



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

# The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework

## Communication

**Introductory Guide**  
for Teachers and  
Educational Managers

Better  
Learning

# Why teach Life Competencies?

Our world is changing fast and we need to prepare our students with the skills and experiences that go beyond simply learning an additional language.

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, and to maintain a positive mindset in an increasingly complex world.

We understand that the engaging and collaborative nature of the language classroom is the perfect place to develop and embed these key qualities and the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework supports teachers in this challenging area.

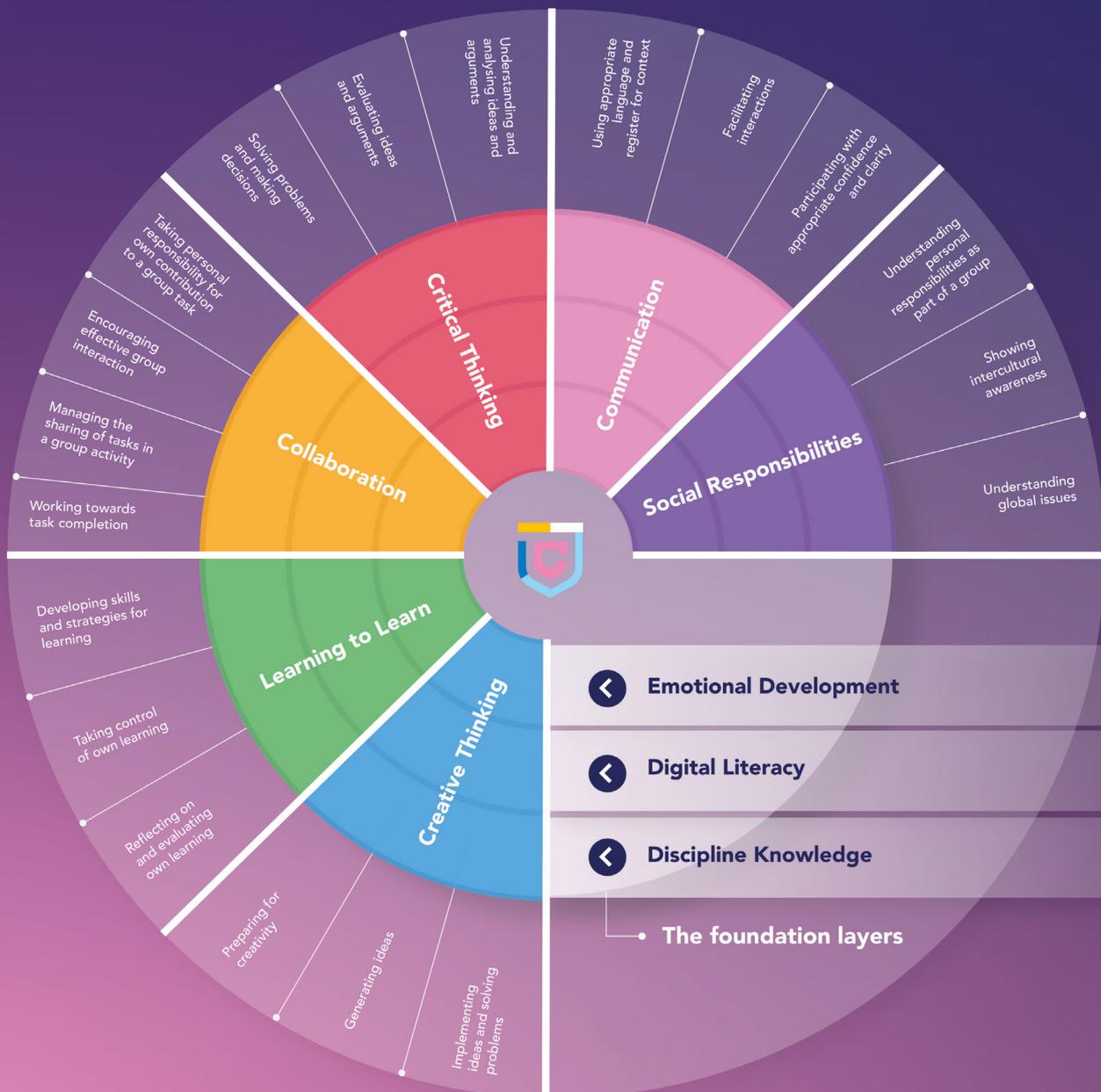


## Cambridge Life Competencies

A framework to develop skills for life



Hear from our experts



# What is the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework?

The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework has been created in response to educators who have asked for a way to understand how life skills, or 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, can be integrated into English language programmes. It is made up of six **Competencies** that describe how these essential skills develop and vary across different stages of education, as learners grow and change.

