READING DESCRIPTORS

Level 5

- Inferences are made about meaning in both simple and more complex texts, including inferences based on understanding of the wider meaning of a text.

- The contextual meaning of words and phrases is identified when a context is given, including a context requiring inferences based on more than one part of a text. This includes both literal and some figurative language.

- The main theme or focus of both simple and more complex text is identified, with both familiar and less familiar topics.

- Views and attitudes expressed in a more complex text are evaluated and alternative views are compared. The development of a point of view or argument is followed, and the reasons are fully understood.

- The tone and mood of a writer is identified, when this is clearly signalled in the text.

Level 4

- Explicitly stated information is understood in simple texts and generally in more complex texts.

- Obvious inferences are made about meaning in both simple and more complex texts. More complex inferences may be made if the text is simple and the topic is familiar.

- The contextual meaning of words and phrases is generally identified when a context is given by one or more sentences or a paragraph in both simple and more complex texts. This will mainly be when the meaning is literal.

- The main theme or ideas of a simple text are identified, and of a more complex text if the topic is familiar.

- Explicitly expressed views and attitudes are identified, and the development of an argument may be followed if straightforward.

Level 3

- Explicitly stated information is understood in simple texts, and may sometimes be understood in more complex texts when the topic is familiar.

- Both obvious and more complex inferences are made within simple texts. Some simple inferences may be made in more complex texts.

- The contextual meaning of words and phrases is generally identified in simple texts, and may be understood in more complex texts if there is a clear and fairly straightforward context of one or two sentences.

- The main theme or ideas of a paragraph are identified if a text is simple and straightforward, and may be identified in a more complex text if the topic is familiar.

- Explicitly expressed views and attitudes are usually identified (e.g. directly expressed opinions in a newspaper article).

Level 2

- Explicitly stated information is understood in simple texts.

- Obvious inferences about meaning are made in simple texts.

- The contextual meaning of words is generally identified, when clearly signalled within the context of one or two sentences in a simple text.

- The main idea of a simple paragraph is understood, when this is clearly signalled (e.g. by a topic sentence).

- Fact is generally distinguished from opinion in simple texts, when this is clearly signalled (e.g. by phrases such as 'I think that ....).

Level 1

- Explicitly stated factual information is generally understood in simple texts with familiar vocabulary.

- The sequence of events is identified in a text with a straightforward narrative structure.

- Very simple inferences may sometimes be made when meaning is clearly implied within one or two sentences and the topic is familiar.

- Headings or key words are used to locate the section of a text relevant to a task.

WRITING DESCRIPTORS

Level 5

Relevance and adequacy of content for purpose
• The content is relevant to the task; personal opinions are expressed effectively where appropriate, and different viewpoints are considered.
Accuracy & appropriacy of punctuation, vocabulary, language patterns
• A range of sentence structures is used, with a good grasp of simple and compound sentences. Complex sentences with a straightforward structure are used accurately and appropriately (e.g. conditional sentences).
• Punctuation and grammar are mainly accurate with only occasional errors that do not affect overall clarity.
• Vocabulary is quite wide, with some attempts to use more ambitious and sophisticated language. Most spelling is correct.
Planning & organisation
• Ideas are organised effectively in paragraphs, with topic sentences signalling the content of each paragraph, development of the topic within the paragraph, and some points supported by relevant details.
• Most ideas are developed logically and succinctly, with a clear focus on the topic, and a range of connectives and sequencers used.
Appropriacy of tone, style & register; appropriacy of features for genre
• An appropriate register and level of formality is generally maintained (e.g. appropriate polite opening and closing paragraphs when writing a formal letter).
• An awareness of audience is shown throughout.
• An awareness is shown of features of various genres of writing, including occasional stylistic features (e.g. narratives show some evidence of imagination and reach a suitable conclusion).

Level 4

Relevance and adequacy of content for purpose
• Most or all of the content is relevant. Attempts are made to consider different viewpoints where appropriate. When personal opinions and experiences are described, there are attempts to relate these to the topic.
Accuracy & appropriacy of punctuation, vocabulary, language patterns
• Most sentences are simple or compound, mainly used appropriately. There is some appropriate variation in sentence type (e.g. use of rhetorical questions). Complex sentences are used, and some are appropriate and correctly structured.
• Punctuation is mainly accurate. Most basic grammatical structures are appropriately used; errors in more complex structures do not affect overall clarity.
• Straightforward, common vocabulary is used appropriately for the topic, and is mainly spelt correctly.
Planning & organisation
• There are appropriate short introductory and concluding paragraphs, and other paragraphs have clearly defined topics.
• There is some development of ideas within the paragraph (e.g. arguments with supporting evidence, or a description with supporting details).
Appropriacy of tone, style & register; appropriacy of features for genre
• An appropriate tone and register is used in most tasks.
• An awareness of the audience is shown and may be maintained throughout.
• The features of familiar genres of writing are generally used correctly (e.g. letter format, or description and speech in narrative).

