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Cambridge Life Competencies Framework

OWN IT!

Developing Life
Competencies
Through *Own It!*



Better
Learning

How can we prepare our students to succeed in a world that is changing fast? We see the increasing need to work together with people from around the world, to think creatively and solve problems, to analyse sources more critically, to communicate our views effectively, to maintain a positive mindset in an increasingly complex world. How can we support the development of these skills? At Cambridge, we have set out to support teachers in this challenging area.



The Cambridge Framework

Introduction to the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework

There have been many initiatives to address the skills and competencies our students need for the 21st century – each relating to different contexts. At Cambridge, we are responding to educators who have asked for a way to understand how all these different approaches to life competencies relate to English language programmes.

The Cambridge Framework sets out to have three dimensions:

BREADTH

Complete view of transferable skills within one system

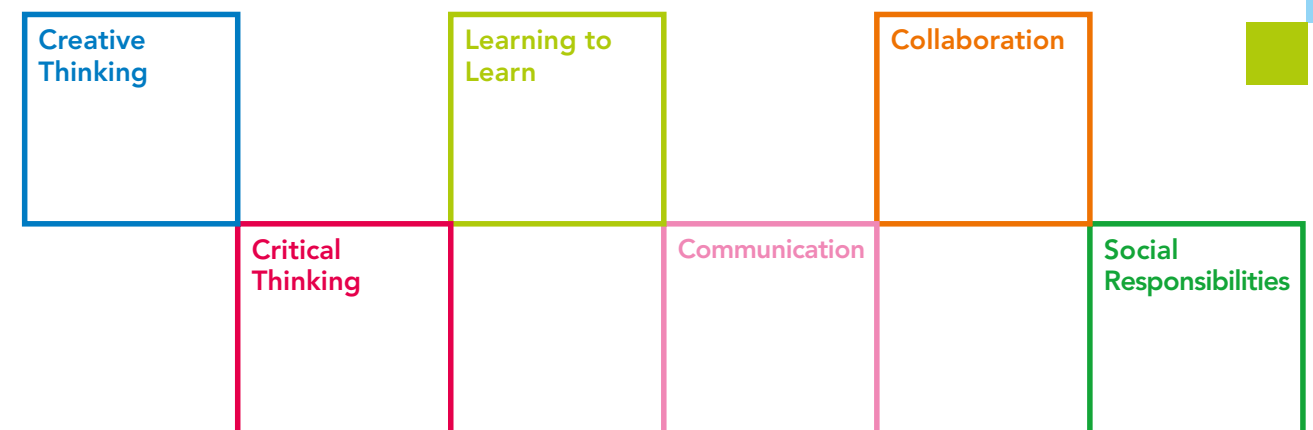
DEVELOPMENT

How the skills develop across stages of the learning journey

DEPTH

Enough detail to guide teaching and assessment in practical ways

We have grouped the different competencies into six main areas.



These are supported by three foundation layers that underpin the Framework:

- Emotional Development
- Digital Literacy
- Discipline Knowledge



Damir
Student, Angola

The Learning Journey

We have also started work on examining the different stages of the learning journey, and how these competencies vary across each stage.



Pre-Primary



Primary



Secondary



Higher Education



At Work

The exact boundaries between each stage will vary between different countries and different contexts, as will the expectations of what learners at each stage will be able to do. This Framework sets out to provide a useful starting point for institutions and educationalists to use in identifying the most appropriate learning outcomes for their particular context.



Cambridge Life Competencies Framework

CORE AREAS

Creative Thinking	Participating in creative activities	Creating new content from own ideas or other resources	Using newly created content to solve problems and make decisions	
	Understanding and analysing links between ideas	Evaluating ideas, arguments and options	Synthesising ideas and information	
	Practical skills for participating in learning	Taking control of own learning	Reflecting on and evaluating own learning success	
	Using appropriate language and register for context	Managing conversations	Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity	
Critical Thinking	Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task	Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions	Managing the sharing of tasks in a project	Working towards a resolution related to a task
	Understanding personal responsibilities as part of a group and in society – including citizenship	Taking active roles including leadership	Understanding and describing own and others' cultures	Understanding and discussing global issues – environmental, political, financial and social
Learning to Learn				
Communication				
Collaboration				
Social Responsibilities				