<b>CREATIVE THINKING</b>	Learners actively participate in creative activities, generate new ideas and use them to solve problems.
<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	Learners identify patterns and relationships, evaluate ideas and use these skills to solve problems.
<b>LEARNING TO LEARN</b>	Learners develop practical skills to support and take control of their learning and reflect on their own progress.
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	Learners choose the most appropriate language to use in different situations, manage conversations effectively and express themselves clearly and confidently.
<b>COLLABORATION</b>	Learners work well together in groups through actively taking part in group activities, listening to others, sharing tasks and finding solutions to problems.
<b>SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	Learners recognise and describe different roles and responsibilities in a variety of groups and understand cultural and global issues.
<b>EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	Learners describe and manage emotions and develop positive relationships with others.

## The Learning Journey

The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework supports learners at all stages of their learning journey, from very young pre-primary learners right through to adults in education and at work. The framework maps out how learner behaviours typically found within each competency can change and develop as learners encounter new situations and circumstances in their lives, both within and beyond the classroom.

The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework allows us to support learners throughout their education and into the careers of the future.



# Understanding the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework

The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework is made up of six **Competencies** – Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Learning to Learn, Communication, Collaboration and Social Responsibilities. Each broad competency is broken down into **Core Areas** that describe these competencies in more detail. These are then analysed further into **Components** that, along with example **Can Do Statements**, describe the observable behaviours that learners are likely to be able to demonstrate by the end of each stage of learning if they have had the opportunity to develop in these areas.



Linked to the competencies are the three foundation layers of the framework – Emotional Development, Digital Literacy and Discipline Knowledge. Development of skills in these foundation layers underpins all other competencies.

Along with this structured breakdown, we provide **example language** that learners may use to express the actions and behaviours found in each of the Core Areas at each stage of learning. These have been informed by both our Functional Language Phrase Bank, a collection of spoken data from expert speakers of English from children to adults, and input from experienced ELT practitioners from around the world. See this example for one Core Area within Communication at the Primary stage:

COMPETENCY	CORE AREAS	COMPONENTS	EXAMPLE CAN DO STATEMENTS	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE
COMMUNICATION	Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity	Structuring spoken and written texts effectively	Uses connectors to add additional points.	Also...
		Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency	Tells a story or describes something clearly.	My story is...

By clearly defining these areas of development in a structured and detailed way, we can ensure that our teaching and learning materials take a systematic approach to delivering and developing these skills in our learners, as they progress. This means that teachers can be assured that our resources bring out the best in their students, without creating extra work.

The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework is an ongoing project, evolving through stages of validation and teacher feedback. Go to [cambridge.org/clcf](https://cambridge.org/clcf) to see how you can get involved.

# What is **Communication** ?

Communication is an essential professional life skill, enabling us to share information and ideas, as well as express feelings and arguments (Cenere et al., 2015). It is also an active process influenced by the complexities of human behaviour in which elements such as non-verbal behaviour and individual styles of interpreting and ascribing meaning to events have significant influence. Mastering effective communication is more than just mastering the core language resources of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. It's about using those resources for the desired effect – whether that is persuading someone of your argument, apologising for a mistake, or making friends.

We have identified three **Core Areas** within Communication:



- **Using appropriate language and register for context** refers to a learner's understanding that there are formal, semi-formal and informal situations which require them to vary their language and expressions and adapt their communication style. Learners can use language for effect by employing a variety of language and rhetorical devices, for example, to be more persuasive in an argument, to engage and catch attention or to add emphasis or humour. It also refers to learners' awareness of differences in communication styles across cultures.
- **Facilitating interactions** is related to a learner's ability to converse with others effectively and efficiently by knowing how to initiate, maintain and end conversations appropriately. Learners are aware of and use key communication strategies that can help them convey their own messages as well as support others in communicating successfully.
- **Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity** refers to a learner's ability to communicate effectively with appropriate fluency, confidence and pace. This may include using appropriate tonal and structural variation, facial expression and eye contact as well as an ability to structure content to create coherent and cohesive texts.