Level 3

Relevance and adequacy of content for purpose
• Most of the content is relevant to task and purpose. Opinions are expressed, and are clear in some parts. There may be occasional exploration of alternative viewpoints. Relevant personal examples and anecdotes may be included.

Accuracy & appropriacy of punctuation, vocabulary, language patterns
• Most simple and compound sentences are accurately constructed. There may some appropriate variation in sentence types (e.g., questions, direct speech). There are attempts to use more complex sentences, and these are sometimes correct (e.g., *If you have time, you... / When I turned on the TV, I...).* • Basic punctuation and some basic grammatical structures are used accurately (e.g. past and present tense, simple modal verbs). Errors in basic grammatical areas do not affect meaning. • Vocabulary is appropriate when writing about familiar straightforward topics. Most common words are spelt correctly.

Planning & organisation
• There is a brief introduction and conclusion, and other paragraphs are clearly defined, generally with topic sentences. There are simple cohesive ties within and between paragraphs • Common sequencers are used appropriately (e.g., *firstly, secondly, after, when*) and a range of connectives is used to develop ideas (e.g., *however, although, because*).

Appropriacy of tone, style & register; appropriacy of features for genre
• Tone and register are generally appropriate in familiar types of writing (e.g. formal letters) and appropriate in some parts in less familiar types. • Occasional awareness of audience is shown (e.g. use of appropriate pronouns, direct address to reader). • Simple features of familiar genres are used (e.g. salutation and closing in a letter, narrative sequencing).

Level 2

Relevance and adequacy of content for purpose
• When a structure is given to the writing by the task prompt, the content is relevant (e.g. picture narrative, outline notes). When the task is more complex, with less guidance, some points are included which are relevant to the topic. There may be some attempts to elaborate or to expand points.
Accuracy & appropriacy of punctuation, vocabulary, language patterns
• The structure of short simple sentences is generally accurate. A small range of mainly short and simple sentence types is used accurately. There may be some attempts at longer more complex sentences.
• Most basic punctuation is used correctly (capitals/full stops, apostrophes in contractions, speech marks, question marks); there may be occasional appropriate use of commas. Grammatical accuracy is sufficient to make meaning clear when the content is simple and straightforward.
• Simple vocabulary is mainly appropriate to the topic, and most is spelt correctly.
Planning & organisation
• The writing is organised into paragraphs, with an appropriate overall organisation when this is supplied by the task prompt. When there is less guidance, there are brief introductory and concluding paragraphs, with some attempts to organise topics into suitable paragraphs.
• Within paragraphs, there may be some development of ideas, and occasional appropriate use of conventional markers and sequencers (e.g. *first of all*, *nevertheless*).
Appropriacy of tone, style & register; appropriacy of features for genre
• Tone and register are mainly appropriate when the task is very familiar (e.g. in a letter of application).
• There may be some awareness of audience.
• Some features of familiar genres may be used (e.g. narratives with a beginning and an ending, or some features of letter format).

Level 1

Relevance and adequacy of content for purpose
• Some of the content is relevant to the task, based on the cues given by the task prompt. When closely based on the cues, most can be understood. When fewer cues are given, some parts can be understood.

Accuracy & appropriacy of punctuation, vocabulary, language patterns
• Some simple sentences have an accurate structure, and there may be some correct use of common conjunctions, e.g. *so, and, but*.
• Some simple basic grammatical structures are correct (e.g. present tense verbs, articles, common prepositions). Basic punctuation is sometimes used correctly (capitals/full stops, apostrophes in contractions, speech marks, question marks).
• A limited range of very simple vocabulary is used, often based on the prompt or drawn from the reading passages. Some is spelt correctly.

Planning & organisation
• There may be some paragraph divisions, and these may be appropriate when a clear structure is given by the task, (e.g. one paragraph for each picture in a picture story, or appropriate content when headings are provided).
• There may be some use of simple connectives (*and, but, so*) or sequencers (*on Friday, first, then*).

Appropriacy of tone, style & register; appropriacy of features for genre
• A suitable tone may be used in some parts when writing a familiar type of text (e.g. a straightforward formal letter or a factual report).
• Some basic features of a familiar genre may be used (e.g. *Yours faithfully* at the end of a letter, direct speech in a narrative).

