Elementary Cycles One and Two
English as a Second Language Programs

Teacher’s Handbook

Getting Ready to Teach English as a Second Language in a Combined Elementary 2 and Elementary 3 Class

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class presents the challenge of working with two distinct programs that have different approaches to second language learning. However, this challenge is eased since the competencies developed in Elementary Cycle One prepare students to develop the Elementary Cycle Two competencies.

This handbook offers teachers ten suggestions for ensuring students’ development of their respective ESL competencies and essential knowledge in a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class. Suggestions on managing the group of students as a whole will also be provided, whenever possible.

In addition, four Learning and Evaluation Situations (LES) designed for a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class are available on the ESLInsight website (eslinsight.qc.ca). These LES illustrate how to use the proposed suggestions and will be referred to throughout this handbook. They are entitled:

- Can’t Fall Asleep
- What Season Is It? Perhaps You Know.
- Who Can Guide My Sleigh Tonight?
- You Are What You Eat!

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1 The Elementary Cycle One ESL program reflects research showing that young learners benefit more from living the language (natural emergence) than from learning about it. The Elementary Cycle Two ESL program reflects the latest research on the communicative approach, which indicates that when students are made aware of the structure of the target language, the speed at which they become skilled communicators is greatly accelerated. (Progression of Learning, p. 3 and Elementary Cycle Two ESL Program, p. 352)
1. Students in a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class

Students in a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class have already experienced the Elementary Cycle One ESL program. That is, Elementary 2 students have finished the first year of the program and Elementary 3 students have completed the second year. Both groups of students have developed, to different degrees, the two Cycle One ESL competencies, *To act on understanding of texts* (C1) and *To communicate orally in English* (C2). They have a lot in common in their learning experience of the second language.

All these students are used to:

- participating in classroom routines
- engaging in tasks related to familiar topics
- being in an interactive English environment
- listening to authentic stories
- joining in recurrent passages of stories read aloud
- imitating specific actions to show understanding of texts
- developing strategies, guided by the teacher
- observing frequent modelling by the teacher
- participating in activities that have been scaffolded (broken down into smaller steps)
- self-monitoring and self-evaluation using a reflection tool

However, there are differences between Elementary 2 and Elementary 3 students. Elementary 3 students can better express themselves orally using strings of words and short expressions; have a greater repertoire of songs, rhymes and stories; are more at ease working in pairs; can create personalized versions of texts and have greater awareness of helpful strategies to learn a second language.
2. Developing the competencies: *To communicate orally in English* (Cycle One) and *To interact orally in English* (Cycle Two)

Comparing the Elementary Cycle One ESL program to the Elementary Cycle Two ESL program allows us to target the common elements between the two programs when developing the competencies: *To communicate orally in English* (Cycle One) and *To interact orally in English* (Cycle Two). These links help to manage a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class as a whole, without having to teach one group of students first and then the other. These common elements are:

- Tapping into classroom routines (Suggestion A)
- Using tasks related to familiar topics (Suggestion B)
- Creating an interactive English environment (Suggestion C)

**Suggestion A: Tapping into classroom routines**

Routines help establish a safe, predictable environment, which reassures students since they know what to expect. Classroom routines also expose students to recurrent language, which encourages them to participate and to use English from the very start.

The chart below describes what is meant by classroom routines, gives examples of expressions that could be used and illustrates the progression of the element *classroom routines* from Cycle One to Cycle Two.
It is important to remember that Elementary 2 students are acquiring, at their own pace, contextual language that they pick up while being exposed to songs, rhymes and stories, and by participating in classroom routines. In this way, students build a personal language repertoire made up of words and short expressions. At the same time, Elementary 3 students are learning to express themselves using targeted functional language (i.e. useful expressions and vocabulary) taught and practised in class. Elementary 2 students can benefit from hearing functional language as they will pick up certain words and expressions and add them to their personal language repertoire of contextual language. On the other hand, Elementary 3 students are expected to use targeted functional language.
**Suggestion B: Using tasks related to familiar topics**