Within these Core Areas we break things down further, defining the **Components** that make up each Core Area:

COMMUNICATION	<b>Using appropriate language and register for context</b>	Using language appropriate for the situation
		Using a variety of language and communication strategies to achieve a desired effect
		Adapting language use according to different cultures and social groups
	<b>Facilitating interactions</b>	Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations
		Using strategies for overcoming language gaps and communication breakdowns
	<b>Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity</b>	Structuring spoken and written texts effectively
		Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency

# Communication

## across the learning journey

Core Areas may be realised in different ways across the different stages of learning. In order to demonstrate this, each Core Area and Component is contextualised by an example Can Do Statement. This illustrates what kinds of behaviour students who are competent in this area might display by the end of each stage of learning. These example Can Do Statements can be used as a starting point in the development of a curriculum, programme or assessment system and will vary in their suitability for learners in different contexts. The example language is provided for teachers to consider what kind of language they could encourage their students to use in these kinds of tasks.

### PRE-PRIMARY

CORE AREAS	COMPONENTS	EXAMPLE CAN DO STATEMENTS	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE
<b>Using appropriate language and register for context</b>	Using language appropriate for the situation	Uses simple, polite forms of greetings, introductions and farewells.	Hello / Hi / Hey.
	Using a variety of language and communication strategies to achieve a desired effect	Changes sound levels and pitch of voice when doing drama to communicate different emotions.	
	Adapting language use according to different cultures and social groups	Adjusts language for playing different roles (e.g. a teacher, an animal or a character from a story).	[A gold star for you!/I'm a very hungry lion!].
<b>Facilitating interactions</b>	Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations	Takes turns when speaking.	And you?
	Using strategies for overcoming language gaps and communication breakdowns	Uses basic communication strategies, such as asking for repetition.	Pardon?
<b>Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity</b>	Structuring spoken and written texts effectively	Uses simple connectors to link groups of words.	...and/but...
	Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency	Asks and answers simple questions with confidence.	What's your name? / It's...

## PRIMARY

CORE AREAS	COMPONENTS	EXAMPLE CAN DO STATEMENTS	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE
<b>Using appropriate language and register for context</b>	Using language appropriate for the situation	Responds appropriately to invitations, suggestions, apologies, etc.	Good idea!
	Using a variety of language and communication strategies to achieve a desired effect	Uses intonation and gesture to communicate different emotions during a drama or role-play.	I'm [a bit / really / so] sad.
	Adapting language use according to different cultures and social groups	Adapts language according to the social group (e.g. talking with teachers at school vs parents at home).	Excuse me, Mr/Mrs/Miss/ Ms...
<b>Facilitating interactions</b>	Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations	Interrupts others politely.	Sorry,...
	Using strategies for overcoming language gaps and communication breakdowns	Tries to use alternative words or expressions if they are not understood.	I mean...
<b>Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity</b>	Structuring spoken and written texts effectively	Uses connectors to add additional points.	Also...
	Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency	Tells a story or describes something clearly.	My story is...

## SECONDARY

CORE AREAS	COMPONENTS	EXAMPLE CAN DO STATEMENTS	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE
<b>Using appropriate language and register for context</b>	Using language appropriate for the situation	Uses appropriate forms of address, greetings and farewells.	How are you? / How are you doing? / How's it going? / What's up?
	Using a variety of language and communication strategies to achieve a desired effect	Uses language for emphasis (e.g. exaggerations or cleft sentences).	I've got a million things to do!
	Adapting language use according to different cultures and social groups	Demonstrates understanding of which topics are appropriate for conversation in different contexts.	I guess you could say this to [a friend / an older person / someone you don't know].

