

GESE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Graded Examinations in Spoken English
Advanced stage

Grades 10-12 | CEFR levels C1-C2

About this booklet

This booklet provides teachers with a comprehensive breakdown of the requirements and some preparation techniques for Trinity Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE) Grades 10-12.

About Trinity College London

Trinity College London is a leading international exam board and independent education charity that has been providing assessments around the world since 1877. We specialise in the assessment of communicative and performance skills covering music, drama, combined arts and English language. With over 850,000 candidates a year in more than 60 countries worldwide, Trinity qualifications are specifically designed to help students progress. Our aim is to inspire teachers and learners through the creation of assessments that are enjoyable to prepare for, rewarding to teach and that develop the skills needed in real life.

At the heart of Trinity's work is the belief that effective communicative and performance skills are life enhancing, know no boundaries and should be within reach of us all. We exist to promote and foster the best possible communicative and performance skills through assessment, content and training that is innovative, personal and authentic.

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The Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE)

The Graded Examinations in Spoken English are designed for all learners of English. There are 12 grades in total, so whatever your students' level of English there is an exam that they can take.

Trinity's GESE exams assess a range of speaking and listening skills and test what a candidate can actually do, rather than just what they know. Preparation for GESE exams focuses on the development of authentic communicative skills and on building the confidence to use English in real life.

Each GESE exam is conducted in person by a Trinity examiner. All Trinity examiners are highly trained and experienced. The exam consists of a one-to-one conversation with the examiner.

The 12 grades of GESE are divided into four stages:

Initial	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced
Grades 1-3 5-7 minutes	Grades 4-6 10 minutes	Grades 7-9 15 minutes	Grades 10-12 25 minutes
			Topic presentation
			Topic discussion
		Candidate-led discussion of topic	Interactive task
	Topic discussion	Interactive task	Listening task
Conversation	Conversation	Conversation	Conversation

This booklet has been prepared to help teachers prepare their students for the Advanced stage, Grades 10-12 exams.

Full details of Trinity's GESE exams can be found in the latest edition of our Exam Information booklet at trinitycollege.com/GESEexaminformation

Assessment

At the Advanced stage, the examiner assesses the candidate's performance by awarding a letter grade A, B, C or D for Task fulfilment for the Topic presentation, Topic discussion, Interactive, Listening and Conversation phases. In simple terms, these levels can be classified as follows:

- A – Distinction (reflects an excellent performance)
- B – Merit (reflects a good performance)
- C – Pass (reflects a satisfactory performance)
- D – Fail (reflects an unsatisfactory performance).

The combination of the five letter grades provides the overall level of achievement.

The examiner notes their assessments on a tablet. The centre receives an email within a couple of days of the end of the exam session with provisional results and key areas where the students can improve.

Certificates for successful candidates are usually sent to exam centres for distribution within four weeks of the completion of the GESE exam session.

GESE Advanced stage (Grades 10-12, CEFR C1.1-C2)

Introduction to the Advanced stage

Candidate profile

By the end of the Advanced stage, the candidate can:

- ▶ understand arguments, inferences, changes in register and emphasis in extended, complex and sometimes unstructured speech, even when delivered at fast native speed
- ▶ express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning
- ▶ control the direction of a spoken interaction and maintain its flow with ease, relating skilfully to the contributions of the listener
- ▶ exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of complex language structures, vocabulary and language functions
- ▶ produce speech at word, sentence and discourse level which rarely deviates from an internationally intelligible model

This profile is based on the level C1-C2, Proficient User, on the Common European Framework of Reference.

Advanced stage exam format

		Assessed	Not assessed
1	Greetings and setting at ease		✓
2	Formal topic presentation task	✓	
3	Discussion of topic presentation task	✓	
4	Interactive task	✓	
5	Listening task	✓	
6	Conversation task	✓	
7	End of conversation and leave-taking		✓

Overview of the Advanced stage

The Advanced stage exams last up to 25 minutes. The exams have five phases. In the first phase, the **Formal topic presentation**, the candidate delivers a formal presentation on a discursive topic of his/her choice which they have prepared before the exam. The examiner does not interact with the candidate during the presentation. This phase lasts up to five minutes.

In the second phase, the **Discussion of the topic presentation**, the candidate and examiner participate in an authentic discussion of the ideas and opinions given in the Formal topic presentation. This phase lasts up to five minutes.

In the third phase, the **Interactive phase**, the examiner reads out an oral prompt. The candidate needs to ask questions to find out more information and make comments. The candidate is responsible for maintaining the interaction. This phase lasts no more than four minutes.

In the fourth phase, the **Listening phase**, the examiner reads three short pieces of discourse to the candidate. The candidate needs to suggest a suitable ending or answer a question. This phase lasts up to three minutes.

In the final phase, the **Conversation phase**, the candidate and examiner have two short discussions about two of the subject areas listed for the conversation. At Grade 12, there are no specific subject areas and the examiner will select two appropriate subjects relating to the previous subject areas as well as subjects of general interest. This phase lasts no more than six minutes.

The Formal topic presentation

Introduction

Candidates begin the exam by giving a formal presentation to the examiner about a topic that they have chosen and prepared.

The purpose of the Formal topic presentation task is to give candidates the opportunity to display their command of the language of the grade while delivering a formal oral presentation on a self-selected and personally relevant topic.

Choosing the topic

A good choice of topic is very important. Candidates should make sure that:

1. it is of personal interest and discursive
2. it will allow them to use the communicative skills of the grade, eg giving supporting reasons and examples
3. it will allow them to use the functions and language of the grade.

1. Personal interest and discursive

Candidates can choose any topic they like, but it is best to choose a topic that they are interested in and that is discursive in nature, eg veganism or alternatives to fossil fuels. This makes it easier to talk about. If the candidate doesn't know very much about the topic and they are trying to remember certain facts, they may not feel so relaxed in their exam.

