Language and Culture Classroom:

A Practical Guide to Competency-Based ESL Teaching

Instructor's Handbook

College-Level English as a Second Language

Teaching Academic, Social, Cultural, and Literary Communication

Prepared by

Didimus Zencha Ayeseh, M.A., M.Ed., LL.B., DIPES II, DIPESS I

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

Preface

Teaching English at the college level extends far beyond helping students master grammar or expand their vocabulary. It requires guiding learners toward confident, purposeful, and critical communication in an increasingly interconnected world. The *Language and Culture* course reflects this broader vision by inviting students to explore social, cultural, and literary issues while developing the linguistic competence necessary to participate effectively in academic, professional, and civic life.

This Instructor's Handbook was developed to support teachers delivering the college-level English as a Second Language course, **Language and Culture**. It is grounded in the competency-based approach adopted by Québec colleges and is designed to help instructors develop students' ability to communicate with ease in English on social, cultural, and literary themes.

Unlike many teaching manuals that focus primarily on lesson procedures, this handbook combines curriculum planning, language pedagogy, classroom practice, and assessment into a single resource. Every lesson has been designed to promote the integration of the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while encouraging learners to think critically, conduct responsible research, and communicate with confidence in authentic contexts.

The handbook is informed by principles of Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, and competency-based education. Students are progressively guided from receptive language skills toward increasingly complex productive tasks. Listening activities develop strategic comprehension; reading tasks promote analytical thinking and vocabulary acquisition; speaking activities emphasize fluency, organization, and audience awareness; and writing tasks foster clarity, coherence, accuracy, and academic integrity.

Throughout the course, students engage with contemporary social issues, cultural diversity, global citizenship, and literary themes that encourage reflection and discussion. These topics provide meaningful contexts for language learning while

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

helping students develop intercultural competence and informed perspectives on the world around them.

Special attention has been given to the sequencing of instruction. Grammar is not presented as isolated rules but as a practical resource that enables students to communicate more effectively. Similarly, vocabulary development, presentation skills, research strategies, summarising, paraphrasing, and essay writing are integrated throughout the course rather than treated as separate components.

Assessment follows the competency framework established for the college-level English as a Second Language curriculum. Both **Reception** (listening and reading) and **Production** (speaking and writing) are developed progressively through formative activities and evaluated through authentic performance tasks. The handbook provides detailed guidance for preparing students for oral presentations, listening evaluations, reading assignments, and academic writing while maintaining clear alignment with course competencies and evaluation criteria.

Although this handbook has been developed specifically for this course, its pedagogical principles and instructional strategies are equally applicable to instructors working in other English areas including Second Language contexts. Teachers are encouraged to adapt activities to meet the needs of their students while maintaining the communicative and competency-based philosophy that underpins the course.

Ultimately, language learning is about more than acquiring linguistic knowledge. It is about enabling learners to interpret ideas critically, communicate respectfully across cultures, and participate confidently in academic and professional communities. It is my hope that this handbook will serve not only as a practical teaching guide but also as a resource that supports reflective practice, encourages innovation in the classroom, and contributes to meaningful language learning experiences.

Course Sequence: From Language and Culture to English Culture and Literature. This course is the second course in the two-course English as a Second Language sequence and builds directly on the competencies introduced in the previous course. In turn, this course lays essential groundwork for English Culture and Literature, the next course in the sequence, which has not yet been developed at the time of this writing.

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

Instructors should note the following points of continuity so that this course's classroom experience prepares students for what comes next:

- **Competency progression:** the reception and production skills developed here (listening, reading, speaking, writing on social, cultural, and literary themes) are the direct foundation for the more advanced, research-based communication tasks students will undertake in advanced settings.
- **Grammar and essay-writing carry-over:** verb tenses, sentence and paragraph structure, essay planning, and revision strategies taught across Units 1 to 15 should be treated as prerequisite knowledge for advanced and very advanced courses and referenced explicitly when the course is introduced.
- **Assessment habits:** the double-threshold evaluation model, oral presentation formats, and academic integrity expectations established at this upper-intermediate level should be carried forward without needing to be re-taught from scratch in very advanced level.

Instructors are encouraged to close the final units of this course (see Unit 15, Course Closing Reflection) with an explicit preview of how the skills students have built will be extended to a very advanced level once that course's lesson notes become available.

