

The National Curriculum Standards for Grade 3 and Grade 4 in Elementary School  
Chapter 4 Foreign Language Activities

I. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To develop pupils' competencies that form the foundation of communication as follows through language activities such as listening and speaking in foreign languages while activating the Approaches in communication in foreign languages.

- (1) To develop the pupils' understanding of languages and cultures through various experiences by using foreign languages, notice the differences between Japanese language and foreign languages such as in sounds and become familiar with the sounds and basic expressions of foreign languages.
- (2) To cultivate the base for the ability to communicate their own thoughts and feelings by listening and speaking about familiar and simple matters in foreign languages.
- (3) To deepen the understanding of languages and the cultures in its background through foreign languages and cultivate the attitude of attempting to proactively communicate in foreign languages while giving consideration to someone they communicate with.

II. OBJECTIVES AND CONTENTS OF EACH LANGUAGE

English

1. Objectives

To develop the competencies specified in I. (1) and (2) in an integrated manner, through instruction that aims for the realization of the goals set in the three skill areas of listening, speaking [interaction] and speaking [presentation] specified below, and to develop the competencies specified in I. (3) through this process, based on the characteristics of learning English.

(1) Listening

- a. Listen to and understand simple words and phrases regarding themselves and their surroundings when spoken to slowly and clearly.
- b. Understand the meanings of basic expressions regarding familiar and simple matters when spoken to slowly and clearly.
- c. Recognize the (alphabet) letters by listening to the names of letters pronounced.

(2) Speaking [Interaction]

- a. Greet, thank and give simple instructions and respond to them by using basic expressions.
- b. Exchange their own thoughts and feelings regarding themselves and their surroundings by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions with gestures.
- c. Ask and answer questions about themselves, someone they communicate with and their surroundings by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions with support.

(3) Speaking [Presentation]

- a. Talk about their surroundings while showing the actual objects, etc. in front of people by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.
- b. Talk about themselves while showing the actual objects, etc. in front of people by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.
- c. Talk about their own thoughts and feelings regarding familiar and simple matters about daily life while showing the actual objects, etc. in front of people by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.

2. Contents

[Grade 3 and Grade 4]

[Knowledge and skills]

(1) Items related to the characteristics of English

Give instructions to enable pupils to acquire the following items through various experiences in language activities using English.

- a. Knowing the pleasure and value of proactively communicating by using languages.
- b. Understanding the languages and cultures of both Japan and foreign countries.
  - (a) Becoming familiar with the sounds and rhythms of English, knowing the differences from Japanese language and noticing the interest and richness of the language.
  - (b) Knowing the differences in lifestyles, customs and events, etc. between Japan and foreign countries and noticing the fact that there are diverse ways of thinking.
  - (c) Experiencing exchanges with people from different cultures and deepening understanding of the cultures, etc.

[Abilities to think, make decisions and express themselves]

- (2) Items related forming thoughts while organizing information, expressing themselves and communicating.

Give instructions to enable pupils to acquire the following items through setting specific tasks and expressing information and thoughts in accordance with the purposes, scenes and situations where communication takes place.

- a. Exchanging themselves and familiar and simple matters by using simple words and phrases and basic expressions while giving consideration to someone pupils communicate with.
  - b. Coming up with ways to ask and answer questions in order to communicate their own thoughts and feelings about familiar and simple matters.
- (3) Items related to language activities and language functions

- (i) Items related to language activities

Give instructions about the items specified in (2) by utilizing the items specified in (1), for example, through the following language activities.

- a. Listening

- (a) Activities to listen to brief talks about familiar and simple matters and largely understand their contents.
- (b) Activities to listen to simple words and phrases and basic expressions about their familiar people and their surroundings and match the phrases and expressions with illustrations and photographs, etc. representing them.
- (c) Activities to listen to the names of letters pronounced and match the readings with letters written in block letters.

- b. Speaking [Interaction]

- (a) Activities to exchange simple greetings with acquaintances, express gratitude, give simple instructions and make requests and respond to them.
- (b) Activities to exchange their own thoughts and feelings such as preferences and demands with gestures, regarding matters about themselves and their surroundings.
- (c) Activities to ask and answer simple questions about each other's likes and wants, etc.

c. Speaking [Presentation]

- (a) Activities to talk about the numbers and figures, etc. of surroundings while showing the actual objects, illustrations and photographs, etc. in front of people.
- (b) Activities to talk about their own likes and dislikes and the things they want, etc. while showing the actual objects, illustrations, and photographs, etc. in front of people.
- (c) Activities to talk about their own thoughts and feelings regarding familiar and simple matters in daily life such as times, days of the week and places, etc. while showing the actual objects, illustrations and photographs, etc. in front of people.

