



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

Directorate of National Examinations

Subject: English Language – Grade 3

Test Specifications

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Kingdom of Bahrain

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The details in this document are correct at the time of publishing, but may be subject to change as a result of ongoing efforts to ensure the quality of the examination product. Please ensure you refer only to the most current version.

Construct

Test Purpose

To provide a reporting mechanism for schools and the Ministry of Education on the English language proficiency of pupils at the end of Cycle 1 in the Bahraini English Language National Curriculum, with reference to the English language learning goals and international level of proficiency described in the curriculum.

As a general principle, we believe grammar, or language knowledge, is integral to performance in a foreign language and is a key assessment aim at this level. In particular, students will require sufficient knowledge of language, both lexical and structural, to enable them to respond in an informed way to the tasks on the Writing, Reading and Listening Papers. While the emphasis in every task will be on meaning and communication, students who have knowledge of how language is used to achieve effect or express meaning will be strongly placed to perform well in this examination.

Test Level

The Grade 3 examination level is designed to test the skills in the three major competencies (Writing, Reading and Listening) which are covered by the Grade 3 National Curriculum.

For example, drawing on what is expected in the National Curriculum at Grade 3, a language user at this level can:

Speaking/Listening

- Understand and extract specific information from short recorded passages dealing with familiar topics
- Interact at a very basic level in structured situations and short conversations
- Respond with short or one word answers to a question about themselves, their daily needs and familiar topics

Reading

- Understand words and very short phrases when there is clear visual support

Writing

- Write very short simple sentence-level text on familiar topics

Balance of Marks

The allocation of marks in the parts of the skills papers is shown in the table below:

Skill	Part				
	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	33%	67%			
Reading	25%	25%	25%	25%	
Listening	25%	25%	25%	25%	

Relationship with the National Curriculum

These examinations reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum in terms of what learning a foreign language involves as well as the expected outcomes as identified in the curriculum.

The learning outcomes to be assessed are described in the curriculum. Language learning is seen as cumulative and these examinations are based on aspects of language which will have been learnt up to and including those in Grade 3.

The use of language, topics and lexical fields targeted in the Grade 3 assessment materials are designed to be appropriate to the description in the curriculum as well as the international standard of English as a Second Language, at this level.

Students learn language when they are involved in meaningful and purposeful activities which require them to communicate using the language. Tasks in these examinations therefore identify the intended audience where appropriate as well as a reason for completing the task, most specifically in the writing examination. The purpose of these examinations is to focus on communication and outcomes, and on what learners can do with the language rather than on what they know about the language. Therefore grammar is not tested directly but indirectly through the writing tasks as well as through the processing that the students need to do in order to successfully complete the reading and listening tasks.

Relationship with Textbooks

The learning outcomes to be assessed are defined by the National Curriculum, not by text books. Learning outcomes in the National Curriculum which are not covered by textbooks **will** be assessed. Content from textbooks which is not covered by the learning outcomes of the National Curriculum **will not** be assessed.

Paper 1 Writing

Overview

Duration 20 minutes

Format Students read and answer on the question paper.

Skills Objectives

The language objectives have been grouped under skills headings, but it is recognised that these are interrelated.

Writing

W1 Brief guided writing - write words with the correct spelling.

W2 Guided writing - simple phrases and linked sentences about familiar topics based on a picture.

Writing Test Specification

Skill	Question	Skill Objective	Description
Writing	1	W1	Students write four words with the correct spelling based on four different pictures
	2	W2	Students write a short sentence-level text of 10–25 words based on one picture.

Writing Test Format

Question	Task Type	Text length
1	Brief guided writing.	Students write four words with the correct spelling based on four different pictures.
2	Guided descriptive writing.	Students write a short sentence-level text of 10–25 words based on one picture.

Mark Schemes

Examiners mark the Writing Paper following coordination sessions which set the standard and ensure the correct application of the mark schemes. The live mark schemes may be expanded, revised or amended as required from one session to the next.

Students performance is to be assessed at the Grade 3 level.