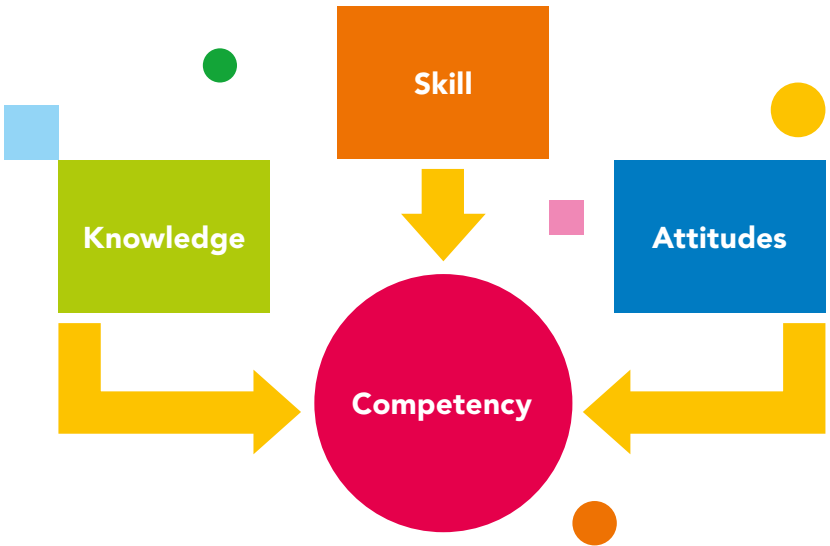
FOUNDATIONAL LAYERS

Emotional Development
Digital Literacy
Discipline Knowledge



What Are 'Competencies'?

We call these 'competencies' rather than 'skills', because competencies are more than just skills. The competencies in this Framework are complex and require development in three areas:



Knowledge is what you need to know to do something well. Skill is the degree of mastery or fluency in using the competency; skill is what you get from practice. Attitudes refer to the disposition and mind-set you need to develop knowledge and skill in this area.

This approach is consistent with the definitions given by the European Union in their Recommendations on Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning.

Competences are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes, where:

a) knowledge is composed of the facts and figures, concepts, ideas and theories which are already established and support the understanding of a certain area or subject;

b) skills are defined as the ability and capacity to carry out processes and use the existing knowledge to achieve results;

c) attitudes describe the disposition and mind-sets to act or react to ideas, persons or situations.

Council of the European Union, 2018, p14.

Can Do Statements

In this section, we have provided some examples of Can Do Statements which are descriptions of what learners can be expected to do for each competency by the end of that stage of the learning journey. These Can Do Statements will vary in their suitability for learners in different contexts, and so are provided as a starting point in the development of a curriculum, programme or assessment system.

The Can Do Statements at each level generally assume that the learners have developed the skills at a previous stage of learning, although this is not true of the Higher Education and At Work stages, which are treated as being in parallel. We have given a few examples below, but you can read a lot more in our Competency Booklets available at cambridge.org/clcf

STAGE OF LEARNING	CAN DO STATEMENTS
CRITICAL THINKING	
Understanding and analysing links between ideas	
PRE-PRIMARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sorts and arranges things by shapes, size, colour, weight, texture and positions.Explores different materials and media and decides what to use.Matches objects, people, letters, pronunciations and words.Identifies the difference between puzzles, games, and toys.
PRIMARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sorts and classifies objects and activities according to key features (e.g. types of animal, or transport).Identifies characters, setting, plot and themes in a story.Compares different types of information.Explains why things happened (e.g. cause and effect).
SECONDARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Compares points and arguments from different sources.Distinguishes between main and supporting arguments.Identifies the basic structure of an argument.
HIGHER EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Summarises key points in a text or an argument.Identifies unstated assumptions and biases in an argument.Contrasts different points of view on a specific topic.
AT WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifies patterns in business and operational data.Summarises key points from a business-related report.Identifies assumptions in a proposal.
COMMUNICATION	
Using appropriate language and register for context	
PRE-PRIMARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understands and carries out basic instructions for class/school.Expresses basic likes/dislikes and (dis)agreement.Uses simple, polite forms of greetings, introductions and farewells.Adjusts language for playing roles.
PRIMARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Talks about topics suitable to primary school.Knows how to ask for permission, apologise, make requests and agree/disagree.Uses polite forms of greeting and address and responds to invitations, suggestions, apologies, etc.Changes sound level and pitch when doing drama or acting a role in a play.
SECONDARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Uses appropriate form of address, greetings and farewells.Knows how to present points clearly and persuasively.Uses language for effect (exaggerations, cleft sentences).Knows what language is more appropriate for friends and unfamiliar persons.
HIGHER EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Is aware of differences in communication styles, between individuals and between cultures.Is aware of how suitability of topics can vary according to context and culture.Expresses a point of view, elicits and responds to others' points of view politely.
AT WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Can adapt register to different types of interlocutor (i.e. colleagues, managers and customers).Keeps a discussion moving by periodically summarising and moving to next topic.Sums up the outcomes of a discussion and elicits confirmation.

