

Section 8 Foreign Languages

Article 1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To develop students' communication abilities such as accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc., deepening their understanding of language and culture, and fostering a positive attitude toward communication through foreign languages.

Article 2 SUBJECTS

I. Basic English Communication

1. Objective

To develop students' basic abilities such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, while fostering a positive attitude toward communication through the English language.

2. Contents

(1) Based on 1. Objective, appropriate language activities should be conducted in English, with reference to the language activities stated in Chapter 2, Section 9, II. 2. (1) of the Course of Study for Lower Secondary School.

(2) To effectively conduct the language activities stated in (1), upon evaluation of the extent to which each student has mastered the items introduced in lower secondary schools, consideration should be given as to the appropriate mode of instruction, with reference to the points stated in Chapter 2, Section 9, II. 2. (2) A. of the Course of Study for Lower Secondary School.

3. Treatment of the Contents

In order to ensure continuity with lower secondary education and a smooth transition to English Communication I, the basic items introduced in lower secondary schools should be mastered by reviewing them through systematic instruction at the same time as experiencing language activities occurring mainly in everyday situations.

II. English Communication I

1. Objective

To develop students' basic abilities such as accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc., while fostering a positive attitude toward communication through the English language.

2. Contents

(1) The following language activities, designed for specific language-use situations in order to encourage students to apply their abilities to understand and convey information, ideas, etc., should be conducted in English.

A. Understanding information, ideas, etc., and grasping the outline and the main points by listening to introductions to specified topics, dialogues, etc.

B. Understanding information, ideas, etc., and grasping the outline and the main points by reading explanations, stories, etc. Reading passages aloud so that the meaning of the content is expressed.

C. Discussing and exchanging opinions on information, ideas, etc., based on what one has heard, read, learned and experienced.

D. Writing brief passages on information, ideas, etc., based on what one has heard, read,

learned and experienced.

(2) To effectively conduct the language activities stated in (1), consideration should be given to the following instructional points.

A. Listening and speaking with due attention to the characteristics of English sounds, such as rhythm and intonation, speed, volume, etc.

B. Reading and writing with due attention to phrases and sentences indicating the main points, connecting phrases, etc.

C. Understanding and conveying matters, distinguishing facts, opinions, etc.

3. Treatment of the Contents

(1) Based on general instruction to develop basic communication abilities given in lower secondary schools, the four areas of language activities should be interlinked for comprehensive learning, while incorporating appropriate language activities involving speaking and writing about content heard or read.

(2) Consideration should be given so that students master the items introduced in lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools through repeated instruction in accordance with students' circumstances, while experiencing various situational language activities.

III. English Communication II

1. Objective

To further develop students' abilities such as accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc., while fostering a positive attitude toward communication through the English language.

2. Contents

(1) The following language activities, designed for specific language-use situations in order to encourage students to apply their abilities to understand and convey information, ideas, etc., should be conducted in English.

A. Understanding information, ideas, etc., and grasping the outline and the main points by listening to introductions to specified topics, reports, dialogues, discussions, etc.

B. Reading explanations, commentaries, stories, essays, etc. in accordance with the purpose such as rapid reading, intensive reading, etc. Reading aloud and reciting passages so that the meaning of the content is expressed.

C. Drawing conclusions through discussion, etc., on information, ideas, etc. based on what one has heard, read, learned and experienced.

D. Writing coherent and cohesive passages on information, ideas, etc. based on what one has heard, read, learned and experienced.

(2) To effectively conduct the language activities stated in (1), consideration should be given to the following instructional points.

A. Listening and speaking with due attention to the characteristics of English sounds, plot development, etc.

B. Reading and writing with due attention to passage structure, relation to charts and tables, etc., while clarifying the points of the argument, evidence, etc.

C. Listening and reading while guessing the meaning of unknown words and using background knowledge.

D. Speaking and writing to effectively convey the meaning to the audience, using carefully thought-out explanations and descriptions.

3. Treatment of the Contents

The same considerations stated in 3. of English Communication I should be applied.

IV. English Communication III

1. Objective

To enhance students' abilities such as accurately understanding and appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc., and enable them to use such abilities in their social lives, while fostering a positive attitude toward communication through the English language.

2. Contents

(1) Based on 1. Objectives, the language activities stated in 2. (1) of English Communication II should be further developed.

(2) When conducting language activities stated in (1), the same considerations stated in 2. (2) of English Communication II should be applied.

3. Treatment of the Contents

The same considerations stated in 3. of English Communication I should be applied.

V. English Expression I

1. Objective

To develop students' abilities to evaluate facts, opinions, etc. from multiple perspectives and communicate through reasoning and a range of expression, while fostering a positive attitude toward communication through the English language.

2. Contents

(1) The following language activities, designed for specific language-use situations in order to encourage students to apply their abilities to understand and convey information, ideas, etc., should be conducted in English.