LISTENING AND INTEGRATED SKILLS DESCRIPTORS

Level 5

Listening
- A range of both familiar and unfamiliar spoken text types are understood when delivered at a near-natural speed, in familiar and some less familiar accents.   - Both explicitly stated and implied information is extracted from spoken texts. Speakers' attitudes and intentions are identified, based on features of stress and intonation.   - Full and relevant notes are taken quickly and accurately.
Reading
- Detailed written instructions from more than one source are interpreted correctly, and followed appropriately.   - Relevant information is selected and transferred from both simple and more complex texts.
Writing
- The content is complete and relevant to the purpose.   - There is a good range of accurate sentence structures, and the standard of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and language structures is high.   - An awareness of audience is shown throughout, register and tone are appropriate, and appropriate features of the genre are used.

Level 4

Listening
- Both familiar and less familiar spoken text types are generally understood when delivered at moderate speed, by speakers with familiar accents.   - Explicitly stated information and some clearly implied information is extracted from spoken texts. Speakers' attitudes and intentions may be identified, based on features of stress and intonation, when these are clear and straightforward.   - Relevant and full notes are generally made when the text is delivered at a moderate speed, and some straightforward notes may be made when the pace of the speaker or the complexity of the text increases.
Reading
- Straightforward written instructions are followed correctly, and more detailed ones, including those from more than one source, may sometimes be followed.   - Task-relevant information is located and transferred from simple texts, and some is transferred from more complex texts.
Writing
- Most of the content relevant to the purpose is included.   - Simple or compound sentences are used appropriately, with some attempts at more complex sentences. Punctuation, spelling and language structures are mainly accurate with only occasional minor errors that do not affect overall clarity.   - An awareness of the audience is shown and may be maintained throughout. An appropriate tone and style is used in familiar tasks, and the features of familiar genres of writing are used correctly.

Level 3

Listening
- Familiar spoken text types are generally understood when delivered at moderate speed, by speakers with familiar accents.   - Explicitly stated information is usually extracted from spoken texts, particularly when the information is repeated in alternative formats or follows a predictable sequence.   - Relevant notes are taken when a structure is given for note-taking and information is given clearly and slowly.
Reading
- Straightforward written instructions are usually understood and followed.   - Task-relevant information is usually located and transferred from simple texts, and may sometimes be correctly located in more complex texts where topics are familiar.
Writing
- The content is mainly relevant to the purpose.   - Most simple and compound sentences are accurately constructed and punctuated and simple basic structures are used accurately. Meaning is generally clear.   - Tone and register are appropriate in straightforward, familiar types of writing, and features of familiar genres are used. Some awareness of audience is shown (e.g. use of appropriate pronouns, or direct address to the reader).

Level 2

Listening
- Familiar spoken text types are generally understood when delivered slowly, by speakers with familiar accents.   - Some explicitly stated information is extracted from spoken texts which have a clear sequential structure and in which speakers repeat or emphasise key information.   - Some brief relevant notes are taken when the speaker explicitly states what is to be written and gives sufficient time for writing, and a clear structure is given for note-taking (e.g. a table to be completed).
Reading
- Straightforward written instructions in a familiar format are usually followed correctly (e.g. in a memo or a short e-mail).   - Most task-relevant information is located and transferred from simple texts with a familiar structure.
Writing
- Relevant content is included when this has been presented in a straightforward way (e.g. a clear outline in task cues).   - A small range of mainly short and simple sentence types is used accurately. Meaning is generally clear. There may be some ambiguity when attempts are made to express more complex ideas.   - There may be some awareness of audience. Tone and register are mainly appropriate when the task is familiar (e.g. in a letter). Some features of familiar genres are used.

Level 1

Listening
- Short simple spoken texts of familiar types are understood when they are delivered slowly by speakers with familiar accents, and have a predictable or sequential structure.   - Simple, predictable factual information is extracted from short spoken texts.   - Names and addresses which are spelt out and numbers are written down when these are delivered slowly, with sufficient time given for writing. Short very simple notes may be made (e.g. one or two words, delivered slowly, to be added to a table or a simple form).

Reading
- Some short, simple written instructions with a clear format are followed correctly (e.g. using bullet points).   - Some task-relevant information is located and transferred from simple texts with a guided structure, when vocabulary is familiar (e.g. lists, adverts, tables, forms).

Writing
- Some straightforward relevant content is included if detailed cues have been given.   - Most simple sentences have an accurate structure, and simple basic structures and punctuation are mainly correct. The meaning can usually be understood when the structure is simple and the content is straightforward.   - A suitable tone may be used in some parts and basic features of familiar genres may be used (e.g. *Yours sincerely* at the end of a letter).