2. The communicative skills of the grade

Communication skills are very important when giving a presentation and it is the same in our GESE exams. The candidates are expected to give a formal presentation of their topic with an identifiable structure and which is engaging and interesting. The topic should be introduced, developed and properly concluded by inviting questions and comments from the examiner.

3. The language of the grade

When choosing a topic look at the language of the grade that the candidate needs to use. For example, if the candidate chooses education as a topic for Grade 10, it is important that the functions, grammar and lexis for Grade 10 level are used.

It is important to choose topics that relate to social and abstract issues and are discursive, ie an issue with different sides or viewpoints. This is because the language required at this level (eg developing an argument, expressing beliefs, evaluating different standpoints) may not be easily exploited within a more simple or concrete topic.

Preparing the Topic

It is very important to prepare the topic before the exam. Candidates are advised to:

- ▶ plan and prepare the areas of the topic they would like to inform the examiner about
- ▶ prepare enough material to sustain a presentation of the topic for up to five minutes (but no more)
- ▶ make sure the topic allows them to use the communicative skills of the grade (eg giving a formal presentation that is discursive in nature with an identifiable structure and sequence)
- ▶ make sure the topic allows them to use the language of the grade
- ▶ consider the structure and sequence of the presentation giving thought to how they will develop their ideas

Recitation

Candidates must not prepare their Formal topic presentation as a written script to memorise and recite. Candidates may bring some notes to support them in the presentation, but this should not be a script.

Other points about recitation:

- ▶ it is clear to the examiner that it is not natural spoken English
- ▶ reciting can make a candidate nervous
- ▶ the intonation and speed of speaking are different when someone recites
- ▶ the examiner will gently interrupt if the candidate recites
- ▶ recitation is taken into account in the assessment.

The handout

Candidates are required to produce brief notes in the form of a handout for the examiner to facilitate the presentation. These should be given to the examiner before the start of the presentation. These notes will not be taken into account in the assessment.

Exam procedure

- ▶ In the Formal topic presentation phase the examiner will ask the candidate for their handout, and will tell them that they are going to make some notes. The examiner will reassure them that these notes are for the topic discussion, and not about language or mistakes.
- ▶ The candidate has approximately five minutes to give their presentation. The candidate may stand or sit to deliver the presentation.
- ▶ At the end of the Formal topic presentation the candidate should invite comments and questions from the examiner to begin the topic discussion.
- ▶ If the candidate's presentation exceeds five minutes, the examiner will say:

Thank you. Now I'd like to discuss some of the points you've made.



The Topic discussion phase

Introduction

After the presentation, the candidate and the examiner have a discussion about the presentation.

The purpose of the topic discussion is for the candidate and the examiner to have an authentic discussion about the ideas and opinions given in the formal topic presentation.

The topic discussion is intended to be a genuine discussion with a real exchange of ideas and opinions. The Candidate should be ready to challenge the examiner and respond to his or her contributions. They should also be ready to justify, exemplify and elaborate on the ideas and opinions given in the presentation.

Preparing for the topic discussion

It is very important to prepare for the discussion. Candidates are advised to:

- ▶ anticipate what the examiner might say – think of comments they might make and questions they might ask.
- ▶ think about how to talk more about the topic outside of the limitations of the formal presentation.
- ▶ consider any alternative viewpoints or objections the examiner might have and how you can respond ie by defending/justifying your position, evaluating the different views or contradicting them.

Exam procedure

- ▶ The candidate needs to initiate this phase by inviting the examiner to comment on any points made in the presentation.
- ▶ The examiner will ask questions and make comments about the presentation.
- ▶ After five minutes the examiner will end the topic discussion by saying:

Thank you. That was interesting. Now we'll move on to the Interactive phase.

The Interactive phase

Introduction

The purpose of the Interactive phase is for the candidate to demonstrate their ability to control and maintain an interaction while using the language functions of the grade.

The examiner provides an oral prompt to the candidate. The candidate responds by asking questions to find out more information and making comments. Once the examiner has set up the situation, it is the candidate's responsibility to maintain the interaction.

The interaction takes the form of multiple turns, with the examiner's turns being shorter than those of the candidate. The discussion may involve some role-play, but the candidate is free to be themselves.

In this phase, the candidate's ability to use the functional language of the grade is more important than grammatical accuracy.

The Interactive phase provides candidates with the opportunity to:

- ▶ demonstrate their independence as users of English
- ▶ understand and use the language functions of the grade
- ▶ take control over and maintain an interaction
- ▶ participate in an authentic exchange of information and opinions.

The Interactive phase lasts up to five minutes.

Preparing for the Interactive phase

It is very important to prepare for the Interactive phase. Candidates are advised to:

- ▶ practise different question forms and techniques
- ▶ learn how to express the language functions of the grade in a variety of ways
- ▶ develop strategies to maintain a conversation
- ▶ practise taking the initiative and controlling the direction of a conversation
- ▶ hold conversations which allow them to use the language functions of the grade.

Strategies for the Interactive phase

Do	Don't
Ask the examiner to repeat the prompt if necessary	Interrupt the examiner when he/she is reading the prompt
Ask questions to find out more about the situation	Immediately make comments before asking questions
Ask questions and make comments about the whole situation	Ask questions and make comments about one small part of the prompt
Use multiple, longer turns	Use short questions and comments
Focus on the language functions of the grade	Focus on the grammar of the grade
Engage the examiner by inviting opinions and comments	Provide a five-minute monologue response to the prompt

Exam procedure

- ▶ The examiner introduces the Interactive phase by saying:

In this task, I'll start by telling you something. You'll have to ask me questions to find out more information and make comments. It's your responsibility to maintain the conversation. Are you ready?