Life Competencies in Own it!

These life competencies are already embedded in many of your English lessons. The purpose of the Framework is to help you approach this more systematically and effectively. Here are some examples of how the activities in *Own it!* help develop life competencies in today's learners.

Own it! Level 1, page 47

VOCABULARY

Food and drink

1 Write all the food and drink words you know in English. Compare with a partner.

2 Match the words in the box with the photos. Listen, check and repeat.

apples

carrots

chocolate

fizzy drink

rice

bananas

cheese

eggs

juice

water

beans

chicken

fish

meat

3 When do you have the food and drinks in Exercise 2? Write the words in the table.

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner

4 Compare with a partner. Write sentences about your partner's meals. Use adverbs of frequency.

Eva always has an egg and juice for breakfast.

Get it right!

We say *I don't like apples*. NOT *I don't like the apples*.

LEARN TO LEARN

Personalising vocabulary

Think about your own routines and habits when you learn new vocabulary.

Use it!

5 Discuss the questions.

- Which food do you love/hate?
- Which food do you eat when you're happy? What about when you're sad?

Explore it!

Guess the correct answer.

One hundred grams of ants have got ...

- less protein than an egg.
- more protein than an egg.
- the same protein as an egg.

Find an interesting fact about food. Write a question for your partner to answer.

UNIT 4 | YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT 47

Own it! Level 3, page 77

BRINGING COLOUR TO A GREY WORLD

Millions of people around the world are colour blind. They can't see some colours, such as red, green or blue. Some people who are colour blind can't see any colours at all, so the world looks very different. But now there are special glasses to help colour-blind people.

The glasses look like normal glasses, but the lenses are made from special glass or plastic. The glasses separate colours, such as red and green, so people can see them. When they are worn by colour-blind people, they can see colours they have never seen before.

What I like about them is that they look really cool. There are sunglasses, glasses for children and sports sunglasses. However, I should point out that the glasses are really expensive. Overall, I think they are an amazing invention that can help millions of people see our beautiful world.

WRITING

A review

1 Look at the photo. What do the glasses do? Read the review and check.

2 Put a-f in the order they appear in the review.

- A description of the invention
- How the invention works
- A disadvantage
- The reviewer's general opinion
- What the reviewer likes
- Who the invention is for

3 Complete the phrases in the *Useful language* box. Then check in the review.

Useful language

However, I should point out that ¹ _____.

Overall, I think they are ² _____.

The glasses look like ³ _____.

The lenses are made from ⁴ _____.

What I like about them is ⁵ _____.

Write your own review of an amazing invention.

PLAN

4 Think of an amazing invention. Write notes.

Who the invention is for: _____

How it works: _____

The advantages: _____

One disadvantage: _____

Your opinion: _____

5 Decide what information to include. Use the information in Exercise 2 to help you.

WRITE

6 Write your review. Remember to include the parts of the review from Exercise 2, the passive, and phrases from the *Useful language* box.

CHECK

7 Do you ...

- describe the invention and who it's for?
- say what the advantages and disadvantages are?
- give your general opinion?