SPEAKING DESCRIPTORS

Level 5

Pronunciation / Delivery techniques

- Pronunciation of most words is clear and quite accurate.
- Some features support communication (e.g. question intonation, use of word stress for emphasis).
- Pace and volume are sustained appropriately, with only occasional hesitation.
- Body language is generally appropriate.

Expressing information and ideas / Use of organising techniques to convey meaning

- Most information and ideas are expressed clearly.
- Most responses are expanded, when appropriate, with explanations or detail.
- Conversational exchanges are sustained.
- Most ideas are developed and linked in presentations.

Accuracy and appropriacy of vocabulary and language patterns

- Vocabulary choice is varied and generally appropriate.
- Language patterns are generally accurate and appropriate to the context.

Use of formulaic expressions and strategies to establish and maintain interaction

- A range of formulaic expressions and strategies is used on appropriate occasions to respond to others and to maintain interaction (e.g. encouraging contributions from others in group discussion, asking for others' opinions).

Level 4

Pronunciation / Delivery techniques
- Pronunciation of familiar words is usually clear and accurate; pronunciation of less familiar words can usually be understood.   - Intonation, volume and pacing are appropriate to convey meaning.   - Some features of body language support communication (e.g. eye contact during questions).
Expressing information and ideas / Use of organising techniques to convey meaning
- Most information and ideas are expressed clearly when topics are familiar and straightforward.   - There is some expansion of topics, with additional detail or explanation.   - Most conversational exchanges are sustained, with adequate participation.   - In presentations, topics are usually introduced and suitably concluded, and some ideas are linked and developed.
Accuracy and appropriacy of vocabulary and language patterns
- Vocabulary is appropriate when the topic is familiar and the content is predictable.   - Language patterns are usually accurate when topics are straightforward and familiar. Any errors made do not impede communication.
Use of formulaic expressions and strategies to establish and maintain interaction
A range of straightforward formulaic expressions and strategies is used (e.g. greetings, responding appropriately to other people's comments, making suggestions in a group discussion).

Level 3

Pronunciation / Delivery techniques
• Pronunciation of familiar words can usually be understood; less familiar words, if used, can sometimes be understood within the overall context.   • Intonation, volume and pacing are generally appropriate enough to be understood.   • Some features of body language are appropriate, e.g. occasional eye contact.
Expressing information and ideas / Use of organising techniques to convey meaning
• Some ideas and information are expressed clearly.   • Occasional detail is added to responses (e.g. to describe or explain).   • Conversational exchanges on familiar topics are sometimes sustained (e.g. sequences of more than one question and answer).   • In presentations, topics may be introduced and concluded, and ideas may follow sequentially with some links.
Accuracy and appropriacy of vocabulary and language patterns
• Simple familiar vocabulary is usually used appropriately.   • Simple language patterns are used, sometimes accurately and appropriately. Errors do not usually impede communication when topics are familiar.
Use of formulaic expressions and strategies to establish and maintain interaction
• Some very basic strategies and formulaic expressions are used appropriately (e.g. requests for repetition or clarification).

Level 2

Pronunciation / Delivery techniques
• Pronunciation of simple and familiar words can usually be understood within the overall context. • Intonation, pacing and volume are sometimes appropriate enough to be understood.
Expressing information and ideas / Use of organising techniques to convey meaning
• There are attempts to express simple information and ideas, sometimes successfully. • Some ideas and information may be expanded briefly, e.g. simple description or opinion. • There is some brief participation in conversation, generally when prompted by others. • In presentations, some ideas or topics may be developed briefly.
Accuracy and appropriacy of vocabulary and language patterns
• Vocabulary is drawn from a small range, often derived from the context. • Some very basic language patterns may be used accurately enough for the listener to understand, in brief exchanges on familiar topics.
Use of formulaic expressions and strategies to establish and maintain interaction
• Some very basic formulaic expressions are used appropriately, generally in response to others (e.g. greetings, short phrases of apology or gratitude).

Level 1

Pronunciation / Delivery techniques
• Some simple and familiar words are pronounced accurately enough to be understood. • Some of the speech is at a suitable volume.
Expressing information and ideas / Use of organising techniques to convey meaning
• Information is occasionally relevant to the topic, e.g. some answers relate to questions. • Some brief responses or statements are made on familiar topics. • In presentations, some appropriate statements or ideas may be included.
Accuracy and appropriacy of vocabulary and language patterns
• A small range of simple and familiar vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There may be occasional accurate use of language patterns, generally in very short formulaic utterances.
Use of formulaic expressions and strategies to establish and maintain interaction
• Some simple formulaic expressions and strategies may used in response to others (e.g. simple greetings).