- ▶ The examiner provides the candidate with an oral prompt.
- ▶ The candidate may ask the examiner to repeat the oral prompt if necessary.
- ▶ The candidate responds to the prompt by asking questions to find out more information and making comments.
- ▶ The candidate controls and maintains the interaction. If he/she does not, the phase will not last the full five minutes.
- ▶ Before five minutes, the examiner will end the Interactive phase by saying:

Thank you. Now we'll move on to the Listening phase.



The Listening phase

Introduction

The purpose of the Listening phase is for the candidate to demonstrate high level listening skills such as prediction, deduction and inference. The candidate needs to show recognition of the context, participants and register.

There are two types of listening tasks which require different responses from the candidate.

- ▶ Type 1 – require the candidate to provide a suitable ending
- ▶ Type 2 – require the candidate to identify participants, contexts or settings.

The examiner will read three listening texts: two of type 1 and one of type 2.

The Listening phase lasts up to three minutes.

Preparing for the Listening phase

It is very important to prepare for the Listening phase. Candidates are advised to:

- ▶ practise listening to recordings of natural, authentic spoken English, eg news, films, podcasts
- ▶ develop strategies to identify context, participants, attitude, mood and intentions from spoken text

Strategies for the Listening phase

Do	Don't
Give short, precise answers	Give lengthy replies
Listen carefully	Ask the examiner to repeat the text – they can only read it once.

Exam procedure

- ▶ The examiner introduces the Listening phase by saying:

I'm going to read you three short passages and after I've finished each one, I'd like you to either suggest a suitable ending or answer a question. I'll then move on to the next passage. Are you ready?

- ▶ The examiner will introduce the type 1 listening task by saying:

These two passages are incomplete. When I stop, I'd like you to tell me in just a few words how you think the passage finishes.

- ▶ The examiner will read two type 1 listening tasks before moving onto a type 2 listening task.

- ▶ The examiner will introduce the type 1 listening task by saying:

After I've read this passage, I'll ask you a question about what you've heard.

- ▶ After three minutes, the examiner will end the Listening phase by saying:

Thank you. Now we'll move on to the Conversation phase.

The Conversation phase

Introduction

The purpose of the Conversation phase is for the candidate to participate in a genuine exchange of information, ideas and opinions while using the language of the grade. It is not a formal question and answer interview.

The conversation phase consists of a discussion of two subject areas listed for the grade and chosen by the examiner.

At Grades 10 and 11, two lists of subject areas are provided (List A and List B). Candidates only need to prepare one list. At Grade 12 there are no specific subject areas and candidates should be prepared to discuss any two subjects that the examiner deems appropriate.

The Conversation phase provides candidates with the opportunity to:

- ▶ engage the examiner in a meaningful discussion on complex and abstract topics
- ▶ influence the direction of the exchange
- ▶ maintain the flow of the exchange
- ▶ demonstrate their ability to use a range of complex language flexibly and effectively.

The Conversation phase lasts up to six minutes.

Preparing for the Conversation phase

It is very important to prepare for the Conversation phase. Candidates are advised to:

- ▶ prepare to talk about all the subject areas in the list chosen for the grade.
- ▶ at Grade 12, follow current debates and issues in the media and be prepared to discuss them
- ▶ develop strategies to maintain a conversation
- ▶ practise using the communicative skills of the grade
- ▶ practise using the language functions and items of the grade
- ▶ think of questions the examiner may ask, as well as questions they can ask the examiner.

Please note candidates should not recite information they have learnt about the subject areas (see page 5).

Exam procedure

- ▶ The examiner chooses one subject area listed for the grade and says:

Let's talk about...

- ▶ The candidate and examiner exchange ideas, opinions and information about the subject area. After approximately three minutes the examiner changes the subject for discussion by saying:

Thank you. Now let's talk about...

- ▶ The candidate and examiner exchange ideas, opinions and information about the second subject area. After about three minutes the examiner brings the Conversation phase and the exam to an end.

GESE Grade 10 (CEFR C1.1) – Introduction

At Grade 10 candidates express beliefs and opinions and summarise information, ideas and arguments. They can also develop an argument and defend a point of view. They can use a broad range of complex grammatical structures with a high degree of grammatical accuracy.

There are two lists of conversation areas listed for this grade. The conversation areas are about abstract concepts and contemporary issues, so candidates need vocabulary to talk about subjects such as communication, equal opportunities, youth behaviour and social issues.



GESE Grade 10 – Language

Exam format

Total exam time: 25 minutes

The exam consists of five assessed phases:

- ▶ Formal presentation of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ A candidate-led discussion of the topic presentation with the examiner (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Interactive task (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Listening task (up to 3 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 6 minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Formal topic presentation phase

- ▶ Give a formal presentation, discursive in nature, on a chosen subject, with an identifiable structure and sequence, using discourse connectors and cohesive devices
- ▶ Introduce the presentation, develop particular points, give supporting reasons and examples
- ▶ Conclude the presentation by inviting questions and comments from the examiner

In the Topic discussion phase

- ▶ Initiate and engage the examiner in a discussion of some of the points made
- ▶ Share the responsibility with the examiner for the maintenance of the discussion
- ▶ Respond to the examiner's requests for clarification or elaboration
- ▶ Be prepared to defend a point of view and develop an argument further

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Take responsibility for the direction and maintenance of the interaction
- ▶ Utilise turn-taking conventions to ensure that the interaction flows and develops naturally
- ▶ Relate his or her own contributions closely to those of the examiner

In the Listening phase

- ▶ Understand a range of spoken texts and recognise implicit meaning
- ▶ Use contextual, grammatical and lexical cues to identify attitude, mood and intentions and anticipate what follows
- ▶ Use knowledge of grammar, lexis and register to identify context and participants from a piece of discourse

