TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON

Communication Skills

Qualification Specifications for
graded and certificate exams
from 2020

Grade 6, Task 3 (individual), Task 2 (group)

Requirements
The candidate(s) discusses with the examiner the content and delivery of the text of a speech provided by the examiner 15 minutes before the exam.

Guidance

The purpose of this task is to assesses candidates' skills in analyzing, with a tight deadline, the message that needs to be conveyed and the most appropriate and creative methods that could be used to convey the message.

When analyzing the text, candidates should consider:

- The purpose of the speech, for example is it persuasive or informative or both?
- What is the main message of the speech?
- Who is the audience? Think particularly about the age, gender and demographic. Is there a 'perfect' recipient?
- What language is used to particularly connect with the audience?
- Think about the specific language that is used, e.g. examples of specific words used within the speech that helps to communicate the message.
- How might the deliverer get an audience's attention when beginning this speech?
- Are there any moments in the speech that might be emphasized?
- What visual and/or audio aids, or other supporting information might be used?
- How is the speech structured e.g. is there a clear introduction? Is the message supported with clear examples/evidence? Is there a clear and concise ending?
- How might someone dress in order to deliver the speech?
- Is the message of the speech successfully conveyed?
- Are there any improvements that could be made to the speech?

Sample speeches

The Genius of the London Tube Map,
by Michael Bierut, graphic designer, 2018

The history of civilization, in some ways, is a history of maps: How have we come to understand the world around us? One of the most famous maps works because it really isn't a map at all.

The London Underground came together in 1908, when eight different independent railways merged to create a single system. They needed a map to represent that system so people would know where to ride. The map they made is complicated. You can see rivers, bodies of water, trees and parks -- the stations were all crammed together at the center of the map, and out in the periphery, there were some that couldn't even fit on the map. So, the map was geographically accurate, but maybe not so useful.

Enter Harry Beck, a 29-year-old engineering draftsman who had been working on and off for the London Underground. And he had a key insight, and that was that people riding underground in trains don't really care what's happening aboveground. They just want to get from station to station - "Where do I get on? Where do I get off?"

It's the system that's important, not the geography.

He's taken this complicated mess of spaghetti, and he's simplified it. The lines only go in three directions: they're horizontal, they're vertical, or they're 45 degrees. Likewise, he spaced the stations equally and he's fixed it all so that it's not really a map anymore. What it is, is a diagram, just like circuitry, except the circuitry here isn't wires conducting electrons, it's tubes containing trains conducting people from place to place.

In 1933, the London Underground train company decided, at last, to give Harry Beck's map a try. They did a test run of a thousand of these maps, pocket-size. They were gone in one hour. They realized they were onto something, they printed 750,000 more, and this is the map that you see today.

Beck's design really became the template for the way we think of metro maps today. Tokyo, Paris, Berlin, São Paulo, Sydney, Washington, D.C: They all are part of a universal language, seemingly.

I bet Harry Beck wouldn't have known what a user interface was, but that's really what he designed, and he really took that challenge and broke it down to three principles that I think can be applied in nearly any design problem.

First one is focus.
Focus on who you're doing this for.
The second principle is simplicity.
What's the shortest way to deliver that need?

Finally, the last thing is: Thinking in a cross-disciplinary way. Who would've thought that an electrical engineer would be the person to hold the key to unlock what was then one of the most complicated systems in the world - all started by one guy with a pencil and an idea.

Autism by anon.

How many of you like to watch the credits of a movie, or are fascinated by light switches? I'm guessing not very many of you, but I love them!

Bonjour, ni hao, hola, konichiwa, salut, choa chi, my name is Zachary and I have autism. Oh, by the way, I'm also learning to speak in different languages.
When I was very little my family noticed that I did some things differently. I didn't really like to play a lot with toys. I was more interested in books, letters and the alphabet and everyone was shocked and surprised when I could say the alphabet. That may not seem unusual, but, I was only 14 months old! I could even say the alphabet backwards. That's when mom and dad decided to visit a special doctor who told them I had something called "autism".

There are 4 times more boys than girls who have autism, and every 20 minutes someone is born with autism somewhere in the world. Autism is something I will have for the rest of my life, it will never go away, but I am learning to deal with it. I can talk, read and write, but some of my friends who have autism can't talk and that must be really difficult for their families.

Now that I am older I understand my autism better and it really doesn't bother me much, in fact, I love my autism. That doesn't mean I don't have bad days. I have a lot of them. It is especially difficult for my brother Joshua. Sometimes he gets really frustrated with me and we argue. But I guess a lot of brothers and sisters argue, don't they? My family is also learning about autism so that we can get along better. In fact, every year we participate in a fund raiser called "Cycle for Autism".

I know that I'll never be able to do a lot of things, but that's OK. I think I'm pretty lucky, because there are things that I can do very well. For example, I love the piano and I can play a tune by simply listening to the music. My music teacher said that I have a special gift.

