enrichment. It opens doors to new environments and broadens our horizons. It is an important source of cultural growth, both in individuals and societies.

AN ACTIVE TEACHING/LEARNING APPROACH IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED

An introduction to English as a second language must elicit the interest, commitment and active participation of the students. To this end, students must be placed in situations where listening, reading, speaking and writing appeal to their sense of initiative and sustain their motivation. This is why, in the suggested activities, concrete situations are stressed, based on experiences accessible to the students, considering their level of intellectual and social development. Furthermore, learning content concerning the formal aspects of the language is to be introduced in the context of communication situations during which the students will be listening, reading, speaking or writing. In cases where students have difficulty understanding or transmitting messages, activities to support the acquisition of grammar may be integrated into the learning situation.

This program favours an approach in which skills and objectives are integrated in meaningful communication situations. Learning situations are therefore organized so as to lead toward a goal or logical conclusion, called a closure activity. This will enable students to make connections between the various skills they have acquired, so that no single skill is considered an isolated item of learning content.

On the other hand, to ensure that skills and objectives are mastered, the program stipulates that all terminal objectives are to be addressed repeatedly. Thus, every terminal objective must be covered at least six times during each year of the three-year cycle.

LEARNING IS TO BE ACQUIRED IN VARIED CONTEXTS OF COMMUNICATION AND EXPERIENCE

The program stresses the implementation of activities that will enable students to use English as a second language in a variety of communication situations and experiences. To do this it draws on a broad range of materials and topics.

The texts selected will provide an opportunity to extend students' knowledge of certain genres and to introduce new ones. For example, a comic strip may be introduced alongside an interview article from a magazine. The same principle applies to aural resources, where the student may produce an oral or written response after listening to a poem or a song. Different types of literary or practical texts may also be studied, such as adventure stories, fairy tales and legends, fables, and other means of communication such as posters and advertisements. The length of the text or message transmitted should not be an absolute criterion of selection. Sometimes a longer text can be easier to understand than a shorter one due to repetition of information, the use of simple vocabulary and the simplicity of sentence structure.

Students should also have an opportunity to explore diverse topics. They can draw on their own experience, engage their imagination and discuss themes such as their family, their friends, music, sports, the environment and space exploration.

Organization of the Program

GLOBAL OBJECTIVE

At the end of elementary school, students will be able to understand and produce simple messages in English in a limited number of everyday situations appropriate to their ages and areas of interest.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE - UNDERSTANDING

At the end of elementary school, students will be able to understand simple oral and written messages.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE - PRODUCTION

At the end of elementary school, students will be able to produce simple oral and written messages.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 1

Students will understand and produce simple messages concerning their personal experiences and those of people close to them.

6 components

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 2

Students will understand and transmit information on topics beyond their immediate environment.

3 components

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 3

Students will understand the meaning of a story and express this understanding orally and in writing.

4 components

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 4

Students will understand and transmit simple messages during activities relating primarily, but not exclusively, to their classroom experience.

6 components

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 5

Students will understand and produce simple messages in the context of social interaction.

4 components

DISTRIBUTION OF TERMINAL OBJECTIVE COMPONENTS

Each year of the second cycle of elementary school includes compulsory components. These form the minimum common core for each of these years. Some components belonging in a given year must be introduced in the curriculum of the years that precede it. Other components, which are compulsory for a given year, are subject to review in subsequent years. There is no restriction on the choice of components to be introduced or reviewed during a year. However, the learning acquired during any year must be maintained and consolidated through the course of the following years.

The table below illustrates the distribution of the components for each school year.

Terminal Objectives	Components	Grades		
		4	5	6
1 Students will understand and produce simple messages concerning their personal experiences and those of people close to them.	1.1 Introduction of themselves and others.	+	•	•
	1.2 Expression of interests: wants, preferences.	+	•	•
	1.3 Expression of capabilities.	+	•	•
	1.4 Description of themselves and others.	–	+	•
	1.5 Expression of feelings and intentions.	–	–	+
	1.6 Description of experiences.	–	–	+
2 Students will understand and transmit information on topics beyond their immediate environment.	2.1 Identification of a topic: person, animal, object, event, place.	+	•	•
	2.2 Short description of the topic: main features, facts and observations.	–	+	•
	2.3 Brief personal response to the topic: impressions, opinions, etc.	–	–	+
3 Students will understand the meaning of a story and express this understanding orally and in writing.	3.1 Identification of the important elements of a story: characters, plot, sequence of events.	+	•	•
	3.2 Description of the important elements of a story: characters, plot, sequence of events.	–	+	•
	3.3 Comparisons: between elements of the story and the student's personal experiences.	–	–	+
	3.4 Individual response to the story: feelings about and interest in the story; connection with memories and experiences.	–	–	+
4 Students will understand and transmit simple messages during activities relating primarily, but not exclusively, to their classroom experience.	4.1 Instructions and clarifications.	+	•	•
	4.2 Requests for help.	+	•	•
	4.3 Directions to a location.	–	+	•
	4.4 Expression of obligation and permission.	–	+	•
	4.5 Safety rules.	–	+	•
	4.6 Suggestions and invitations.	–	–	+
5 Students will understand and produce simple messages in the context of social interaction.	5.1 Introductions and greetings.	+	•	•
	5.2 Expressions of courtesy: thank-yous, apologies, etc.	–	+	•
	5.3 Requests for information and clarification.	–	+	•
	5.4 Idiomatic expressions.	–	–	+