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Share the responsibility with the examiner for the maintenance of the conversation
- ▶ Offer new contributions to influence the direction of the conversation
- ▶ Participate without much obvious searching for expressions

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Developing an argument
- ▶ Defending a point of view
- ▶ Expressing beliefs
- ▶ Expressing opinions tentatively
- ▶ Summarising information, ideas and arguments
- ▶ Deducing

Grammar

- ▶ A broad range of complex structures to express thoughts clearly
- ▶ A high degree of grammatical accuracy, although minor errors may occur when attempting to use a combination of structures across sentence boundaries

Lexis

- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▶ A range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms
- ▶ Modifying words, eg *basically, quite, certainly*
- ▶ Intensifiers, eg *absolutely, completely, totally*
- ▶ Tentative expressions, eg *I may be wrong but..., Don't you think it might be...*
- ▶ Signposting words, eg *firstly, finally*
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ The clear pronunciation of topic and subject-area specific vocabulary
- ▶ Sounds with minimal interference from the first language
- ▶ A range of stress and intonation patterns, pitch and volume to:
 - engage and maintain the examiner's interest
 - signal the provision of new information
 - indicate discourse structure

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the appropriate list below. The centre should inform the examiner which list has been prepared by the candidate.

LIST A

- ▶ Roles in the family
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ The school curriculum
- ▶ Youth behaviour
- ▶ Use of the internet
- ▶ Designer goods

OR

LIST B

- ▶ International events
- ▶ Equal opportunities
- ▶ Social issues
- ▶ The future of the planet
- ▶ Scientific developments
- ▶ Stress management

Please note, Grade 10 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see guidance notes on page 4).

Grade 10 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level C1.1.

GESE Grade 10 – Example activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare students for a Trinity GESE Grade 10 exam. These activities will show teachers how they can develop their own classroom materials to practise the communicative skills and language needed for Grade 10. There are videos of GESE Grade 10 exams at trinitycollege.com/GESE-advanced

Please note the suggestions given in this booklet are only examples of some of the many ways of practising for the real exam. The suggestions are NOT models to be memorised. Examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help the candidates demonstrate the required language of Grade 10.

Activity 1: Choosing a discursive topic

This activity will guide students to a topic that is discursive and complex enough to demonstrate the language of the grade.

Tell the students that it is very important to prepare a discursive topic. Explain that the language functions focus largely on developing arguments and expressing beliefs, and that in the phase after the topic presentation the examiner will push them to defend a viewpoint.

Give them one minute with their partner to brainstorm ideas of topics which are discursive, then give them the list of topics below and five more minutes to decide together if the topics are good examples for GESE Grade 10 or not.

1. My best friend
2. Alternatives to plastic
3. Mixing business with politics
4. My job – being a nurse
5. Antibiotics – a coming crisis?

Monitor and offer support where needed. Some students might argue that example 4 could be discursive. Encourage them to think of more suitable options which have clear arguments on both sides.

Activity 2: Discussing the topic

This activity will help students to prepare for the kind of questions the examiner will ask them in the Topic discussion phase.

Give the candidates the list of questions and the functions below, Mix up the questions and get to them to work in pairs to decide which function each question is trying to elicit.

Function	Question
Developing an argument	Can you say more about... You said that ... but I don't really understand why... Do you think maybe there's another explanation?
Defending a point of view	I wouldn't agree with... Surely you can't be saying that... But they must have given a reason...
Expressing beliefs	What do you think is the most important... Why is it so important to... What would you do if you were suddenly placed in a position of power? What would you do today, or tomorrow?
Expressing opinions tentatively	I have a feeling there might be more to this; what do you think? Do you think it's possible that...?
Summarising information, ideas and arguments	What's the bottom line here? Could you clarify for me your point about...

Get students work in pairs to rewrite the questions to be relevant to one another's chosen topics. Students can then practise asking and answering the questions about their own topics.

Activity 3: Expressing opinions tentatively

Prepare cards with interactive prompts such as:

At my niece's school, homework is optional. Students only have to do it if they want to. I've even heard there's a move to get rid of it altogether.

Or use topics from the conversation list at Grade 10.

Students can then work in pairs and make a list of their opinions about the prompt or topic.

Students should share their ideas with peers in groups of three or four, adding additional opinions to their list.

Students work in new pairs to make their opinions more tentative by using questions or other tentative expressions. Here are some examples:

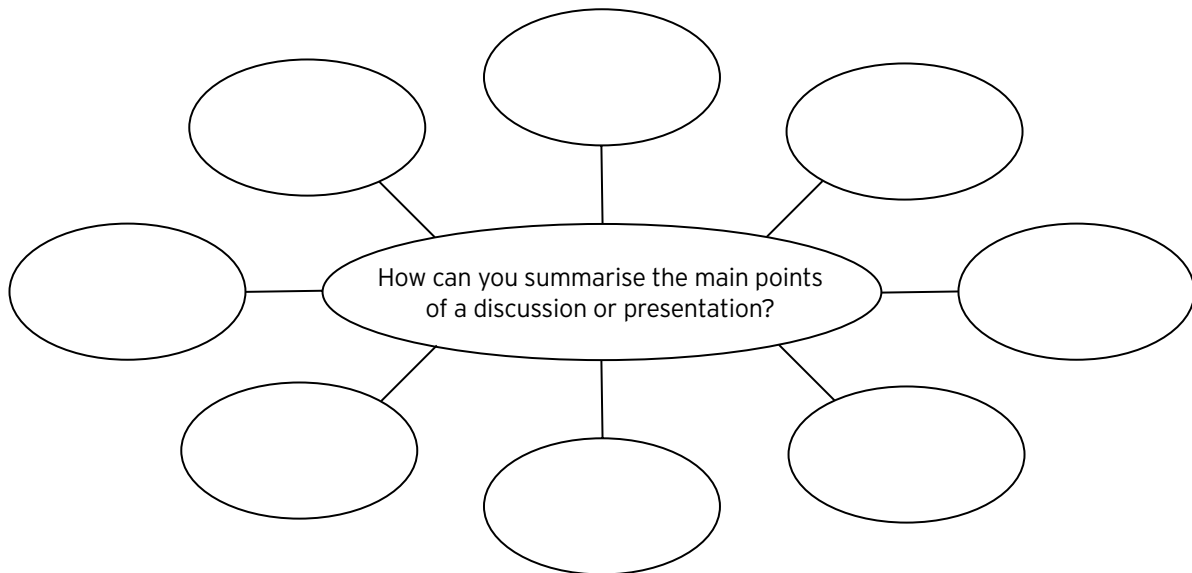
- ▶ I wouldn't want to suggest that..., but...
- ▶ Isn't it true that...?
- ▶ Wouldn't it be better if...?
- ▶ Don't you think it might be better if...?
- ▶ I may be wrong but...
- ▶ I'm inclined to think that...
- ▶ I'd like to think that...
- ▶ I'm not saying I'm right, but...