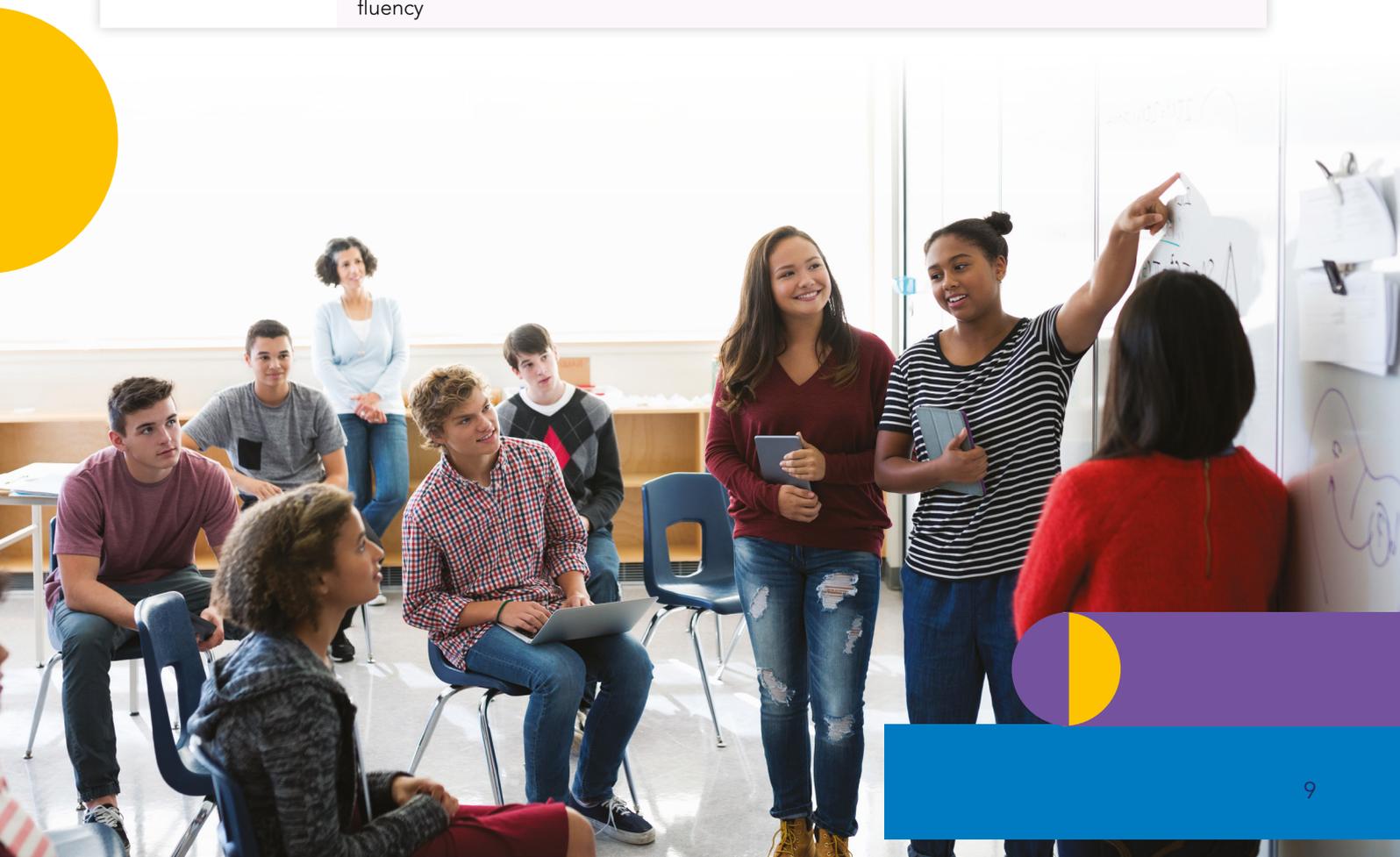
<b>Facilitating interactions</b>	Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations	Uses simple techniques to start a conversation	Hi! Long time, no see!
	Using strategies for overcoming language gaps and communication breakdowns	Guesses or coins a 'new' item of language based on existing knowledge.	Can you say [coined word] in English?
<b>Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity</b>	Structuring spoken and written texts effectively	Develops a clear description or narrative with a logical sequence of points.	When... / After... / Before...
	Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency	Uses facial expressions and eye contact appropriately to support verbal communication.	

## HIGHER EDUCATION

CORE AREAS	COMPONENTS	EXAMPLE CAN DO STATEMENTS	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE
<b>Using appropriate language and register for context</b>	Using language appropriate for the situation	Appropriately expresses a point of view.	Personally, ...
	Using a variety of language and communication strategies to achieve a desired effect	Draws on a range of discourse functions (e.g. questions, commands) to gain others' attention.	Can you guess what happened?
	Adapting language use according to different cultures and social groups	Uses a formal, semi-formal or informal register appropriate to the person they are communicating with.	Excuse me / Pardon? / Sorry? / What?
<b>Facilitating interactions</b>	Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations	Changes the topic of conversation in an appropriate way.	On another note...
	Using strategies for overcoming language gaps and communication breakdowns	Intervenes when it appears that there is a misunderstanding in a conversation or discussion.	Hang on. I think there's been a misunderstanding.
<b>Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity</b>	Structuring spoken and written texts effectively	Organises spoken and written text logically and thematically.	Firstly,... / Secondly,... / Finally,...
	Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency	Speaks at a steady pace when giving a presentation.	