The chart below presents the learning contexts of the two elementary-level programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Elementary 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>Elementary 3</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cycle One ESL Program, p. 13</td>
<td>POL, p. 4 (learning context)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>By the end of Elementary Cycle One, through continuous exposure to an all-English environment, students have acquired an overall understanding of the language commonly used in the classroom. They respond appropriately in familiar situations.</em></td>
<td><em>Creation of a personal repertoire of functional language by participating in classroom routines and through tasks mostly pertaining to familiar environments.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Elementary 2, familiar situations stem from classroom life.

> *Classroom life refers to everything that takes place during the English class from start to finish: greetings, instructions, modelling, learning activities, routines, reflection time, leave-taking, etc. All are done using the second language.* 

(Elementary Cycle One ESL program, p. 7)

In Elementary 3, tasks are centred on familiar environments such as school, home, neighbourhood, family. Given this context, the teacher can select, modify or create tasks on familiar topics for the whole group.

**Suggestion C: Creating an interactive English environment**

To help create an interactive English environment, the teacher may use the following resources designed to support the implementation of the Elementary Cycle One and Cycle Two ESL programs:

- the Elementary Cycle One ESL handbook “Using Only English in Class”
- the Elementary Cycles Two and Three ESL handbook “Using English in the ESL Classroom”
- the Elementary Cycles Two and Three ESL “Strategies Posters”
- the Elementary Cycles Two and Three ESL “Oral Interaction Posters”
Here is an example taken from page 8 of the Elementary Cycle One handbook “Using Only English in Class”:

Next, comes the wording of instructions. Taking some time to think ahead about the right choice of words makes a big difference for students with little prior knowledge of English.

Serious consideration is given to:
- use of prior knowledge (familiar words and expressions)
- use of cognates (words that are similar in English and French)
- short and simple sentence structure

Then, teachers plan the use of:
- visual supports (objects, pictures)
- meaningful gestures and facial expressions to support understanding, especially for important new words and expressions

In addition, the teacher can plan students’ use of English by preparing the visual support that will be needed for communication. To remind students of the expected outcomes, the teacher can use the “Using English” Cycle One flashcard and the Cycle Two oral interaction poster no. 25, “Let’s speak English!” for Elementary 3 students only.

The teacher can also encourage the use of strategies such as risk-taking, asking for help and practice by displaying the following posters.
To practise a strategy, Elementary 2 students will use contextual language, whereas Elementary 3 students will need to be introduced and often directed to the appropriate oral interaction poster. For example, when using the strategy *asking for help*, Elementary 2 students will use contextual language such as “*Problem!*,” whereas Elementary 3 students will use targeted functional language such as the expressions on the following poster:

![Poster with examples of phrases](image)

Flashcards of key elements from stories explored in class can also be posted as visual aids to encourage all students to reuse the vocabulary in various situations.

![Flashcards](image)

To help Elementary 3 students communicate successfully while working in pairs, targeted oral interaction posters can be displayed in students' immediate view for easy referral.

![Posters with phrases](image)

The previous examples illustrate when to use common resources for the whole group and when to differentiate in order to respect each ESL program.
3. Developing the competencies: *To act on understanding of texts* (Cycle One) and *To reinvest understanding of oral and written texts* (Cycle Two)

Comparing the Elementary 2 competency *To act on understanding of texts* to the Elementary 3 competency *To reinvest understanding of oral and written texts* allows us to establish certain common elements. These common elements will be explained in the following sections:

- 3.1 The “comprehension” component (Suggestion D & E)
- 3.2 The “final product” component (Suggestion F, G & H)

### 3.1 The “comprehension” component

It is advantageous to have all students listen to authentic stories with recurrent/redundant elements as this is common to both programs. Moreover, since both competencies require students to identify certain key elements (e.g. *characters, objects, places*), planning a similar activity for students to show their understanding of the story can facilitate classroom management. The following suggestions explore:

- using authentic stories read aloud
- using illustrations to help students demonstrate understanding of stories

**Suggestion D: Using authentic stories read aloud**

Students at both levels have to prepare to listen to the story. Guided by the teacher, they start constructing meaning of the story by using provided contextual cues such as the story’s title and the book illustrations. All students are invited to predict the content of the story, since the strategy **predicting** is part of the essential knowledge in both programs. Students also prepare to listen to the story by observing the teacher present the visual support representing the key elements from the story (e.g. *posters with images, vocabulary flashcards*).