Finished? p123 Ex. 4

UNIT 6 | THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX 77

COMPETENCY	CORE AREA	CAN DO STATEMENTS	ACTIVITY EXAMPLE				
			Level	Unit	Page	Exercise	Description
Creative Thinking	Participating in creative activities	Acts parts in role-plays or dramas	2	2	25	6	Use it!: Students role-play characters who travelled on the Mayflower
		Participates in “what if” (cautionary or wishful thinking) and “if only” (wishful thinking) challenges	4	6	75	5	Use it!: Students complete counterfactual sentences
		Participates in activities that include creative thinking (e.g. reversals, escapes, and distortions with others)	1	3	41	4	Plan: Make a spidergram about an ideal school
	Creating new content – from own ideas or other resources	Writes or tells an original story, given prompts or without prompts	4	9	107	3	Students tell each other real stories but change one fact from the story
		Illustrates a new poster or webpage with unique symbols or persuasive language	1	4	55	7	Present: Display a food truck menu
		Responds imaginatively (e.g. in the form of a story, poem, drawing) to contemporary or historical events and ideas	2	1	12	5	Voice it!: Students imagine they are watching a famous event
		Communicates personal response to creative work from art, music or literature	3	2	28	7	Speak: Students discuss a painting
	Using new content to solve problems and make decisions	Employs new ideas and content in solving a task or activity	4	7	89	7	Write: Students write an email reply to a worried parent
Critical Thinking	Understanding and analysing links between ideas	Distinguishes between fact and opinion	2	7	86	6	Learn to learn: Recognising opinions
		Gives reasons for an argument’s plausibility	1	1	13	6	Students guess which sentences are false
		Assesses strengths and weaknesses of possible solutions	4	1	17	5	Write: Students write a blog comment about reducing fashion footprint
Learning to Learn	Practical skills for participating in learning	Completes homework as required	4	4	57	4	Learn to learn: Plan your homework
		Participates sensibly and positively in learning activities in class	1	0	4	5	Use it!: Take turns activity
		Takes effective notes in class and from homework reading	2	7	93	4	Learn to learn: Make and use flashcards
		Organises notes systematically	4	7	86	2	Learn to learn: Gapped flashcards
		Uses a vocabulary notebook (digital or paper)	3	1	11	4	Learn to learn: Opposites
		Uses notes to construct original output	4	3	41	6	Write: Students use notes to write a listicle
		Produces a revision plan to focus on key skills and knowledge in a systematic way	3	1	21	5	Learn to learn: Set and achieve learning goals
		Understands essential grammatical terms and concepts	3	5	67	5	Learn to learn: Reference words
		Understands essential phonological terms and concepts (e.g. vowel length, word stress)	3	5	142	2	Pronunciation: Sentence stress
		Understands some key phonemic symbols (e.g. /ə/, /j/)	4	8	142	1	Pronunciation: The letters -tion
		Makes use of contextual and co-textual clues to approach the meanings of unfamiliar lexical items	1	3	43	5	Learn to learn: Understanding new words from context
		Uses metacognitive strategies (e.g. time management, affective control) to maximise learning/ exam success	1	2	26	2	Learn to learn: Word partners tip
	Taking control of your own learning	Identifies helpful resources for their learning (e.g. online, the library)	4	3	45	6	Learn to learn: Set and achieve learning goals
		Chooses ways to practise English outside the classroom (e.g. watching clips/TV/films in English, using English on social media, or reading novels/magazines in English)	3	9	117	4	Learn to learn: Use technology to practise English
		Finds sources of information and help (online and in school)	1	6	79	6	Plan: Students research a street sport for a leaflet
		Reviews vocabulary regularly and systematically	4	1	19	4	Learn to learn: Using spidergrams
		Seeks the assistance of an interlocutor to overcome linguistic difficulties	3	8	105	4	Learn to learn: Ask for help when you don’t understand
		Seeks out opportunities and participates in activities for extended spoken and written interaction outside the classroom	2	9	117	4	Learn to learn: Practise English during the holidays

COMPETENCY	CORE AREA	CAN DO STATEMENTS	ACTIVITY EXAMPLE				
			Level	Unit	Page	Exercise	Description
Learning to Learn	Reflecting on and evaluating own learning success	Recognises areas of strength or weakness in learning the subject (e.g. for different skills in English)	4	8	104	Self-assessment	Students reflect on their learning during a coursebook unit
		Plans for improving subject skills and/or knowledge by thinking about what could have been done better	2	6	81	5	Learn to learn: Students get peer-feedback on a speaking task
		Selects and uses a wide range of mind maps and other tools to organise thoughts	2	5	59	4	Learn to learn: Using spidergrams
		Can describe strategies and techniques for improving their English	1	3	45	5	Learn to learn: Students get peer-feedback on a speaking task
Communication	Using appropriate language/register for context	Uses appropriate forms of address, greetings, and farewells	1	1	16	6	Speak: Phoning a friend
		Knows how to present points clearly and persuasively	4	9	113	6	Write: Students write a news story
		Uses language for effect (exaggerations, cleft sentences)	4	4	52	5	Speak: Students make guesses and give clues
		Knows what language is more appropriate for friends and unfamiliar persons	1	1	17	4	Useful language: Starting and ending emails
	Managing conversations	Uses appropriate language to negotiate meaning: a) to show understanding; b) to signal lack of understanding; c) to seek repetition; d) to seek clarification; e) to control speed, volume of interlocutors' speech; f) to check own understanding; g) to check interlocutors' understanding.	3	6	76	5	Speak: Students give and check instructions
		Can use simple techniques to start, maintain and close conversations of various lengths	3	0	8	6	Use it!: Students initial conversations about the past
		Uses appropriate strategies to deal with language gaps: a) signalling a gap; b) appealing to interlocutors for assistance; c) using non-linguistic means (e.g. pointing, drawing); d) using an approximate synonym; e) guessing/coining a 'new' item from existing knowledge of words/morphemes.	4	0	7	5	Learn to learn: Describing words you don't know with other words or a gesture
		Invites contributions for interlocutors in a conversation	1	8	99	4	Use it!: Students ask questions
		Uses appropriate strategies to develop a conversation (e.g. showing interest, giving non-minimal responses, asking follow-up questions)	3	3	39	7	Use it!: Ask follow-up questions to find out more
	Participating with appropriate confidence and clarity	Speaks with suitable fluency	3	2	33	3	Learn to learn: Learn to help your partner improve their speaking
		Can develop a clear description or narrative with a logical sequence of points	4	3	40	5	Speak: Students describe how to make some food
		Uses a number of cohesive devices to link utterances/sentences into clear, coherent discourse	2	7	89	7	Write: Students write an article using various new cohesive devices