## AT WORK

CORE AREAS	COMPONENTS	EXAMPLE CAN DO STATEMENTS	EXAMPLE LANGUAGE
<b>Using appropriate language and register for context</b>	Using language appropriate for the situation	Appropriately expresses a point of view.	To me, it's a matter of...
	Using a variety of language and communication strategies to achieve a desired effect	Varies sentence patterns to achieve effect when speaking or writing.	Something [I enjoy] is... / I enjoy...
	Adapting language use according to different cultures and social groups	Communicates effectively with people from another culture, aware of differences in communication styles.	Hold on a sec! / Sorry, can we just pause for a second?
<b>Facilitating interactions</b>	Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations	Interrupts a colleague appropriately in a meeting when necessary.	Could I just add something?
	Using strategies for overcoming language gaps and communication breakdowns	Paraphrases or summarises what others have said to check comprehension.	So, just to [be sure / clarify], you mean...?
<b>Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity</b>	Structuring spoken and written texts effectively	Makes use of a wide range of cohesive devices to support the structure of their text.	To begin,... / Furthermore,... / In summary,...
	Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency	Chooses a presentation style that is suited to their audience.	First, let me set the scene.



# Communication

## in the classroom

In an increasingly interconnected world, communication is an essential skill that enables us to get our ideas, needs and feelings across to others in meaningful, useful ways. It allows us to access information, opportunities and develop relationships. In the language classroom, learners need extensive practice and feedback in order to use new language confidently and fluently. This is often facilitated through productive, communicative activities like asking and answering drills, role-plays and the multitude of activities that require learners to engage with one another, in order to get or share information. Due to their communicative nature, these activities also present an opportunity to work with, and develop, communication competencies.

Learners reach for communication strategies during many classroom activities because of an inherent need for them. Not having these strategies to draw upon may result in learners hitting communicative blocks more frequently and being less able to benefit from time spent in the classroom. Communication strategies have a broad range of benefits for language learners within the classroom and beyond. For example, being able to continue with a speaking task despite not knowing key vocabulary, avoid misunderstandings by checking what has been said, or tell more engaging stories.

Learners and teachers benefit from developed communication skills by being able to:

- express themselves appropriately and enable a positive, productive learning environment.
- collaborate more effectively with others.
- take more responsibility for their learning, articulate their needs, and access information and support.
- engage in and benefit more from communicative language practice activities.
- experience increased motivation as a result of success in communicative activities.

### Suggestions for classroom practice

The ideas presented here are intended as a general indication of the types of activity that might develop this competency in the classroom, and are not a definitive list.

#### GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

Communication skills are so inherently embedded within language teaching and learning; the question is not so much whether they have a place in the language classroom, but rather, the extent and ways in which teachers provide an overt focus on them.

##### *Familiarisation with communication strategies*

It should be noted that before spending significant amounts of time practising particular communicative strategies within classroom activities, it is helpful for learners to understand what these strategies are. This understanding is important as it informs and supports subsequent attempts to use them. It can help learners become more able to independently practise and reflect on their performance – rather than relying on teacher feedback.

##### *Allowing time*

Once a strategy is established (what it involves, its potential benefits) and practised, learners will be better placed to use it in later lessons, with increasing independence. This is a key point; time and effort may need to be invested in developing learner recognition of communicative strategies, which can initially distract from other teaching and learning aims.

##### *Including communication skills in everyday practice*

It is important to note that existing learning activities and procedures can be adapted to accommodate the development of communication skills. This is an approach and a process; one that needs to be incorporated within communicative activities, with specific strategies revisited, honed and built upon; doing so leaves learners better equipped for success in both the language classroom and the real world

## PRIMARY

Learners at this age tend to be more communicative generally – they can be confident and motivated to speak – but often lack the skills to work more effectively together in groups. Raising learners' awareness of effective communication strategies, and engaging in tasks that promote these skills, are key to supporting young learners in this area. Young learners can be introduced explicitly to these communication strategies, as outlined in the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework. This could involve useful language and phrases for different contexts.

### Ground rules

An example is setting some 'ground rules' for classroom communication amongst peers or between learners and teachers, such as: own "I am..." verse using the text as a model.

#### **Ground rules for classroom communication**

1. *Speak clearly*
2. *Listen carefully*
3. *Ask questions*
4. *Show you're interested – nod, smile, keep eye-contact*
5. *Say if you don't understand something – use phrases like:*
  - a. *Sorry, could you please repeat that?*
  - b. *I'm sorry, I don't understand. Could you explain, please?*
  - c. *Could you speak more slowly/loudly, please?*
6. *Wait for your turn to speak*

These 'ground rules' can be made more meaningful to learners if they are decided together as a whole class.