Students take on the role of candidate and examiner and interview each other on the interactive prompt or topic, giving their tentative opinions on the subject.

Activity 5 – Summarising: making a brief statement of the main points

Students are expected to be able to give a brief statement of the main points to summarise their presentation and can also summarise the main points in the interactive and conversation tasks.

Students work in pairs or small groups to fill in the mind map below with different expressions we can use to summarise. Students can add additional branches to the diagram if needed.



Students explain their completed diagram to a peer, adding additional phrases from their peer which they hadn't thought of.

Here are some ideas:

- ▶ The key points to bear in mind are...
- ▶ The key things to remember are...
- ▶ Drawing all the points together...
- ▶ The main point is...
- ▶ What I'm saying is...
- ▶ Are you saying that...?
- ▶ In a nutshell...
- ▶ To summarise...
- ▶ To sum up...
- ▶ When all things are considered...
- ▶ Taking everything into account...

Give students practice of the expressions by asking them to summarise the discussion they had in activity 2, using the phrases to help.

Function in action

Students can view examples of summarising by searching for TED talks at [TED.com](https://www.ted.com). A good example is David Christian's 'Big History'.

GESE Grade 11 (CEFR C1.2) – Introduction

At Grade 11, candidates have mastered the Grade 10 language and are ready to progress to the next grade. At Grade 11 learners express caution, empathy and reservations, they can justify an argument, infer meaning and evaluate different standpoints. They can use a broad range of complex grammatical structures with a high degree of grammatical accuracy.

There are two lists of conversation areas listed for this grade. The conversation areas are about abstract concepts and contemporary issues, so candidates need the vocabulary to talk about subjects such as stereotypes, young people's rights, the arts and economic issues.



GESE Grade 11 – Language

Exam format

Total exam time: 25 minutes

The exam consists of five assessed phases:

- ▶ Formal presentation of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ A candidate-led discussion of the topic presentation with the examiner (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Interactive task (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Listening task (up to 3 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 6 minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Formal topic presentation phase

- ▶ Give a formal presentation, discursive in nature, on a chosen subject, with an identifiable structure, using discourse connectors and cohesive devices and showing controlled use of organisational patterns
- ▶ Introduce the presentation, develop particular points, expand and support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, and integrate sub-themes fluently
- ▶ Bring the presentation to an appropriate conclusion by inviting questions and comments from the examiner

In the Topic discussion phase

- ▶ Initiate the discussion and encourage the examiner to comment and give his or her opinion on the ideas provided in the presentation
- ▶ Take responsibility for the maintenance of the discussion
- ▶ Be prepared to justify the ideas and opinions given in the presentation
- ▶ Respond to challenges made by the examiner spontaneously and appropriately

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Take full responsibility for maintaining the flow of conversation by changing its direction when a particular line of questioning dries up
- ▶ Negotiate towards a logical conclusion to the interaction

In the Listening phase

- ▶ Understand inferences and pick up on phonological clues
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to recognise a range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Take responsibility for the maintenance of the conversation
- ▶ Anticipate the direction of the conversation and cope with topic shifts
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to infer and extract meaning from vague or imprecise language
- ▶ Evaluate and challenge statements and arguments made by the examiner

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Justifying an argument
- ▶ Inferring
- ▶ Expressing caution
- ▶ Expressing empathy and sympathy
- ▶ Challenging arguments and opinions
- ▶ Evaluating different standpoints
- ▶ Expressing reservations

Grammar

- ▶ A broad range of complex structures, used flexibly and effectively in combination and contrast
- ▶ A high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to identify

Lexis

- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▶ A good range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms
- ▶ Signposting expressions, eg *I'd like to begin with...*, *Conversely...*, *To conclude...*
- ▶ Vague and imprecise language, eg *a bit more*, *a hundred people or so*
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ The clear pronunciation of topic and subject-area specific vocabulary
- ▶ Various features of pronunciation which only occasionally deviate from an internationally intelligible model
- ▶ A range of stress and intonation patterns, pitch and volume to convey subtle shifts in meaning and attitude

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the appropriate list below. The centre should inform the examiner which list has been prepared by the candidate.

LIST A

- ▶ Independence
- ▶ Ambitions
- ▶ Stereotypes
- ▶ Role models
- ▶ Competitiveness
- ▶ Young people's rights

OR

LIST B

- ▶ The media
- ▶ Advertising
- ▶ Lifestyles
- ▶ The arts
- ▶ The rights of the individual
- ▶ Economic issues

Please note, Grade 11 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see guidance notes on page 4).

Grade 11 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level C1.2.