Autism is not who I am, it's only a small part of me. I just hope people will take the time to get to know and understand me. So, if you ever meet someone with autism I hope you take the time to get to know them. You never know, you may learn something about them and maybe, something about yourself too.
Well, I hope that you learned a little about autism and me.

Grazia, merci, duo-xie, domo arigato, guten tag, and thank you for listening to my speech.

What's so funny about Mental Illness?
By Ruby Wax, actor and mental health campaigner, 2012

One in four people suffer from some sort of mental illness.

I am one of the one in four. I think I inherited it from my mother, who, used to crawl around the house on all fours. She had two sponges in her hand, and then she had two tied to her knees. My mother was completely absorbent. And she would crawl around behind me going, "Who brings footprints into a building?!" So that was kind of a clue that things weren't right.

So, how did it start? I always dreamt that, when I had my final breakdown, it would be because I had a deep Kafkaesque existentialist revelation, or that maybe Cate Blanchett would play me, and she would win an Oscar for it. But that's not what happened. I had my breakdown during my daughter's sports day. I took to my bed for about a month, and when I woke up I found I was institutionalized, and when I saw the other inmates, I realized that I had found my people, my tribe. They became my only friends. Well, I wasn't sent a lot of cards or flowers. I mean, if I had had a broken leg or I was with child I would have been inundated, but all I got was a couple phone calls telling me to perk up. Perk up. Because I didn't think of that.

Because, you know, the one thing, one thing that you get with this disease, this one comes with a package, is you get a real sense of shame, because your friends go, "Oh come on, show me the lump, show me the x-rays," and of course you've got nothing to show, so you're, like, really disgusted with yourself because you're thinking, "I'm not being carpet-bombed. I don't live in a township." So, you start to hear these abusive voices, but you don't hear one abusive voice, you hear about a thousand abusive voices, a hundred thousand abusive voices. You know, when you have those abusive voices, all those little neurons get together and in that little gap you get a real toxic – I want to kill myself kind of chemical? And if you have that over and over again and on a loop tape you might have yourself depression. If you have a baby, and you abuse it verbally, its little brain sends out chemicals that are so destructive that the little part of its brain that can tell good from bad just doesn't grow, so you might have yourself a homegrown psychotic. If a soldier sees his friend blown up, his brain goes into such high alarm that he can't actually put the experience into words, so he just feels the horror over and over again.

So here's my question. My question is, how come when people have mental damage, it's always an active imagination? How come every other organ in your body can get sick and you get sympathy, except the brain?

Do schools kill creativity?
By Sir Ken Robinson, author and educationalist, 2007

So, I want to talk about education and I want to talk about creativity. Creativity now is as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status. All kids have tremendous talents, and we squander them ruthlessly.

So why is this? Our education system is predicated on the idea of academic ability. And there's a reason. Around the world, there were no public systems of education, really, before the 19th century. They all came into being to meet the needs of industrialism. So, you were probably steered benignly away from things at school when you were a kid, things you liked, on the grounds that you would never get a job doing that. Is that right? Don't do music, you're not going to be a musician; don't do art, you won't be an artist.

Academic ability, has really come to dominate our view of intelligence, because the universities designed the system in their image. If you think of it, the whole system of public education around the world is a protracted process of university entrance. The consequence is that many talented, brilliant, creative people think they're not, because the thing they were good at at school wasn't valued.

I had a conversation with a wonderful woman who maybe some people have heard of, Gillian Lynne. She's a choreographer. She did "Cats" and "Phantom of the Opera." When she was at school, she was really hopeless. And the school, in the 1930s, wrote to her parents and said, "We think Gillian has a learning disorder." She couldn't concentrate; she was fidgeting. She went to see this specialist with her mother. The doctor went and sat next to Gillian, and said, "I've listened to all these things your mother's told me, I need to speak to her privately. They went out of the room, and, as he did, he turned on the radio that was sitting on his desk. When they got out, he said to her mother, "Just stand and watch her." And the minute they left the room, she was on her feet, moving to the music. And they watched for a few minutes and he turned to her mother and said, "Gillian isn't sick; she's a dancer. Take her to a dance school."

I said to Gillian, "What happened?" She said, "I can't tell you how wonderful going to dance school was. We walked in this room and it was full of people like me. People who couldn't sit still. People who had to move to think. And she has since been responsible for some of the most successful musical theatre productions in history.

I believe our only hope for the future is to adopt a new conception of human ecology. Our education system has mined our minds in the way that we strip-mine the earth: for a particular commodity. And for the future, it won't serve us. We have to rethink the fundamental principles on which we're educating our children. And the only way we'll do it is by seeing our creative capacities for the richness they are and seeing our children for the hope that they are. And our task is to educate their whole being, so they can face this future.