When listening to the story for the first time, students continue constructing its meaning by recognizing the key elements previously presented by the teacher and verifying their initial predictions.
During the second listening, all students can anticipate the events in the story and join in by saying aloud the recurrent passages along with the teacher. When students actively participate, it adds to the pleasure of listening to the story and allows them to demonstrate their understanding.

**A tip from teachers**

After listening to the story a few times, each Elementary 3 student could pair up with an Elementary 2 student and read the story to their partner using extra copies of the book. This experience has benefits for both students. Indeed, Elementary 3 students gain a sense of responsibility and practise reading a text to someone, keeping in mind how the story was read to them. Imitation of pronunciation and intonation, as well as the way the teacher uses the illustrations, help both the reader and the listener increase their understanding of the story.

**Suggestion E: Using illustrations to help students demonstrate understanding of stories**

The following chart presents the elements of knowledge related to the demonstration of understanding of texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXTUAL LANGUAGE</th>
<th>TEXT COMPONENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key elements</td>
<td>Key elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Orally identifies characters, actions, objects and places</td>
<td>■ Identifies and briefly describes characters, people, animals, objects, place and setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Key elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Orally identifies main events</td>
<td>■ Sequences events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Progression of Learning, English as a Second Language, Category 4 – Text Components*
Activities used to help students demonstrate understanding take into account the fact that **there are no reading and writing expected outcomes for Elementary 2 students.** All students can partake in the same activity if it is done orally, using illustrations to support Elementary 2 students. Here are examples taken from two LES:

**Who Can Guide My Sleigh Tonight?**
Using various Teacher Tools (TT), the teacher:

- Prepares the class for story time.
- Distributes, randomly to each student, one flashcard for the following key elements of the story:
  - Animals: TT4k and TT4l, TT5a-TT5m
  - Actions: TT6a-TT6j
- Informs students that they will hear the story read a third time.
- Explains that when students hear the names of the animals and actions indicated on their flashcards, they will stand up, show their flashcards and mime the actions.

**You Are What You Eat!**
Using Student Handout no. 6 (SH6), the teacher:

- Reminds them to look at and listen to the teacher.
- Informs students they are going to retell the story in their own way using their completed SH6 (student handout).
- Models with a student how to retell the story:
  
  **T says:** On Monday the caterpillar ate through one apple. But he was still hungry. Your turn.

  **S says:** On Tuesday the caterpillar ate through two pears. Your turn.

- Asks students to turn to a partner.
- Invites students to take turns retelling one sequence of the story to their partner using their own words and their completed timeline, SH6.

3.2 **The “final product” component**

One of the big questions teachers have in managing a combined Elementary 2 and 3 classroom is: **How can I reconcile the creation of a personalized version of the text in Elementary 2 with the personalized product in the reinvestment task in Elementary 3?**

Students prepare a **personalized version** of a text using a template containing the essence of the original story. The template requires that Elementary 2 students fill in the blanks with the missing language elements of their choice. The final version is personalized because students select words and expressions from the class resources that they have previously built together in order to complete the template.
Students deliver a **personalized product** individually at the end of the reinvestment task. In the Cycle Two program, students are expected to use functional language in addition to information/ideas from the original text(s) and combine them with their own ideas in creative ways, in order to deliver a unique final product. The Venn diagram below illustrates the steps involved in creating both final products:

The personalized version of the text and the personalized product of the reinvestment task both require Elementary 2 and Elementary 3 students to plan, use resources, personalize their own text and reflect on their learning, all with the teacher's support. These similarities offer teachers the possibility of teaching to the entire group of students at the same time. The next suggestions will address:

- planning a similar format and time frame for the final products
- having the whole class participate in preparing the resources for the final products
- using a common planning tool for the final products
**Suggestion F: Planning a similar format and time frame for the final products**

The challenge in a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class is to find a similar format and time frame for students to deliver their final product, while respecting the requirements of each ESL program.