GESE Grade 11 – Example activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare students for a Trinity GESE Grade 11 exam. These activities will show teachers how they can develop their own classroom materials to practise the communicative skills and language needed for Grade 11. There are videos of GESE Grade 11 exams at trinitycollege.com/GESE-advanced

Please note the suggestions given in this booklet are only examples of some of the many ways of practising for the real exam. The suggestions are NOT models to be memorised. Examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help the candidates demonstrate the required language of Grade 11.

Activity 1 – Planning a presentation

This activity will help students to think about how to plan their presentation and what elements to include.

Below is a list of features of presentations. Effective presentations will contain most of these elements. Give students the list of features and the example language below and ask them to work in pairs or small groups to decide which element the language represents.

The features of presentations:

- ▶ Opening remarks
- ▶ Invitation to discuss or ask questions
- ▶ Giving examples
- ▶ Introduction to presentation/staging
- ▶ Highlighting points
- ▶ Forward referencing
- ▶ Backward referencing
- ▶ Summarising and concluding
- ▶ Connectors and linking phrases

- ▶ My topic today is...
- ▶ I'm going to talk about...
- ▶ I'd like to talk about...

- ▶ As I said earlier...
- ▶ As I mentioned earlier...
- ▶ As I said before...

- ▶ To sum up...
- ▶ To summarise...
- ▶ In conclusion...

- ▶ As I'll discuss later...
- ▶ Later I'll come on to...
- ▶ I'll return to this point later.

- ▶ The interesting thing about ... is...
- ▶ As an illustration...
- ▶ To give you an example...

- ▶ Now I'd like to move on to...
- ▶ Next I'll talk about...
- ▶ Let's turn to...

- ▶ Do you have any questions or comments?
- ▶ Would you like to ask any questions?
- ▶ I now invite questions from the audience.

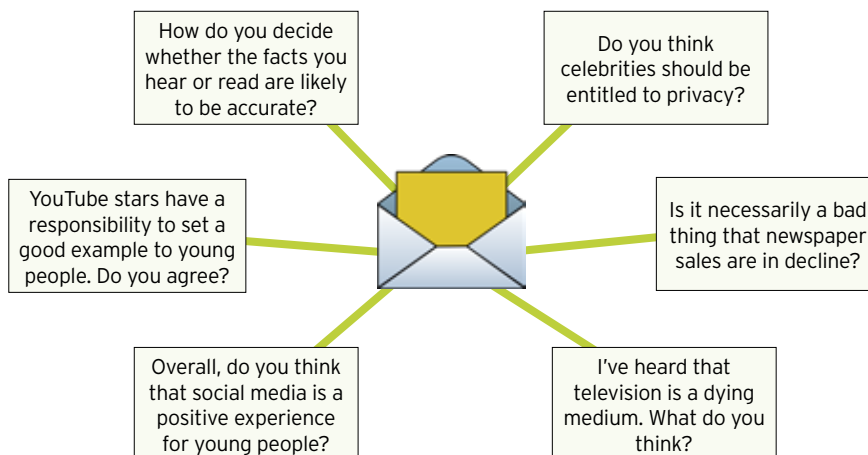
- ▶ And then.../and so.../then.../so.../because...
- ▶ Firstly/secondly/finally
- ▶ However.../on the other hand.../despite this.../nevertheless

- ▶ The first part of my talk concerns...
- ▶ I'll conclude with...
- ▶ Firstly I'd like to talk about... then I'll deal with...Finally I'd like to talk about...

When students plan and practise their own presentations they can try to include as many of these presentational features as possible.

Activity 2 – Preparing for the Conversation

- ▶ Prepare some envelopes with different discussion questions inside them for each of the Grade 11 conversation subject areas. Here are some examples for the media:



- ▶ Divide the class into small groups.
- ▶ Each group selects an envelope. They work through the discussion questions in their groups, taking it in turns to read the questions out loud and inviting comments and opinions.
- ▶ Repeat the activity. Each group choose a new envelope and topic.

Activity 3 – Expressing reservations

Established with the students what we mean by 'expressing reservations' (ie saying that we're not sure, we are tentative in what we think) Then, write the following words on the board.

- ▶ may
- ▶ entirely
- ▶ interesting
- ▶ but
- ▶ simplistic
- ▶ opinion
- ▶ as...as...
- ▶ more
- ▶ totally
- ▶ true
- ▶ sure
- ▶ full
- ▶ picture
- ▶ may not
- ▶ feeling
- ▶ complicated

Bearing the definition in mind, ask students to use the words to build expressions which help us to express reservations. They will need to use other words to build full expressions that are grammatically correct. The words can be used more than once. Example: This may or may not be true, but...

Other possible phrases are:

- ▶ I'm not entirely sure that...
- ▶ My feeling is that...
- ▶ I'm not totally sure that...
- ▶ That's an interesting idea, but...
- ▶ It's not as simplistic as that.
- ▶ In my opinion, it's more complicated than that.

Now ask students to work in pairs and practise expressing some reservations about the opinions and arguments for the following interactive topic:

A lot of young people nowadays are encouraged to go travelling around the world in order to broaden their experience of life. Personally, I think this is a complete waste of time.

Example: I'm not entirely sure that travelling around the world is a complete waste of time. I think it's more complicated than that.

Additionally, the students could practise with Grade 11 conversation topics.

Activity 4 – Challenging arguments and opinions

Give students a copy of the following topics at Grade 11.

LIST A

- ▶ Independence
- ▶ Ambitions
- ▶ Stereotypes
- ▶ Role models
- ▶ Competitiveness
- ▶ Young people's rights

OR

LIST B

- ▶ The media
- ▶ Advertising
- ▶ Lifestyles
- ▶ The arts
- ▶ The rights of the individual
- ▶ Economic issues

Divide students into pairs or threes. Assign two topics to each pair of students. Ask them to prepare individually two or three arguments or opinions for each one.

Next, one of the students becomes candidate and the other examiner and they role play a conversation phase for each topic. Their job is to challenge each other's arguments and opinions.