Competency	Core Area	Can Do Statements	Activity Example				
			Level	Unit	Page	Exercise	Description
Collaboration	Taking personal responsibility for own contributions to a group task	Follows the instructions for a task and alerts others when straying from them	3	2	31	5	Plan: Students plan a profile of an artist
		Explains reasons for their suggestions and contributions	3	3	43	5	Voice it!: Discuss and give reasons for views of endangered languages
		Take responsibility for completing tasks as part of a larger project	1	2	31	6	Plan: Work in groups to plan a class survey
	Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions	Listens to, acknowledges different points of view respectfully	1	6	73	5	Use it!: Students discuss preferences
		Is ready to justify, adapt, and abandon a proposal or point of view in response to others' queries and contributions	2	9	112	6	Speak: Students make polite refusals
		Evaluates contributions from other students with appropriate sensitivity	3	2	28	8	Check: Students give peer feedback
	Managing the sharing of tasks in a project	Works with others to plan and execute class projects	3	4	55	4	Plan: Students plan a report about their school
		Ensures that work is fairly divided among members in group activities	2	2	31	6	Plan: Students make a history display
		Ensures that all members have a role in group activities	1	5	64	6	Speak: Buying clothes or accessories
	Working towards a resolution for a task	Is aware when others have divergent views and ideas for solving a problem or task	3	8	103	4	Plan: Students learn how to make descisions in a group and plan a school brochure
		Is able to propose solutions that include other views and ideas to own	2	4	55	6	Present: Students agree ideas as a group to make a poster
Emotional Development	Identifying and understanding emotions	Describing a wider range of different emotions	3	1	11	6	Use it!: Students select adjectives that describe them
		Discussing what makes them feel different emotions	4	7	83	5	Students discuss when they feel different emotions
	Managing own emotions	Dealing with praise, setbacks and criticism	4	7	84	5	Voice it!: Students discussing having a growth mindset
	Empathy and relationship skills	Showing understanding of other people's perspectives and feelings	4	7	88	6	Speak: Students express sympathy and concern
Social Responsibilities	Understanding personal responsibilities as part of a group and in society – including citizenship	Is aware of positive behaviour in different groups (e.g. class, home and with friends)	2	5	62	3	Use it!: Students discuss doing chores
		Understands various aspects of society (e.g. volunteering, charity work, social classes, power, prestige, poverty)	1	7	90	3	Voice it!: Students discuss gender norms
		Makes informed choices (e.g. in relation to diet, exercise, sexual health, environmentally-friendly products)	3	4	50	7	Use it!: Students discuss healthy food choices
	Taking active roles including leadership	Encourages others to participate and contribute in projects	4	6	79	6	Speak: Students use fixed phrases to encourage a friend
	Understanding and describing own and others' cultures	Appreciates themselves and recognises their own value	1	5	60	5	Voice it!: Students discuss clothes preferences
		Accepts others and shows respect for cultural difference, challenging prejudice and discriminatory views	2	9	115	4	Voice it!: Students discuss the importance of understanding other cultures
		Makes informed comparisons between their own society and other societies	4	1	19	6	Voice it!: Students discuss dress in different cultures
		Understands the contributions of different cultures to their own lives	4	3	43	5	Voice it!: Students discuss foods that come from other cultures
	Understanding and discussing global issues – environmental, political, financial and social	Is aware of different global issues (e.g. poverty, migration, global warming, human rights violations, pandemic diseases)	3	3	43	3	Students read a text about endangered languages



You can find information about the other competencies in the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework at cambridge.org/clcf

- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Creative Thinking
- ✓ Critical Thinking
- ✓ Emotional Development
- ✓ Learning to Learn
- ✓ Social Responsibilities

cambridge.org/ownit