To take up this challenge, the first step is to create a model of a personalized version of the text for Elementary 2 students. To do so, the teacher creates a fill-in-the-blanks template by writing down the essence of the original story and adding blank spaces to be filled in with the targeted language elements. The teacher then decides on the template format, such as a flap book, a mini-book or a shape book. Next, the teacher finds a reinvestment task with a similar format for Elementary 3 in which students are required to use functional language and information/ideas from the original text, along with their own ideas. This process ensures that all students develop their respective ESL competencies and related knowledge.
Here are two examples from the LES *What Season Is It? Perhaps You Know*. Notice that the format of the final product is a **flap book** for both levels.

**Elementary 2**
Personalized version of text using a template
Format: a flap book (empty template)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There was a hot man who ate a big camera.</th>
<th>There was a man who ate blue jeans.</th>
<th>He ate a large T-shirt.</th>
<th>He ate cool, new running shoes.</th>
<th>Out popped...</th>
<th>Imagine that! I don’t know the season. Perhaps you know.</th>
<th>It’s summer.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>By Manon</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elementary 3**
Personalized product in the reinvestment task
Format: a flap book (teacher model)

- Fold on the bold line
- Cut on the dotted lines
**Suggestion G: Having the whole class participate in the preparation of the resources for the final products**

All students participate in preparing the class resources for the creation of the final products. Both Elementary 2 and 3 students will use most of these resources. The teacher presents students with categories for the different language elements from the story book. Below are some examples of headings for categories, taken from three different LES:

![Images of spring objects, good food, animals]

To create the class resources, Elementary 2 and 3 students activate their prior knowledge and suggest words and expressions to the teacher. Students can either refer to the flashcards or suggest new words, which are then posted on the board under the corresponding category heading.

Words and expressions brainstormed specifically for the personalized product in the reinvestment task will be clearly identified as such (i.e. to be used by Elementary 3 students only). Given that a reinvestment task is more complex than a personalized version of text task, students may need to refer to various resources (e.g. word/expression banks of functional language, oral interaction posters, graphic organizers, models, books, checklists, information and communications technologies) to carry out the reinvestment task.

Here is an example taken from the LES *You Are What You Eat!*

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**Building resources for Elementary 3**
- Posts the remaining heading, **adjectives** (TT18b), on the board.
  ![adjectives](image)
- Tells students that this heading is only for the Elementary 3 students to create their personalized product, but that everybody will participate.
**Suggestion H: Using a common planning tool for the final products**

It is possible to use a common planning tool for the final products for both cycles. For example, a combined tool, such as a story builder, can be used to create a personalized version of a story in Elementary 2 and a personalized product in the reinvestment task in Elementary 3. The resulting tool presents parts that are common to both levels, as well as a shaded section that is only for Elementary 3 students. This will help the teacher manage the group as a whole, modelling how to create a personalized version and a personalized product using the same tool and the same resources. Here is an example taken from the LES *What Season Is It? Perhaps You Know:*

In this example, Parts A and B are common to both levels. Part C is reserved for Elementary 3 students and is tailored to the nature of the reinvestment task. Part C will also be used by Elementary 3 students when developing Competency 3 *To write texts.* This will be addressed in the next section.
4. Developing the competency: *To write texts* (Cycle Two only)

In the Elementary Cycle Two ESL program, the competency *To write texts* initiates Elementary 3 students to writing as a process.