### Storytelling

For promoting communication in the classroom, storytelling is a useful method that can be exploited in numerous ways. For example, introducing young learners to greetings, making polite requests or asking for permission. The context provided by a well-chosen story can help convey the meaning of useful phrases. Further questions can establish the situations in which they are used, supporting the child's developing awareness of language function and register.

Primary learners could also practise retelling the story to develop their communication skills. By adding a self- and peer-assessment element to this activity, learners are more motivated to retell the story accurately and clearly. This type of assessment can also help to develop receptive skills and learner independence. The success of this approach depends upon the establishment of clear, appropriate and achievable success criteria and the ability to review learner output. The ability to record and listen back to their answers using digital tools (e.g. tablets) can support this.

#### ➤ **Over to you...**

1. Choose one of the example activities in this section and try it out with your class.
  - When planning the activity, you may find the 'General suggestions' guidance above helpful.
  - Following the activity, reflect on what worked well and what could be improved next time, particularly focusing on the extent to which learners were able to develop their communication skills.
2. Using your course book or other materials, choose a few activities that you may be using in your classes in the next week or so. Consider how you could adapt these activities to have a greater focus on communication skills.

## SECONDARY

Motivation is a key factor for engaging learners in communicative activities at this age, and it will be important for activities to have a clear communicative purpose and include topics that are of interest to them. One way of doing this is to create situations in which learners can be successful.

### *Recognising and praising good learner-generated models*

Teachers should monitor carefully during communicative tasks, in order to pick up on good learner-generated models which can be acknowledged and shared to the benefit of the broader class. In addition, teachers can highlight examples of unprompted effective communication strategy use in the classroom – these are often both meaningful and memorable for learners. However, care should be taken with teens who may be more self-conscious.

For example, in a discussion about holidays, a learner who is observed to be actively listening and developing conversation with a classmate by asking further questions about their trip could be praised by the teacher. The experience could then be discussed (use questions such as ‘What did they find out?’, ‘Was it interesting?’), shared with the class and extended to a whole class activity.

### *Noticing communication strategies*

Learners should be encouraged to notice communication strategies used in a variety of texts as a way of developing them in their own speaking and writing. Ideally teachers should choose texts that contain multiple examples of the strategy being focused on. They should ensure the texts are appropriate for the learners’ age, interests and language level so learners can focus on the strategy rather than struggling with trying to understand meaning. Here is an example:

- Learners work towards an understanding of appropriate forms of address and salutations in emails by analysing a selection of models. This analysis could involve reading tasks that focus on the relationship between writer and recipient, the email’s purpose and the phrases used.
- Learners then write their own emails based on what they have learnt from the models.



## Using recordings to highlight progress

A motivating sense of progress can be provided by encouraging learners to record themselves (if comfortable doing so) during tasks. Learners could be asked to speak about a topic, for example, their hobby, for a particular length of time with suitable fluency, using fillers to reduce excessive pausing. Learners record themselves using a device (e.g. a smartphone), listen back and self-assess. After self-assessing their performance, teachers could get learners to identify areas of focus before repeating the process. Finally, they prompt learners to reflect on their performance with questions such as the following:

1. What were you happy with?
2. What difficulties did you face?
3. How did you overcome these?

As an extension, learners could then re-record themselves to build on weaker areas. Learners could also engage in peer-assessment based on the recordings. Encouraging learners to share and offer each other advice provides the basis for further speaking and language practice while establishing a supportive learning environment.

### ➤ Over to you...

1. Choose one of the example activities in this section and try it out with your class.
  - When planning the activity, you may find the 'General suggestions' guidance above helpful.
  - Following the activity, reflect on what worked well and what could be improved next time, particularly focusing on the extent to which learners were able to develop their communication skills.
2. Using your course book or other materials, choose a few activities that you may be using in your classes in the next week or so. Consider how you could adapt these activities to have a greater focus on communication skills.





## ADULT

Adults often have a high level of communicative competence in their first language and experience of communicating effectively in a broad range of situations, and therefore bring this experience with them to the language classroom. This can mean that they may have more to learn from one another.

### *Sharing effective communication strategies*

By carefully monitoring as learners participate in communicative tasks, e.g. in a role-play of a meeting, the teacher may be able to identify and facilitate the sharing of effective communication strategies, e.g. ways of making suggestions and offering opinions, among learners.