Monitor the students' conversations, noting the functional language they use as well as some common errors ready to give feedback. Here are some examples of functional language that they could use:

- ▶ I take your point, but...
- ▶ I'm not sure I agree with that
- ▶ I'm not convinced that's right
- ▶ To suggest that... doesn't seem right to me
- ▶ I find it difficult to accept/believe that...

Remind students there are different ways to express the functional language.

Function in action

Political discussion programmes often demonstrate language to challenge arguments and opinions. Students could watch and note the functional language used to challenge arguments and opinions.

Activity 5 – Justifying an argument

As a follow up to activity 2, students can support their opinion or argument by justifying it.

Students work in pairs or small groups to complete the 'argument' and 'justification' columns in the table below for the different topic areas. They can use their ideas from activity 2 or different ones.

Topic area	Argument	Functional language	Justification
Example: Role models	Footballers should behave like good role models.	I say that because...	...a child is often influenced by positive role models in sport or the media.
Example: Advertising	The best way to advertise is on social media.		
Lifestyles			
The arts			
Ambitions			
Economic issues			

Once students have some ideas, they should then think about the functional language they could use to introduce their justification. They should write ideas in the functional language column.

Discuss as a class and allow students to make notes. Here are some examples of the functional language they could use:

- ▶ Personally, I believe that...
- ▶ One reason for this is...
- ▶ An example of this is...
- ▶ This is supported by (the fact that)...
- ▶ Experts suggest that...
- ▶ That's because...
- ▶ From what I understand...
- ▶ As far as I'm concerned...
- ▶ As I see it...

In groups of three, students role play some conversations, taking turns to be examiner, candidate and listener. At the end of each turn, the listener should tell the examiner and candidate how successfully they justified their opinion, providing additional functional language if possible.

Function in action

Although humorous, Ken Robinson's TED talk 'Schools kill creativity' shows examples of justifying an argument and students may be interested in watching and identifying some of the examples used on the website TED.com

GESE Grade 12 (CEFR C2) – Introduction

At Grade 12, candidates assert, deny, soften and downplay propositions, contradict, imply and affirm. They can demonstrate a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language, reformulate ideas and convey finer shades of meaning with consistency. There is no set list of conversation subject areas, so candidates are expected to be able to discuss any subject of general or topical interest.



GESE Grade 12 – Language

Exam format

Total exam time: 25 minutes

The exam consists of five assessed phases:

- ▶ Formal presentation of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ A candidate-led discussion of the topic presentation with the examiner (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Interactive task (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Listening task (up to 3 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 6 minutes)

Candidate performance

In addition to the items listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Formal topic presentation phase

- ▶ Present a complex topic with a high degree of linguistic formality to the examiner, who will probably be unfamiliar with the subject matter
- ▶ Present a clear argument with an effective logical structure which helps the examiner to notice and remember significant points
- ▶ Bring the presentation to a logical conclusion by inviting questions and comments from the examiner

In the Topic discussion phase

- ▶ Initiate the discussion and actively seek ways in which to engage the examiner in a meaningful exchange of ideas and opinions
- ▶ Take full responsibility for the maintenance of the discussion
- ▶ Be able to deal effectively with the examiner's input by responding to a variety of conversational gambits and handling in-depth questioning

In the Interactive phase

- ▶ Control and sustain the discussion at all times
- ▶ Actively encourage the examiner's collaboration in the task
- ▶ Direct the interaction towards a successful conclusion

In the Listening phase

- ▶ Understand texts on abstract and complex topics which may be of a specialist nature beyond his or her own field
- ▶ Understand virtually everything heard when delivered at natural native speaker speed
- ▶ Identify implicit meaning

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Take full responsibility for the maintenance of the conversation
- ▶ Hold a discussion unconstrained by linguistic limitations, without showing signs of having to restrict what he or she wants to say
- ▶ Introduce his or her contribution into the joint discourse with natural turn-taking and referencing
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to make an unobtrusive substitution for a word or expression he or she is unable to recall

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Asserting
- ▶ Denying
- ▶ Softening and downplaying propositions
- ▶ Contradicting
- ▶ Implying
- ▶ Affirming

Grammar

- ▶ A comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis and eliminate ambiguity
- ▶ Differing linguistic forms to reformulate ideas and convey finer shades of meaning
- ▶ Complete and consistent grammatical control of highly complex language at all times

Lexis

- ▶ A good command of a very broad lexical repertoire
- ▶ A wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ Produce individual sounds so as to be fully understood by the examiner, with only a rare sound that deviates from an internationally intelligible model
- ▶ Stress and intonation patterns which are recognisably specific to English without any lapses in intelligibility

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

There are no specific subject areas for Grade 12.

Candidates should be able to make use of a wide range of vocabulary items relating to all other previous subject areas as well as other subjects of general or topical interest.

At this grade, candidates are expected to be able to enter into discussion on any subject that the examiner deems appropriate for the individual candidate. The age of the candidate will be taken into account when the examiner makes his or her choice.

Grade 12 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level C2.

GESE Grade 12 – Example activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare students for a Trinity GESE Grade 12 exam. These activities will show teachers how they can develop their own classroom materials to practise the communicative skills needed for Grade 12. There are videos of GESE Grade 12 exams at trinitycollege.com/GESE-advanced

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Activity 1 – Developing a topic

This activity will help students to plan and develop their presentations.

Give the students the presentation breakdown and list of discourse markers below. Ask them to make notes under each heading about their own topics. Students can then add discourse markers from the list that they could use in each part of their presentation.