**Meaning of the Competency**

This competency enables elementary students to write for purposes that are significant to them (greeting cards, comic strips, class yearbook, Web page, email, etc.). Using models as guides and sources of inspiration, they start expressing themselves in written English while paying attention to the quality of their writing. The aim is not to have students systematically learn language conventions, but to apply them to the composition of texts while having access to a variety of resources. To do so, students are initiated to writing as a process and benefit from teamwork and teacher assistance throughout the process.

Elementary Cycle Two ESL Program, p.358

How can writing as a process be taught in a combined Elementary 2 and 3 class, since Elementary 2 students are not expected to write texts? Moreover, what do Elementary 2 students do while Elementary 3 students are writing texts? The following suggestions will address:

- Focusing on language conventions used in the story (Suggestion I)
- Including the writing of a text in the reinvestment task (Suggestion J)

**Suggestion I: Focusing on language conventions used in the story**

When planning the writing task for Elementary 3 students, the teacher targets the language conventions from the story to be applied by the students.

To model and practise these targeted language conventions, a focus-on-form activity is presented to students. Students from both levels participate in the activity. However, the teacher only needs to observe and provide feedback to Elementary 3 students. The following example is taken from the LES *What Season Is It? Perhaps You Know*. In this story, the main character swallows a series of objects (e.g. *some snow; a long, striped scarf; a long, brown branch*) and in the end she hiccups a snowman. During this LES, students learn how to write commas between items in an enumeration.
Suggestion J: Including the writing of a text in the reinvestment task

In order to be evaluated on their development of Competency 3, Elementary 3 students are also required to write a text. To do so, students are initiated to the writing process, using a writing checklist as a resource. The teacher models the use of the checklist by writing a class text with the help of the students. Links can also be made to the writing process used in Français, langue d'enseignement. Afterwards, students use the checklist and the model text created by the class to express themselves in writing. Their writing should not be identical to the class model, and should show some personalization. A “fill-in-the-blanks” sentence is not considered to be a written text since it does not involve a writing process.

Here is an example of a checklist taken from the LES What Season Is It? Perhaps You Know. Students have to create a riddle by selecting information/ideas and language (i.e. words, expressions) from the original story, organizing this knowledge in a coherent manner, and personalizing it in light of the purpose and audience (the reinvestment task). The riddle, which will eventually take the form of a flap book, will be written using the following checklist.
While Elementary 3 students are engaged in their C3 task, Elementary 2 students could complete their personalized version of a text or carry out a winding down activity. Winding down moments are meaningful, related activities such as drawing, labelling items, linking pictures to words, etc. that students carry out mostly on their own. They are necessary, calm moments that give students time to assimilate new learning, provide teachers with opportunities to observe and interact with individual students. Below is an example a winding down activity taken from the LES You Are What You Eat!
5. Regulation of the development of the ESL competencies

Evaluation serves two distinct purposes: regulation of the development of competencies, and recognition of competencies at the end of each year of the cycle and for the certification of studies.

The purpose of the evaluation tools found in the LES mentioned in this handbook, is the regulation of the development of the ESL competencies through teacher feedback. These evaluation tools are checklists to support learning and take into account the different tasks in each LES. They allow teachers to jot down their observations in order to help students progress.