(ii) Items related to language functions

Pick up the language use situations and language functions mainly from the following items when engaging in language activities.

a. Examples of language use situations

- (a) Situations related to pupils' familiar lives
  - Life at home      • Learning and activities at school
  - Local events      • Children's play      etc.
- (b) Situations where typical expressions are often used
  - Greetings      • Self-introductions      • Shopping
  - Having meals      • Asking and giving directions      etc.

b. Examples of language functions

- (a) Making communication smooth
  - Greeting      • Making agreeable responses      etc.
- (b) Communicating feelings
  - Expressing gratitude      • Praising      etc.
- (c) Stating facts and information
  - Explaining      • Answering      etc.
- (d) Communicating thoughts and intentions
  - Offering      • Stating opinions      etc.
- (e) Encouraging someone to do something
  - Asking questions      • Requesting      • Ordering      etc.

### 3. Syllabus design and lesson delivery in English

- (1) In designing the syllabus, consideration should be given to the following while taking care to ensure the connections with the instructions in Grade 5 and Grade 6, junior high schools and high schools.
  - a. Anticipate the unity of contents and lessons such as units and aim for the realization of the proactive, interactive and authentic learning of pupils toward development of the competencies fostered in those contents and lessons. In working towards these goals, set specific tasks and aim for the enhancement of learning so that pupils carry out activities with an awareness of the communication purposes, scenes and situations while also activating the Approaches in communication using foreign languages, and utilize knowledge of English sounds, vocabulary, expressions, etc. in communication in the three skill areas.
  - b. Set goals for each grade properly and aim for the realization of the objectives of the foreign language activities through two grades.
  - c. Give instructions as necessary for understanding and practicing the items specified in 2 (1) when actually engaging in language activities in English such as exchanging each other's thoughts and feelings. Furthermore, give consideration to the fact that pupils are learning English for the first time and organize language activities through various experiences that value interactions with friends while using simple words and phrases and basic expressions.
  - d. Come up with ways to ensure that topics in the language activities matches the interests of the pupils, utilizes what the pupils learned in other subjects such as Japanese language, music and arts and crafts, etc. and is linked to what pupils do in school events, etc.
  - e. Deepen the pupils' understanding not only of the foreign languages and cultures, but also of Japanese language and culture through foreign language activities. The topics in the language activities should also be useful for cultivating their attitudes of increasing the interests in the culture of Japan and the culture in the background of English and attempting to deepen understanding of those cultures.
  - f. For pupils with disabilities etc., come up with instruction contents and instruction methods in accordance with the difficulties that arise in learning

activities in a systematic and institutional way.

- g. Enhance instruction forms, for example by obtaining the cooperation of native speakers of English and local residents fluent in English, etc. and come up with more effective instruction methods when teachers in charge of classes or teachers in charge of foreign language activities design the syllabus and conduct the classes.
- (2) Consideration should be given to the following items for teaching the contents specified in 2.
- a. Giving consideration to the developmental stages of the pupils, select appropriate expressions and set communication situations familiar to them when giving them opportunities to experience communication in English.
  - b. Treat letters as supplementary tools for oral communication, in effort not to give too much burden to pupils.
  - c. Since non-verbal communication is also an essential means of communication, focus on gestures, etc. and help pupils understand their functions.
  - d. Come up with learning styles (or activities) such as pair work, group work, etc. as needed so that pupils develop the abilities to ask questions to their friends and answer questions from them regarding familiar and simple matters. In working towards these goals, for pupils who have problems with communicating with other people, come up with instruction contents and instruction methods in accordance with the characteristics of the individual pupils.
  - e. Effectively utilize audio-visual teaching materials, computers, information and communications networks and teaching and learning devices, etc. to further increase the interests of the pupils, to streamline the instruction and to further enhance the language activities, in accordance with the competencies for pupils to acquire, the circumstances of the pupils and the contents of the teaching materials, etc.
  - f. Enable pupils to anticipate and reflect on the learning by clearly establishing purposes, scenes and situations where communication takes place and clearly specifying the competencies that should be developed through the language activities when engaging in instruction of each unit and in each lesson.

### III. SYLLABUS DESIGN AND LESSON DELIVERY

1. In foreign language activities, give instructions to have pupils deepen their understanding of the language and the culture in its background and in principle to use English when engaging in the language activities of listening and speaking using foreign languages.
2. Give proper instructions, in accordance with the characteristics of foreign language activities, regarding the contents specified in Chapter 3 Special Subject Morality, II. while also giving consideration to linkages to the Morality Period, etc., based on the objectives of moral education specified in Chapter 1 General Provisions, I. 2 (2).