A. Impromptu speaking on a given topic. Speaking concisely in a style suitable for the audience and purpose.

B. Writing brief passages in a style suitable for the audience and purpose.

C. Summarizing and presenting information, ideas, etc., based on what one has heard, read, learned and experienced.

(2) To effectively conduct the language activities stated in (1), consideration should be given to the following instructional points.

A. Speaking with due attention to the characteristics of English sounds such as rhythm and intonation, speed, volume, etc.

B. Writing with due attention to phrases and sentences indicating the main points, connecting phrases, etc. and reviewing one's own writing.

C. Learning presentation methods, expressions used in presentations, etc. and applying them to real-life situations.

D. Forming one's own opinion by comparing what one has heard or read with opinions from other sources, and identifying similarities and differences.

3. Treatment of the Contents

(1) Based on general instruction to develop basic communication abilities given in lower secondary schools, students should be instructed so as to improve their abilities to convey information, ideas, etc., while focusing on language activities involving speaking and writing.

(2) Instruction on speaking and writing should be conducted more effectively through integration with listening and reading activities.

(3) Consideration should be given so that students master the items introduced in lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools through repeated instruction in accordance

with students' circumstances, while experiencing various situational language activities.

VI. English Expression II

1. Objective

To further develop students' abilities to evaluate facts, opinions, etc. from multiple perspectives and communicate through reasoning and a range of expression, while fostering a positive attitude toward communication through the English language.

2. Contents

(1) The following language activities, designed for specific language-use situations in order to encourage students to apply their abilities to understand and convey information, ideas, etc., should be conducted in English.

A. Impromptu speaking in accordance with the given conditions. Expressing what one wants to say in a coherent and logical manner.

B. Writing various kinds of passages on a provided theme.

C. Summarizing and presenting information, ideas, etc. based on what one has heard, read, learned and experienced. Asking questions and giving opinions after hearing a presentation.

D. Deciding a stance on a topic open to a range of debates, organizing an argument, and exchanging opinions so as to persuade others.

(2) To effectively conduct the language activities stated in (1), consideration should be given to the following instructional points.

A. Speaking with due attention to the characteristics of English sounds, plot development, etc.

B. Writing with due attention to passage structure, relation to charts and tables, expressions, etc., while clarifying the points of the argument, evidence, etc., and reviewing and revising one's own writing.

C. Learning presentation methods, rules of debate and discussion, expressions used in these activities, etc., and applying them to real-life situations.

D. Making use of each other's ideas to solve problems, while respecting others' opinions and ideas and comparing each other's statements so as to broaden one's own mind.

3. Treatment of the Contents

The same considerations stated in 3. of English Expression I should be applied.

VII. English Conversation

1. Objective

To develop students' abilities to hold conversations on everyday topics, while fostering a positive attitude toward communication through the English language.

2. Contents

(1) The following language activities, designed for specific language-use situations in order to encourage students to apply their abilities to understand and convey information, ideas, etc., should be conducted in English.

A. Understanding what others are saying, and responding appropriately according to the situation and purpose.

B. Posing questions on matters of interest and responding to questions from others.

C. Appropriately conveying information, ideas, etc., in accordance with the situation and purpose, based on what one has heard, read, learned and experienced.

D. Holding conversations using basic expressions needed when living overseas.

- (2) To effectively conduct the language activities stated in (1), consideration should be given to the following instructional points.
- A. Listening and speaking with due attention to the characteristics of English sounds such as rhythm and intonation, speed, volume, etc.
 - B. Using expressions required in asking for repetition, paraphrasing, etc.
 - C. Understanding the role of non-verbal means of communication such as gestures, and using them appropriately according to the situation and purpose.

3. Treatment of the Contents

- (1) Based on general instruction to develop basic communication abilities given in lower secondary schools, students should be instructed so as to improve their listening and speaking abilities, while proactively incorporating language activities simulating real-life conversations.
- (2) Instruction on listening and speaking should be conducted more effectively through integration with reading and writing activities.
- (3) Students should master the items introduced in lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools through repeated instruction in accordance with students' circumstances, while experiencing various situational language activities.

VIII. Foreign Languages other than English

Instruction for foreign languages other than English should follow the Objectives and Contents for each subject stated in I. through VII. and Article 3.

Article 3 COMMON CONTENTS FOR EACH ENGLISH SUBJECT

1. When conducting language activities stated in 2. (1) for each English subject, appropriate language-use situations and functions of language may be selected from below and combined in a way suitable for achieving the objective of each subject.

[Examples of Language-use Situations]

a. Situations where fixed expressions are often used:

- Shopping
 - Talking on the phone
 - Traveling
 - Exchange of letters and e-mails
 - Having meals
- etc.

b. Situations which are likely to occur in students' everyday lives and in social lives:

- Home life
 - Community activities
 - Learning and activities at school
 - Activities in the workplace
- etc.

c. Obtaining information, etc., through a variety of media:

- Reading books, newspapers, articles, etc.
 - Watching TV programs, movies, etc.
 - Accessing information using communication networks
- etc.