Two examples of these checklists are found in Appendix A. These evaluation tools provide observable elements to assist teachers in recording their feedback.
### Checklist to Support Learning – Elementary 2
#### C2: To Communicate Orally in English
**You Are What You Eat!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observable Elements</th>
<th>My Teacher’s Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence of understanding of oral messages</strong></td>
<td><strong>You got it! 😊</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Act 8 15 17 I react to messages using verbal or nonverbal responses (e.g. *I nod my head. I raise my hand.*) | __ Yes | __ Look at and listen to your partner and teacher.  
__ Use gestures.  
__ Use these resources more: class resource chart, flashcards, posters  
__ _______________________________ |
| **Use of words and expressions to transmit oral messages** | **You got it! 😊** | **Oops! Next time you could...** |
| Act 8 15 17 I initiate exchanges and respond to others (e.g. *Your turn. Yes.*) | __ Yes | __ Take risks in using more English words.  
__ Express your ideas and needs.  
__ Ask for help or clarification.  
__ _______________________________ |
| **Strategy use** | **You got it! 😊** | **Oops! Next time you could...** |
| Act 15 I ask for help or clarification (e.g. *Problem! Help!* | __ Yes | __ Talk to the teacher.  
__ Talk to a classmate.  
__ _______________________________ |
| Act 7 15 I take risks. | __ Yes | __ Participate more during classroom routines, activities and group work.  
__ Try to use more English words.  
__ _______________________________ |
| Act 17 I use resources (e.g. *class resource chart, flashcards, story builder, models.*) | __ Yes | __ Observe the visual support.  
__ Look at the teacher.  
__ Imitate your classmates.  
__ _______________________________ |
### Checklist to Support Learning – Elementary 3

**C1: To Interact Orally in English**

**You Are What You Eat!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observable Elements</th>
<th>My Teacher’s Feedback</th>
<th>Oops! Next time you could...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of functional language</strong></td>
<td><strong>You got it! 😊</strong></td>
<td><strong>You got it! 😊</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Act 8 15 17 | I use words and expressions from flashcards and class resource chart. (e.g. *I agree. It’s my turn.* ) | __ Yes | __ Listen carefully to the teacher’s instructions.  
__ Use these resources more: class resource chart, flashcards, story builder, classmates.  
__ Practise using useful expressions and vocabulary. |
| | I pronounce words and expressions from the story and resources correctly (e.g. *On Monday he ate through, caterpillar, butterfly.* ) | __ Yes | __ Listen carefully to the teacher’s pronunciation.  
__ Listen to audio-models.  
__ Practise pronunciation with a partner.  
__ Remember to say the final “s” of plural nouns. |
| **Participation in exchanges** | **You got it! 😊** | **You got it! 😊** |
| Act 8 15 17 | I react to oral messages (e.g. *I nod my head. I raise my hand.*) | __ Yes | __ Look at and listen to your partner and teacher.  
__ Use gestures.  
__ Use these resources more: class resource chart, flashcards, posters. |
| | I initiate and maintain oral exchanges. (e.g. *What do you think? It’s your turn.*) | __ Yes | __ Take risks to speak English during exchanges.  
__ Express your ideas and needs.  
__ Ask for help or clarification. |
| **Strategy use** | **You got it! 😊** | **You got it! 😊** |
| Act 15 | I ask for help or clarification. (e.g. *How do you say...in English?*) | __ Yes | __ Talk to the teacher.  
__ Talk to a classmate. |
| Act 7 15 | I take risks. | __ Yes | __ Participate more during classroom routines, activities and group work.  
__ Try to use more English expressions and words. |
| Act 17 | I use resources (e.g. flashcards, oral interaction posters, story builder, class resource chart, models) | __ Yes | __ Observe visual support.  
__ Look at the teacher.  
__ Imitate your classmates. |
7. Bibliography

Learning and evaluation situations

• *Can't Fall Asleep?* MELS Working Document, 2011.


Storybooks


References

• ESLinsight ([www.eslinsight.qc.ca](http://www.eslinsight.qc.ca))
  Path to the posters: Elementary/resources/posters:
  – Oral Interaction Posters (Cycles Two and Three)
  – Cycle 1, Elementary 2 Competency Posters
  – Strategy Posters (Cycle One)
  – Strategy Posters (Cycles Two and Three)

  Path to the handbooks: Elementary/resources/handbooks:
  – the Elementary Cycle One ESL handbook “Using Only English in Class”
  – the Elementary Cycle Two and Three handbook “Using English in the ESL Classroom”


• QRC: Quebec Reading Connection ([www.quebecreadingconnection.ca](http://www.quebecreadingconnection.ca))