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

Contents

Preface 2
THE COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH: TEACHING FRAMEWORK 12
UNIT 1 - COURSE ORIENTATION AND SELF-INTRODUCTION 14
1.1 Why This Unit Matters - Competency Connection 14
1.2 Learning Objectives 14
1.3 Three-Class Lesson Plan 14
Writing Focus: The Three-Part Paragraph 16
1.5 Grammar Preview: Verb Tenses in a Self-Introduction 18
1.6 Test Questions and Practice - Unit 1 18
Extension Activity: Quebec Context (Unit 1) 19
1.7 Teacher Notes - Unit 1 20
UNIT 2 - LISTENING AND READING STRATEGIES / QUESTION FORMS 20
2.1 Why This Unit Matters - Competency Connection 21
2.2 Learning Objectives 21
2.3 Listening Strategies - What a good listener does 21
2.4 Reading Strategies - What successful readers do 24
2.4.1. The SQ3R Method 24
2.5 Grammar Focus: Question Forms 26
2.6 Test Questions and Practice - Unit 2 28
Extension Activity: Quebec Context (Unit 2) 29
2.7 Homework - Unit 2 30
UNIT 3 - VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT AND ORAL PRESENTATION STRUCTURE 30
3.1 Why This Unit Matters - Competency Connection 30
3.2 Learning Objectives 31
3.3 Vocabulary Development Strategies 31
3.4 Oral Presentation Structure - The Three-Part Framework 33
3.5 Grammar Focus: The Simple Present Tense 36
3.6 In-Class Activity: Topic Selection and Introduction Draft 36
3.7 Test Questions and Practice - Unit 3 38
Extension Activity: Quebec Context (Unit 3) 40
3.8 Homework - Unit 3 40
UNIT 4 - PAST AND FUTURE TENSES / SUMMARISING TECHNIQUES 42
4.1 Why This Unit Matters - Competency Connection 42
4.2 Learning Objectives 42
4.3 Grammar Focus: Past Tenses 42
4.4 Grammar Focus: Future Forms 44
4.5 Summarising Techniques 45
4.6 Test Questions and Practice - Unit 4 47

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

Extension Activity: Quebec Context (Unit 4) 49
4.7 Teacher Notes - Unit 4 49
UNIT 5 - PRESENT PERFECT / LISTENING EXAM I PREPARATION AND EXECUTION 51
5.1 Why This Unit Matters - Competency Connection 51
5.2 Learning Objectives 51
5.3 Grammar Focus: The Present Perfect Tense 51
5.4 Listening Exam I - Complete Preparation Guide 54
5.5 Oral Presentation Rehearsal Activities 56
5.6 Exam Day Logistics - Teacher Notes 58
5.7 Test Questions and Practice - Unit 5 59
Extension Activity: Quebec Context (Unit 5) 60
5.8 Homework - Preparing for Unit 6 Oral Presentation 61
APPENDIX - QUICK REFERENCE FOR UNITS 1 TO 5 62
A. Units 1 to 5 Summary Table 62
B. What 'Communicating with Ease' Looks Like in Practice 62
C. Mixed Grammar Test - Units 1 to 5 63
UNITS 6–10 AT A GLANCE 66
UNIT 6, MID-TERM ORAL PRESENTATION + INTRODUCTION TO ESSAY PLANNING 67
6.1 Competency Connection 67
6.2 Learning Objectives 67
6.3 Mid-Term Oral Presentation : Full Details 67
6.4 Grammar Focus: Modal Auxiliaries 71
6.5 Introduction to Essay Planning (Post-Presentation) 74
UNIT 7: MID-TERM WRITING EVALUATION + ESSAY STRUCTURE IN DEPTH 78
7.1 Competency Connection 78
7.2 Learning Objectives 78
7.3 Mid-Term Writing Evaluation: Full Details 78
7.4 Grammar Focus: The Passive Voice 80
7.5 Essay Structure In Depth: Body Paragraphs 83
UNIT 8: ESSAY PLAN + TRANSITIONS + MODULE 3 LAUNCH 86
8.1 Competency Connection 86
8.2 Learning Objectives 86
8.3 Returning and Discussing Mid-Term Feedback 86
8.4 Full Essay Plan: How to Build One 87
8.5 Grammar Focus: Pronouns and Word Choice 90
8.6 Transition Words: A Full Reference 93
8.7 Homework for Unit 9 94
UNIT 9: ADVANCED READING STRATEGIES + CONDITIONAL FORMS 95
9.1 Competency Connection 95
9.2 Learning Objectives 95

