Introduction

Introductory Guide for Teachers and Educational Managers
How can we prepare our students to succeed in a world that is changing fast? We see the increasing need to work together with people from around the world, to think creatively and solve problems, to analyse sources more critically, to communicate our views effectively, to maintain a positive mindset in an increasingly complex world. How can we support the development of these skills? In Cambridge, we have set out to support teachers in this challenging area.
The Cambridge Framework

Introduction to The Cambridge Framework for Life Competencies

There have been many initiatives to address the skills and competencies our students need for the 21st century – each relating to different contexts. At Cambridge we are responding to educators that have asked for a way to understand how all these different approaches to life competencies relate to English language programmes.

The Cambridge Framework sets out to have three dimensions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BREADTH</th>
<th>DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>DEPTH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Complete view of transferable skills within one system</td>
<td>• How the skills develop across stages of the learning journey</td>
<td>• Enough detail to guide teaching and assessment in practical ways</td>
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We have grouped the different competencies into six main areas.

Creative thinking  Critical thinking  Learning to Learn  Communication  Collaboration  Social Responsibilities

These are supported by three foundation layers that underpin the Framework: Emotional Development, Digital Literacy and Discipline Knowledge.
The Learning Journey

We have also started work on examining the different stages of the learning journey, and how these competencies vary across each stage.

The exact boundaries between each stage will vary between different countries and different contexts, as will the expectations of what learners at each stage will be able to do. This Framework sets out to provide a useful starting point for institutions and educationalists to use in identifying the most appropriate learning outcomes for their particular context.
## The Cambridge Framework for Life Competencies

### COMPETENCIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creative thinking</th>
<th>Participating in creative activities</th>
<th>Creating new content – from own ideas and other resources</th>
<th>Using new content to solve problems and make decisions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>Understanding and analysing links between ideas</td>
<td>Evaluating ideas, arguments and options</td>
<td>Synthesising ideas and information</td>
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<td>Learning to Learn</td>
<td>Practical skills for participating in learning</td>
<td>Taking control of own learning</td>
<td>Reflecting on and evaluating own learning success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Using appropriate language/register for context</td>
<td>Managing conversations</td>
<td>Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Taking personal responsibility for own contributions to a group task</td>
<td>Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others’ contributions</td>
<td>Managing the sharing of tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Responsibilities</td>
<td>Understanding personal responsibilities as part of a group and in society – including citizenship</td>
<td>Taking active roles including leadership</td>
<td>Understanding and describing own and others’ cultures</td>
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</table>

### FOUNDATIONAL LAYERS

- Emotional Development
- Digital Literacy
- Discipline Knowledge

[http://languageresearch.cambridge.org/cflc](http://languageresearch.cambridge.org/cflc)
What are ‘competencies’?

We call these ‘competencies’ rather than ‘skills’, because competencies are more than just skills. The competencies in this Framework are complex and require development in three areas:

Knowledge is what you need to know to do something well. Skill is the degree of mastery or fluency in using the competency; skill is what you get from practice. Attitudes refer to the disposition and mind-set you need to develop knowledge and skill in this area.

This approach is consistent with the definitions given by the European Union in their Recommendations on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning:

Competences are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes, where:

a) knowledge is composed of the facts and figures, concepts, ideas and theories which are already established and support the understanding of a certain area or subject;

b) skills are defined as the ability and capacity to carry out processes and use the existing knowledge to achieve results;

c) attitudes describe the disposition and mind-sets to act or react to ideas, persons or situations.

In this section, we have provided some examples of Can Do Statements which are descriptions of what learners can be expected to do for each competency by the end of that stage of the learning journey. These Can Do Statements will vary in their suitability for learners in different contexts, and so are provided as a starting point in the development of a curriculum, programme or assessment system.

The Can Do Statements at each level generally assume that the learners have developed the skills at a previous stage of learning, although this is not true of the Higher Education and At Work stages, which are treated as being in parallel. We have given a few examples below, but you can find a lot more in our Competency Booklets available at [http://languageresearch.cambridge.org/cflc](http://languageresearch.cambridge.org/cflc).

### STAGE OF LEARNING | CAN DO STATEMENT
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**CRITICAL THINKING**

**Understanding and analysing links between ideas**

**PRE-PRIMARY**
- Sorts and arranges things by shapes, size, colour, weight, texture and positions.
- Explores different materials and media and decides what to use.
- Matches objects, people, letters, pronunciations and words.
- Identifies the difference between puzzles, games, and toys.

**PRIMARY**
- Sorts and classifies objects and activities according to key features (e.g. types of animal or transport).
- Identifies characters, setting, plots and theme in a story.
- Compares different types of information.
- Explains why things happened (e.g. cause and effect).

**SECONDARY**
- Compares points and arguments from different sources.
- Distinguishes between main and supporting arguments.
- Identifies the basic structure of an argument.

**HE**
- Summarises key points in a text or an argument.
- Identifies unstated assumptions and biases in an argument.
- Contrasts different points of view on a specific topic.

**AT WORK**
- Identifies patterns in business and operational data.
- Summarises key points from a business-related report.
- Identifies assumptions in a proposal.

### COLLABORATION

**Taking personal responsibility for own contributions to a group task**

**PRE-PRIMARY**
- Takes turns in shared activities.
- Shares space and toys.
- Observes rules of games when playing with other children.
- Plays and works cooperatively with other children.