[Examples of Functions of Language]

a. Facilitating communication:

- Nodding
 - Paraphrasing
 - Asking for repetition
 - Developing a topic
 - Repeating
 - Changing topics
- etc.

b. Expressing emotions:

- Praising
- Expressing desire etc.
- Apologizing
- Expressing surprise
- Expressing gratitude
- Expressing concern

c. Transmitting information:

- Explaining
- Reasoning etc.
- Reporting
- Summarizing
- Describing
- Correcting

d. Expressing opinions and intentions:

- Offering
- Asserting etc.
- Agreeing
- Inferring
- Disagreeing
- Assuming

e. Instigating action:

- Requesting
- Advising etc.
- Inviting
- Giving orders
- Permitting
- Calling attention

2. When conducting language activities stated in 2. (1) of each English subject, appropriate language elements should be selected from Chapter 2, Section 9, II. 2. (3) of the Course of Study for Lower Secondary School and the items below in a way suitable for achieving the objective of each subject. When instructing English Communication I, all items listed in C. should be appropriately introduced by linking them effectively with language activities.

A. Vocabulary, collocations and common expressions

(a) Vocabulary

- a. For English Communication I, about 400 new words should be added to those introduced in lower secondary schools.
- b. For English Communication II, about 700 new words should be added to those stipulated in a.
- c. For English Communication III, about 700 new words should be added to those stipulated in b.
- d. For Basic English Communication, English Expression I, English Expression II and English Conversation, appropriate words should be introduced with consideration to students' capacities so that they are not overburdened.

(b) Frequently used collocations and common expressions

B. Frequently used sentence structures

C. Grammatical items

- (a) Use of infinitives
- (b) Use of relative pronouns
- (c) Use of relative adverbs
- (d) Use of auxiliary verbs
- (e) The pronoun *it* in reference to noun phrases or noun clauses that follow
- (f) Verbal tenses, etc.
- (g) Subjunctive mood
- (h) Participial construction

3. When using the language elements stated in 2., consideration should be given to the following points:

A. Contemporary standard English should be used. At the same time, consideration should also be given to the reality that different varieties of English are used to communicate around the world.

- B. Grammar instruction should be given as a means to support communication through effective linkage with language activities.
 - C. Phrases, sentence structures, grammatical items, etc., required for communication should be taught in a way applicable to real-life situations, without centering instruction on the distinction of terms and usage, etc.
4. When taking into consideration the characteristics of each English subject, classes, in principle, should be conducted in English in order to enhance the opportunities for students to be exposed to English, transforming classes into real communication scenes. Consideration should be given to use English in accordance with the students' level of comprehension.

Article 4 CURRICULUM DESIGN AND TREATMENT OF THE CONTENTS FOR EACH SUBJECT

1. In designing the curriculum, consideration should be given to the following points.
 - (1) In principle, English Communication II should be introduced after covering English Communication I, English Communication III after covering English Communication II, and English Expression II after English Expression I.
 - (2) When implementing Basic English Communication, English Communication I should, in principle, be introduced after covering Basic English Communication.
2. In the treatment of the contents, consideration should be given to the following points.
 - (1) In order to cultivate communication abilities through foreign languages in a comprehensive manner, teaching materials that give sufficient consideration to actual language-use situations and functions of language should be used according to the objectives of each subject. Teachers should take up a variety of suitable materials in accordance with the level of students' development, as well as their interests and concerns, covering materials that relate to the daily lives, manners and customs, stories, geography, history, traditional culture, natural science, etc., of Japanese people and the people of the world, focusing on countries that use the foreign language being taught. Special consideration should be given to the following points.
 - A. Materials that are useful in understanding various viewpoints and ways of thinking, developing the ability to make impartial judgments and cultivating a rich sensibility.
 - B. Materials that are useful in deepening the understanding of the ways of life and cultures of Japan and foreign countries, raising interest in language and culture, and developing respectful attitudes toward these elements.
 - C. Materials that are useful in deepening international understanding from a broad perspective, heightening students' awareness of being Japanese citizens living in a global community, and cultivating a spirit of international cooperation.
 - D. Materials that are useful in deepening individual thinking on humanity, society, nature, etc.
 - (2) Phonetic notation may be employed to supplement phonetic instruction.
 - (3) Students should learn how to use dictionaries and through such instruction be encouraged to have a positive attitude toward lifelong learning and using a foreign language on their own.
 - (4) In the instruction of each subject, teachers should devise teaching methods and styles, incorporating pair work, group work, etc., as appropriate, utilizing suitable audio-visual teaching materials, computers, communication networks, etc. Moreover, team-teaching classes conducted in cooperation with native speakers, etc. should be carried out in order to develop students' communication abilities and to deepen their international understanding.