- + This component is compulsory for the year indicated.
- This component can be reviewed during the year indicated.
- This component can be introduced during the year indicated.

General Outline of Terminal Objectives

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 1

Students will understand and produce simple messages concerning their personal experiences and those of people close to them.

Components

- 1.1 Introduction of themselves and others.
- 1.2 Expression of interests: wants, preferences.
- 1.3 Expression of capabilities.
- 1.4 Description of themselves and others.
- 1.5 Expression of feelings and intentions.
- 1.6 Description of experiences.

Scope of the terminal objective

To help students attain this objective, teachers will emphasize the experiences that students derive from the immediate environment in which they are developing: relationships with the people, objects and various locations of their daily life.

Students will therefore be invited to share these experiences as suggested by the components.

Learning may take the following forms:

- Points of view are exchanged in English in the presence of people in the child's immediate environment: other students, the teacher, other members of the school staff, classroom guests (parents, neighbours), etc.
- Students note down their comments and opinions, relate their experiences and express their feelings by various means, such as taking notes, recording on tape, keeping a personal journal, exchanging letters, etc.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 2

Students will be able to understand and transmit information on topics beyond their immediate environment.

Components

- 2.1 Identification of a topic: person, animal, object, event, place.
- 2.2 Short description of the topic: main features, facts and observations.
- 2.3 Brief personal response to the topic: impressions, opinions, etc.

Scope of the terminal objective

To help students attain this objective, teachers will encourage the students to broaden the scope of their observations and research by exploring new horizons. A wide range of topics may be introduced. The students will have access to printed and audio-visual resource materials which will enable them to obtain useful information on different topics.

Learning may take the following forms:

- The students exchange information among themselves.
- The students make choices with the help of the teacher.
- The students give an account of their observations and research, either orally or in writing, to one or more persons (other students, school personnel, parents, classroom guests).

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 3

Students will understand the meaning of a story and express this understanding orally and in writing.

Components

- 3.1 Identification of the important elements of a story: characters, plot, sequence of events.
- 3.2 Description of the important elements of a story: characters, plot, sequence of events.
- 3.3 Comparisons: between elements of the story and the student's personal experiences.
- 3.4 Individual response to the story: feelings about and interest in the story; connection with memories and experiences.

Scope of the terminal objective

To help students attain this objective, teachers will provide students with a rich linguistic environment and they will be introduced to English literature. They will be able to hear and read different types of stories, such as fairy tales and legends, short stories, adventure stories, comic strips and fables. Various media may be used, such as the printed word, audio recordings and video cassettes. Students' comprehension of stories can be enhanced by choosing illustrated texts written in a simple, straightforward style and corresponding to the students' focuses of interest.

Learning may take the following forms:

- Students read and listen to a complete story, rather than an excerpt.
- Students share the results of their reading and listening.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 4

Students will understand and transmit simple messages during activities relating primarily, but not exclusively, to their classroom experience.

Components

- 4.1 Instructions and clarifications.
- 4.2 Requests for help.
- 4.3 Directions to a location.
- 4.4 Expression of obligation and permission.
- 4.5 Safety rules.
- 4.6 Suggestions and invitations.

Scope of the terminal objective

To help students attain this objective, teachers will lead their students to understand and produce messages for the purpose of carrying out actions. Various kinds of illustrations (photos, slides, maps, drawings, etc.) may be used to facilitate the attainment of this objective.

Learning may take the following forms:

- The students specify the actions they wish to accomplish in order to attain a goal.
- The students accomplish the required actions.
- The students use the appropriate expressions to make others act or to explain their own actions to others.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVE 5

Students will understand and produce simple messages in the context of social interaction.