### *Noticing communication strategies*

Teachers should help learners to notice communication strategies being used in context. Potentially useful models exist wherever there is communication, so there should be no shortage of choice. Potential sources include:

- Course book texts and recordings
- Films and television
- Podcasts, radio and audio books
- Real-world audio recordings
- Stories and books (digital or print)
- Naturally occurring learner interaction
- The teacher

Useful communication strategies can be highlighted with effective questioning. For example, a teacher helping adults on an English-for-work course may pause a recording of an interview to ask about the impression given by an interviewee who is looking downwards and avoiding eye contact with an interviewer (being prepared to highlight cultural differences). Additionally, teachers can ask questions or design tasks that lead learners to notice the strategy, the way it is used and its effect.



### *Providing useful phrases and language structures*

Teachers should provide any phrases or language structures needed to help learners manage conversations. This language can be identified when first modelled, practised and then displayed (on the board or on worksheets – see example below), so it can be referred to, if necessary, during an activity. As learners will naturally stop referring to it when they no longer need to, this is a simple way of ensuring individual learners receive the levels of support and challenge they need.

Language for signposting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firstly,</li><li>• First of all,</li><li>• Secondly,</li><li>• Furthermore,</li><li>• Another point is ...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It's important to remember that ...</li><li>• It is well known that ...</li><li>• In short,</li><li>• Finally,</li><li>• To summarise,</li><li>• In conclusion,</li></ul>

### *Encouraging the use of communication strategies*

Teachers should encourage the continued use of communication strategies by directing praise and encouragement towards learners' attempts to use them (even if unsuccessful). They should also be specific in their praise and use this as an opportunity to reinforce the benefits and features of specific strategies, eliciting these from learners where possible and appropriate.

#### **➤ Over to you...**

1. Choose one of the example activities in this section and try it out with your class.
  - When planning the activity, you may find the 'General suggestions' guidance above helpful.
  - Following the activity, reflect on what worked well and what could be improved next time, particularly focusing on the extent to which learners were able to develop their communication skills.
2. Using your course book or other materials, choose a few activities that you may be using in your classes in the next week or so. Consider how you could adapt these activities to have a greater focus on communication skills.

# Communication

## in learning materials

PRIMARY

Here, students practise communication skills by structuring texts using connectors (exercise 2). This helps them to use language to express thought processes with clarity. By working in a group (see 'mission' box), students need to use communication strategies to facilitate interactions.

### Language practice 2

5

#### 1 Listen and choose the correct picture.

1 What clothes do George and Grandpa talk about?



2 What have George and his parents decided to do tomorrow?



#### Grammar spotlight

The weather's really cold, **so** we have to wear warm clothes.  
Today we couldn't go skiing **because** it was foggy.

#### 2 Match to make correct sentences. Write the sentences.

- |                                      |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 There was a bad storm, ...         | a because there was a lot of snow. |
| 2 They were wearing warm clothes ... | b so we could go sledging.         |
| 3 It snowed heavily, ...             | c so we couldn't play in the park. |
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### mission STAGE 2

#### Draw a map with weather symbols.

- In groups, draw a map of the country you chose.
- Draw the weather symbols on your map for a day in winter.

The weather in the north is foggy and cold because it's near the sea.

It's snowy in the east because there are mountains.

My  
mission  
diary  
Activity Book  
page 56

Conjunctions: so and because

61

## SECONDARY

Here, students practise communication skills by using language appropriate for a specific situation (exercise 4). They are learning about adapting language according to the context, such as using politeness strategies in agreeing/disagreeing (exercise 6), and practising implementing those strategies in a group discussion (see 'speaking task').

### WRITING

#### A FORMAL EMAIL

**1** Lots of schools and colleges offer evening and weekend courses to the public. Have you ever done a course in your free time? What did you study? What would you like to learn: a sport, a musical skill or an art or craft?

**2** Look at this advertisement and email and tick the things that Anna wants to know.

- 1 how much the course costs \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 if the next course is fully booked \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 if she needs to bring her own camera \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 when the course will take place \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 if you need to have experience to do the course \_\_\_\_\_

**Queenswood Hall**

## Photography Courses

Learn the latest photography techniques from the experts!

Every weekend during July and August

For more information contact  
Jenny Bolton  
[jbolton@qhpc.co.uk](mailto:jbolton@qhpc.co.uk)

£250  
including  
accommodation

Dear Ms Bolton,

I am writing to enquire about the photography courses at Queenswood Hall.

Please could you tell me if all the equipment is provided? I'd also like to know if the courses are suitable for beginners.

Finally, please could you let me know if there are still places available on next weekend's course?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,  
Anna Rossi

**3** Look at Anna's email again and find the phrases which she uses to:

- 1 start the email with a formal greeting
- 2 explain her reason for writing
- 3 ask for information
- 4 ask for additional information
- 5 end the email

**4** Look at these pairs of sentences. Decide which sentence in each pair sounds more polite and is more suitable for formal conversations, letters and emails.