Presentation sections

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Provide a clear indication of your position
- ▶ Present your first argument
- ▶ Present your second argument
- ▶ Present your third argument
- ▶ Indicate that there is another side to this argument, with some idea of the points likely to be made for the view(s) which are opposite to your own
- ▶ Reiterate your position and conclude

Discourse markers

- ▶ In addition...
- ▶ Firstly...
- ▶ Furthermore...
- ▶ I'll begin by talking about...
- ▶ Secondly...
- ▶ On the other hand...
- ▶ To sum up...
- ▶ I've chosen to talk about...
- ▶ In my opinion...
- ▶ In conclusion...
- ▶ Nonetheless...
- ▶ Thirdly...
- ▶ In this presentation I'm going to talk about...
- ▶ Personally, I believe that...

Activity 2 – The Interactive task

This activity will help students to prepare for the Interactive task and give them some ideas for keeping the conversation going.

Below are some statements that the examiner might make. Students should select a comment and a follow-up question to go with each one. There is more than one possible answer. Students can practise role-playing as examiner and candidate to experiment with making different comments and seeing what effect this has on the conversation.

Examiner's statement

- ▶ I've decided not to vote in any political elections ever.
- ▶ I've heard that a huge amount of oil has just been found in my country.
- ▶ My perfect house would be high in the mountains.
- ▶ Many celebrities like to get involved in charity work.
- ▶ I heard that constant texting can affect our brains.
- ▶ The government in my country has extended the school day by one hour each day.
- ▶ About 85% of the world's population now own a mobile phone.
- ▶ The benefits of doing unpaid work experience outweigh the drawbacks.

Comments

- ▶ Mmmm. That's unlikely.
- ▶ I'm not surprised
- ▶ That's always good to hear.
- ▶ Really?
- ▶ How awful.
- ▶ That's good news.
- ▶ Sorry I didn't catch that.
- ▶ That's incredible.

Follow-up questions

- ▶ Don't you think you'd feel isolated?
- ▶ But what could be the reason behind that?
- ▶ Could this have an impact on the price of petrol for car drivers?
- ▶ What proof is there to support that?
- ▶ How long have you had yours?
- ▶ Can you ever really trust politicians?
- ▶ Do you mean it's worth working for nothing?
- ▶ How have the students reacted?

Activity 3 – Implying

Brainstorm and elicit with students some possible topics for conversation at Grade 12, or use the following Grade 12 interactive prompt:

'It is often said that there should be no limits to the activities of the press, even when it comes to people's private lives. I couldn't agree more.'

Ask students to work in small groups to list three or four arguments or opinions about the prompt or one of the topic areas elicited. Write some of these ideas on the board.

Now, clarify with students what we mean by 'implying', ie communicate an idea without saying it directly or without the idea coming directly from the speaker.

With that in mind, now ask the students to transform one of the examples on the board into an implied opinion or argument, using functional language.

Example Direct opinion: I think everyone has the right to a private life.

Example Implied opinion: It's been suggested that everyone has the right to a private life
I've heard it said that everyone has the right to a private life
It's thought that everyone has the right to a private life
People suppose that everyone has the right to a private life
Experts suggest that everyone has the right to a private life
You only have to look at (the media/politics) to know that everyone has the right to a private life
I wonder if it would be better to ask if everyone has the right to a private life?

Ask students to transform their direct opinions into implied opinions, using functional language. Take feedback as a class, focusing on the use of different functional language for implying.

Students work in teams. One student says a direct opinion while the others in the group have to transform this into an implied opinion as quickly and accurately as possible, using functional language. The first team to come up with a sentence wins a point.

Activity 4 – Softening and downplaying propositions

In the conversation phase at Grade 12, students are expected to demonstrate their ability to soften and downplay their opinions and propositions.

Elicit from students what they understand by the term 'softening and downplaying propositions', ie you make people think it is less serious or important than it is. Elicit an example from the students to support their idea.

Students work in pairs to complete the gaps in the sentences on the left with words on the right to make softening and downplaying expressions

I'm not sure I know all the _____, but...	just answers only suppose question just maybe feel considered problem might
That's not the only _____ .	
_____ it's too strong, but...	
I'm not _____ saying that...	
I _____ it's possible that...	
It _____ be true that ...	
(Society) should also be _____ as one of the (arguments).	
It's not only a _____ of...	
I _____ there's more to it than _____ (economic issues).	

Ask students if they know any other words that can replace the words in the sentences, but keep the function of softening and downplaying the same. For example: 'just' could also be 'simply', 'suppose' could be 'guess' and 'maybe' could be 'perhaps'. How does the formality change?

You can also take current news headlines or topics from English news websites on the internet which will stimulate discussion. Students can work in pairs to brainstorm some propositions.

Students can then work in pairs (examiner and candidate) to role play a discussion on the topic and practise the softening expressions.

Function in action

Students can search for examples of political discussions or news reports on the headlines they found, watching them to find examples of the softening and downplaying function in context.

Activity 5 – Asserting and denying

In small groups, give students the following phrases on cards. Ask them to discuss and categorise them into either 'asserting' or 'denying'. Ask them to justify their choice.

Asserting	Denying
I can see the advantages of...	I never said that...
I strongly believe that...	I wasn't trying to say that...
It seems logical that...	That's not what I'm saying...
I have to say that...	That's not what I meant
I'm afraid that's not right...	I didn't mean that...
I must argue/disagree with that...	I think you've misunderstood my point
I'm totally in favour of...	There's no truth in that idea. Where is the evidence?
I really do think that...	No, it's not the case that...

Students prepare three or four opinions or arguments on a particular topic or Interactive task. Here is an example Interactive task they could discuss:

'One effect of increased globalisation is that minority languages are gradually becoming extinct. Many people regret this but I'm not sure it's such a bad thing.'

Next, in pairs or small groups, students take on the role of candidate or examiner to practise discussions in which they should assert or deny their point of view on the topic.

Function in action

Students can watch discussions between a politician and interviewer, noting the language they use to assert or deny their points of view.