Components

- 5.1 Introductions and greetings.
- 5.2 Expressions of courtesy: thank-yous, apologies, etc.
- 5.3 Requests for information and clarification.
- 5.4 Idiomatic expressions.

Scope of the terminal objective

To help students attain this objective, teachers will familiarize students with ways of making contact with people in everyday life. Students will be taught to use simple expressions for making requests, giving correct information, asking for help when necessary or simply engaging in brief conversations with those around them.

In addition, students will become acquainted with certain popular expressions, such as: *How about that!*, *No kidding!*, *Give me a break!*, etc.

Learning may take the following forms.

- The students use forms of politeness in their daily exchange of points of view in the classroom.
- The students use role playing to simulate simple exchanges of points of view in social situations.

Weighting of Skills

Weighting of Skills

In the field of second-language teaching, a number of studies have confirmed the observation that emphasizing oral communication from the start is a crucial factor in learning the language. This is very demanding of the student, since verbal communication places the listener in a situation where it is impossible to control the rate and complexity of messages received. By contrast, in reading it is always possible to re-read sections of a text in order to fully understand the meaning. This indicates the importance of learning how to grasp the meaning of a message at the same time and speed as it is being transmitted. The importance of oral communication can also be explained by the fact that in the first stages of learning a second language students generally have more opportunities to engage in verbal exchanges than to communicate in writing. At a later stage, the study of written communication takes on greater importance.

In light of the principles stated above, the following table indicates the weighting of skills for each grade.

Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
UNDERSTANDING oral 60% written 10% \ / 70%	UNDERSTANDING oral 50% written 20% \ / 70%	UNDERSTANDING oral 40% written 20% \ / 60%
30% / \ 20% 10% oral written PRODUCTION	30% / \ 20% 10% oral written PRODUCTION	40% / \ 25% 15% oral written PRODUCTION

Outcome Profile

Outcome Profile

SKILLS EXPECTED COMPETENCIES

Listening	• THE STUDENTS SHOULD UNDERSTAND ENGLISH IN A LIMITED NUMBER OF EVERYDAY SITUATIONS. • The students should understand the main ideas and significant details of an oral text in English, making use of available help appropriate to the context. • The students should be able to understand messages spoken in English at a normal or slower than normal speed. • The students should be able to understand an oral text containing: - simple, colloquial, concrete and varied vocabulary - a limited quantity of information - recurring information.
Reading	• THE STUDENTS SHOULD UNDERSTAND TEXTS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH, INVOLVING A LIMITED NUMBER OF FAMILIAR SUBJECTS AND SITUATIONS FROM DAILY LIFE. • The students should understand the main ideas and significant details of a written text in English, making use of available help appropriate to the context. • The students should be able to understand a written text containing: - simple, colloquial, concrete and varied vocabulary - simple, compound or complex sentences in a limited number of examples - a limited quantity of information - recurring information.

SKILLS**EXPECTED COMPETENCIES****Speaking**

- **THE STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE ORALLY IN ENGLISH IN A LIMITED NUMBER OF EVERYDAY SITUATIONS:**
 - in relation to the context
 - independently
 - connecting the elements of the message together in a logical way
 - at an acceptable speed, despite inevitable hesitations and construction or pronunciation errors.
- The students should use a simple vocabulary and simple sentence structures to express themselves.
- The students should be able to engage in a conversation in English.
- The students should be able to compensate for communication difficulties (for example, with gestures or borrowings from their mother tongue).

Writing

- **THE STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO WRITE IN ENGLISH IN A LIMITED NUMBER OF EVERYDAY SITUATIONS:**
 - in relation to the context
 - independently
 - connecting together in a logical way the elements of the text they are writing in spite of errors of construction using a simple vocabulary and simple sentence structures using various reference materials (e.g., a dictionary)
- The students should be able to compensate for difficulties in writing (for example, with synonyms or borrowings from their mother tongue).

To help the students achieve the above outcome profile, they should be encouraged to adopt certain positive attitudes, including:

- confidence in their ability to express themselves in English
- determination to overcome their own hesitation to speak in English
- perseverance in their efforts to communicate in English
- the will to overcome the fear of making errors
- motivation to take advantage of opportunities they encounter to pursue their learning of English outside the school

Appendix

PROPOSALS FOR TOPICS TO BE APPROACHED WITH STUDENTS

The topics proposed in the list below (which are offered as suggestions only) should be approached in such a way as to engage the personal experience of the students. Putting the students at the centre of the learning situation allows them to express their own preferences and maintain their motivation.

My family
My friends
My ancestors
My neighbours
My school
My body and my health
My future
My projects
My models
My city, my village
Space
Music
Books
Television programs
Movies
Sports
Fashion