There is no penalty for over-length responses, but digression (or failure to address the content points) is penalised according to the mark scheme.

Part 1

1 mark is available for each correct word in this task

Mark	Description
1	a word with the correct spelling
0	Illegible/a legible incorrect word

Part 2

8 marks are available for this task, 4 marks for content + 4 marks for language. The response is marked according to the schemes below, then the marks are added to get the total for the question.

Content marks	
4	All content of the picture addressed
3	Most content of the picture addressed
2	Some content of the picture addressed
1	Very little content of the picture addressed
0	No content of the picture addressed No marks can be awarded for language use

Language marks	
4	Reader can easily understand the message. May have a few minor errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
3	Reader can understand the message. May have a few errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
2	Reader can understand some parts of the message but other parts are only understandable with difficulty. Some errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
1	Reader can understand few parts of the message but most parts are only understandable with difficulty. Many errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar
0	Reader does not understand the message: includes illegibility. Numerous errors

Paper 2 Reading

Overview

Duration 30 minutes

Format Students read and answer on the question paper.

Skills Objectives

The language objectives have been grouped under skills headings, but it is recognised that these are interrelated.

Reading

- | | |
|----|--|
| R1 | Understand signs, notices, instructions, comics and messages. |
| R2 | Identify and understand key points and details. |
| R3 | Use of language in context (recognise the appropriate lexical item for a given context). |
| R4 | Identify specific lexis related to colours, objects and prepositions. |

Reading Test Specification

Skill	Part	Skill Objective	Description
Reading	1	R1	Five items with signs, notices, instructions, comics and messages (3–5 words) and 3-option multiple choice questions (MCQ). Options are all pictures.
	2	R2	Five short sentences with Yes, No or Don't Know options. Each sentence (4–8 words) based on one picture.
	3a & 3b	R3	Text (40–60 words) with 5 gaps testing lexical items and a list to choose from (words with their pictures).
	4	R4	Text (35–55 words) with one picture to colour. (Range of colours is: black, blue, brown, green, grey, orange, pink, purple, red and yellow)

MCQ = multiple-choice question

Reading Test Format

Part	Task Type	Text length
1	3-option MCQs	Five sentences (each sentence about 3-5 words) with three options each (all visual). One worked example included.
2	Matching task testing specific detail.	Five short sentences (each about 4-8 words) based on a picture. One worked example included.
3	Lexical cloze	Text of about 40-60 words with 5 gapped words with pictures. One worked example included.
4	Colouring	Text of about 35-55 words. One worked example included.

Paper 3 Listening

Overview

Duration	Approximately 20 minutes
Format	Students listen to a series of recordings and answer questions on the question paper. Each recording is heard twice.
Voices	A range of adult and child voices, as appropriate to the level of the test takers.

Skills Objectives

The language objectives have been grouped under skills headings, but it is recognised that these are interrelated.

Listening

L1	Understand short dialogues.
L2	Identify and understand specific information.
L3	Understand detail and gist.
L4	Understand short monologue.

Listening Test Specification

Skill	Part	Skills Objective	Description
Listening	1	L1	Five short informal dialogues between 2 speakers (1 male, 1 female) about typical daily situations. Each dialogue is 20–25 words. Five items with 3-option MCQ. Options are all pictures.
	2	L2	Five short informal dialogues between 2 speakers (1 male, 1 female) about typical daily situations. Each dialogue is 20–25 words. Numbering five pictures.
	3	L3	Five short informal dialogues between 2 speakers (1 male, 1 female) about typical daily situations. Each dialogue is 20–25 words. Matching 7 small pictures with one big picture.
	4	L4	A monologue of 50–60 words about a typical daily situation. Five short sentences with Yes, No or Don't Know options, 4–8 words each.

Listening Test Format

Part	Task Format
1	M/F dialogues (each about 20-25 words)
2	M/F dialogues (each about 20-25 words)
3	M/F dialogues (each about 20-25 words)
4	A short monologue (about 50-60 words)