**PRIMARY**
- Participates actively in group and whole activities, such as games and songs.
- Takes part in group discussions.
- Participates in shared projects.
- Explains reasons for own suggestions in a simple way.

**SECONDARY**
- Follows the instructions for a task and alerts others when straying from them.
- Explains reasons for their suggestions and contributions.
- Take responsibility for completing tasks as part of a larger project.

**HE**
- Participates constructively in seminars/workshops.
- Takes the initiative to organise groups for social or study purposes.
- Is ready to question consensus within the group constructively.
- Directs peers to relevant resources, sources of information.

**AT WORK**
- Builds good working relationships with colleagues and external contacts.
- Directs colleagues to relevant resources, sources of information.
- Is ready to question consensus within the group constructively.
- Takes the initiative to lead on a project.
Life Competencies in ELT

These Life Competencies are already embedded into many of your English lessons. The purpose of the Framework is to help you approach this more systematically and effectively. Here are some examples of activities you may already be using to develop Life Competencies.

**11. MAKING THE NEWS**

**READING**

1. Tick (✓) the qualities you need to be a news journalist.
   - funny
   - intelligent
   - brave
   - confident
   - charming
   - talented
   - positive
   - active
   - warm
   - cheerful
   - serious
   - adventurous

2. **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. What other adjectives can you think of?

3. **SPEAKING** Would you like to be a journalist? Say why or why not.
   - I'd like to be a journalist because I like finding out things.
   - I wouldn't like to be a journalist because I'm not adventurous.

4. On April Fool's Day in many English-speaking countries, people play jokes on others. Journalists are usually serious, but sometimes they play jokes, too. Do you have a similar day in your country?

5. **Think, p103** Read and listen to the article. Which photo relates to each story? Write the dates of the stories on the pictures to match them.

6. Read the article again. Which story are these people talking about?
   1. 'I saw that. I think they were in the middle of making a nature programme.'
   2. 'What a great way to get people interested in your product.'
   3. 'They said the mistake happened because of a bad translation.'
   4. 'It definitely doesn’t come from a plant. I think it’s made with flour and water.'
   5. 'I think people believed the story because he was such an intelligent person.'

**OBJECTIVES**

- **FUNCTIONS:** reporting what someone has said; expressing feelings: anger
- **GRAMMAR:** reported statements; verb patterns: object + infinitive
- **VOCABULARY:** fun; more verbs with object + infinitive; expressions with make

**April Fool’s Day**

In 1957 the BBC news programme Panorama told its viewers that Swiss farmers were enjoying a really good year for their spaghetti crop. They showed a film of the farmers picking the pasta from their trees. Many people believed the story and some of them even phoned up the BBC to ask how they could grow their own spaghetti tree. The date, of course, was April 1st, or April Fool’s Day – the day when people in many countries across the world like to play jokes on each other.

April Fool’s Day seems to be very popular with journalists. They have the extremely important job of reporting the news to us. For 364 days a year they need to be serious. But for one day a year they allow themselves to forget this responsibility for a few minutes and have a bit of fun trying to fool their readers or viewers.

[Think, Level 2, Students Book p103]
SPEAKING TASK

Give a short presentation about an invention or discovery that has changed our lives.

1. Work alone. Make a list of inventions or discoveries that have changed our lives.
2. Choose one of the inventions and prepare an ideas map about it. Write questions on the diagram.
3. Work with a partner. Discuss your research questions and help each other answer the questions on the ideas maps.
4. Work with a partner. Take turns to practise giving your presentation.
5. Give each other feedback using the questions below.
   1. Was the presentation clearly organized and interesting?
   2. Was there a clear description of the invention/discovery?
   3. Were there examples of how the invention/discovery has changed our lives?
6. Work in small groups. Take turns to give your presentations. Discuss which one of your inventions has had the biggest influence on our lives.

TASK CHECKLIST

- Did you use phrases with make correctly?
- Did you use passive and active forms correctly?
- Did you outline the topic clearly?
- Did you explain clearly how something is used?
Going forward

Applications of the Framework

How can the Framework be used to improve English language programmes?

**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Use descriptors of component competencies at each learning stage to develop Curriculum Learning Outcomes

**LEARNING MATERIALS**

Use descriptors to design suitable learning activities

**TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**

Develop awareness of the component skills that learners should be developing at each stage of learning

**EVALUATION**

Develop appropriate tasks and record-keeping to monitor success in developing Life Competencies

Validation

Cambridge is working on the validation of the Framework, setting up a number of research projects to examine the appropriacy of the proposed component competencies and their descriptors. If you would like to get involved with these validation projects, contact languageresearch@cambridge.org
Further reading


Council of the European Union, Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, 5464/18 EDUC 14 JEUN 4 SOC 22 EMPL 18 + ADD 1, 2018


Most Likely To Succeed - http://www.tonywagner.com/1933


Next Generation: ‘MyWays’ http://nextgenlearning.org/myways


University of Cambridge Primary School Learning skills and Computing learning outcomes, Available at http://universityprimaryschool.org.uk/


You can find information about the other competencies in The Cambridge Framework for Life Competencies at [http://languageresearch.cambridge.org/cflc](http://languageresearch.cambridge.org/cflc)

- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Creative Thinking
- ✓ Critical Thinking
- ✓ Emotional Development
- ✓ Learning to Learn
- ✓ Social Responsibilities