- 1 **a** Is all the equipment provided?  
**b** I'd like to know if all the equipment is provided.
- 2 **a** How much does the course cost?  
**b** Please tell me how much the course costs.
- 3 **a** When will the course take place?  
**b** Please could you let me know when the course takes place?

**5** Change these direct questions into indirect questions.

- 1 When does the course start?  
I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Is accommodation provided?  
Please could you tell \_\_\_\_\_?
- 3 Can under-18s do the course?  
I'd also like to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 How should I pay for the course?  
Please let me \_\_\_\_\_.

**6** Look at this advert and notes. Write an email to Mr Collins asking him for the information in the notes.

## ROCK VALLEY RACE TRACK

**LEARN TO DRIVE A RACING CAR!**

Half-day and full-day driving courses with qualified professional instructors

No experience needed

For more details contact Steve Collins  
[stevec@rockvalley.co.uk](mailto:stevec@rockvalley.co.uk)

How can I get there?

What are the prices?

Is there a minimum age for students?

Here, students practise communication skills by using language appropriate for a specific situation (exercise 4). They are learning about adapting language according to the context, such as using politeness strategies in agreeing/disagreeing (exercise 6), and practising implementing those strategies in a group discussion (see 'speaking task').

- 4 Complete the dialogue with the suggestion sentences and questions from Exercise 3. Try not to use the same expression more than once.

**Man:** This festival is fantastic. What do you want to do first?

**Woman:** <sup>(1)</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ we go to the food tent? I'd like to get some pizza.

**Man:** OK. Good idea. After that <sup>(2)</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ visiting the art exhibition? I'd like to see some of the paintings.

**Woman:** Yeah, that sounds good. Then we <sup>(3)</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ go and do a singing workshop.

**Man:** Oh, I'm not sure that's a good idea. I'm a terrible singer!

**Woman:** OK, well <sup>(4)</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ listening to the talk on poetry instead?

**Man:** Yeah, I'd love to! That's a great idea!

**Woman:** What <sup>(5)</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ we do after that?

**Man:** Well, by then we will probably need to go home!

**Woman:** Hmm, I might want to see other things. How about we look at the gift shop after?

**Man:** Sure! That sounds good.

- 5 Work with a partner. Read the dialogue aloud. Did you choose the same phrases?

## AGREEING AND DISAGREEING

SKILLS

When responding to suggestions it is important to be polite, whether you agree or disagree with the suggestion. When people reply with *yes*, it is rarely on its own. When people reply with *no*, they often add other words to make the meaning softer.

**Yes:** *That's a great idea!*    **No:** *I'm not sure that's a good idea.*

- 6 Look at the dialogue in Exercise 4. Underline the two ways to say "no" and highlight the five ways to say "yes" to the suggestions.

## SPEAKING TASK

PRISM<sup>Online</sup>  
Workbook

Choose a group of events from a festival and persuade your group to go to them.

### PREPARE

- 1 Look at the events in Exercise 1 and your table in Exercise 2 in Critical Thinking. Add any new information to your table.

# Further Reading

Here are a number of books or articles that you could also look at:

Canale, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 2–27). London: Longman.

Cenere, P., Gill, R., Lawson, C., & Lewis, M. (2015). *Communication skills for business professionals*. Victoria, Australia: Cambridge University Press.

Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1995). Communicative competence: A pedagogically motivated model with content specifications. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 6(2), 5-35.

Council of Europe. (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Available at [www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home](http://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/home)

Dörnyei, Z. (1995). On the teachability of communication strategies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 55-85.

Dörnyei, Z., & Scott, M. L. (1997). Communication strategies in a second language: Definitions and taxonomies. *Language Learning*, 47(1), 173–210.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1973). *Explorations in the functions of language*. London: Edward Arnold.

Hymes, D. (1972). Models of the interaction of language and social life. In J. J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Kellerman, E. (1991). Compensatory strategies in second language research: A critique, a revision, and some (non-) implications for the classroom, in R. Phillipson, E. Kellerman, L. Selinker, M. Sharwood Smith, & M. Swain (Eds.), *Foreign/second language pedagogy research: A commemorative volume for Claus Færch*, (Multilingual matters). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

**Laura and Olivia**  
Language Research Team,  
Cambridge University Press





# Cambridge Life Competencies

A framework to develop skills for life

You can find information about the other competencies in the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework at [cambridge.org/clcf](https://cambridge.org/clcf)

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