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

9.3 Listening Exam II: Details and Preparation 95
9.4 Advanced Reading Strategies 97
9.5 Grammar Focus: Conditional Forms 100
9.6 Peer Review Activity: Body Paragraph 103
9.7 Homework for Unit 10 104
UNIT 10: CONCLUSION WRITING + REVISION STRATEGIES + RELIABLE SOURCES 105
10.1 Competency Connection 105
10.2 Learning Objectives 105
10.3 Writing a Strong Conclusion 105
10.4 Revision Strategies: ARMS and CUPS 107
10.5 Evaluating Reliable Sources: The CRAAP Test 109
10.6 Grammar Focus: Prepositions 111
10.7 Reading Assignment 115
10.8 Final Essay Topic Approval 116
10.9 Homework for Unit 11 116
APPENDIX: REFERENCE MATERIALS FOR UNITS 6–10 118
A. Units 6–10: Grammar Taught and Evaluated 118
B. Essay Writing Checklist: Units 6–10 118
C. Quick Grammar Test: Units 6–10 (Mixed Review) 119
UNITS 11 TO 15: OVERVIEW AND FINAL EVALUATION GUIDE 121
UNIT 11: FUTURE PERFECT, COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES, AND ESSAY PLAN FINALISATION 122
11.1 Why This Unit Matters -- Competency Connection 122
11.2 Learning Objectives 123
11.3 Grammar Focus: The Future Perfect Tense 123
11.4 Grammar Focus: Comparison of Adjectives 124
11.5 Essay Plan Finalisation 127
11.6 Homework -- Unit 11 129
UNIT 12: COMPREHENSIVE REVISION, FREQUENCY ADVERBS, AND FINAL PREPARATION 129
12.1 Why This Unit Matters -- Competency Connection 130
12.2 Learning Objectives 130
12.3 Grammar Focus: Frequency Adverbs 130
12.4 Comprehensive Grammar Revision Checklist 132
12.5 Full Oral Presentation Rehearsal 134
12.6 Practice Questions -- Unit 12 136
12.7 Homework -- Unit 12 137
UNIT 13: FINAL LISTENING EXAM (10%) AND FINAL READING EXAM (10%) 137
13.1 Why This Unit Matters -- Competency Connection 138
13.2 Learning Objectives 138
13.3 Final Listening Exam -- Complete Guide 138

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

13.4 Final Reading Exam -- Complete Guide 142
13.5 Sample Reading Comprehension Test 143
13.6 Teacher Notes -- Exam Day (Unit 13) 146
UNIT 14: FINAL WRITING EXAM (15%) 146
14.1 Why This Unit Matters -- Competency Connection 147
14.2 Final Writing Exam -- Full Specifications 147
14.3 The Seven Evaluation Criteria -- Explained Clearly 147
14.4 Time Management Strategy for 2.5 Hours 149
14.5 Structural Blueprint -- What a Strong 450-Word Essay Looks Like 150
14.6 Common Final Exam Writing Errors -- Fix These Before You Submit 151
14.7 Teacher Notes -- Exam Day (Unit 14) 152
UNIT 15: FINAL ORAL PRESENTATION (15%) AND COURSE CLOSING REFLECTION 153
15.1 Why This Unit Matters -- Competency Connection 153
15.2 Learning Objectives 153
15.3 Final Oral Presentation -- Full Specifications 153
15.4 The Six Evaluation Criteria -- Explained Clearly 154
15.5 Cue Card Guidelines -- What Students May and May Not Write 155
15.6 Answering Questions -- A Skill to Teach Explicitly 156
15.7 Final Oral Presentation Assessment Grid 157
15.8 Course Closing Reflection 159
APPENDIX: REFERENCE MATERIALS FOR UNITS 11 TO 15 160
A. Full Evaluation Summary -- Units 11 to 15 160
B. All Grammar Points -- Full Course Quick Reference 161
C. Student Checklist -- Final Exam Preparation 163
D. Mixed Grammar Test -- Full Course Review (Units 1 to 15) 164
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS: UNITS 11 TO 15 166
PART A: GRAMMAR (Units 11 to 12) 166
PART B: LISTENING COMPREHENSION (Unit 13) 171
PART C: READING COMPREHENSION (Unit 13) 173
PART D: WRITING TASKS (Unit 14) 176
PART E: ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS (Unit 15) 179
PART F: INTEGRATED SKILLS TASK (Units 11 to 15) 181
SUMMARY OF LESSON NOTES: UNITS 11 TO 15 183
Overview of This Document 183
Summary by Unit 183
Grammar Covered in Units 11 to 15 185
Evaluation Summary -- Units 11 to 15 186
Key Teaching Principles Applied in Units 11 to 15 187
A Note to the Teacher 187
APPENDIX D: KEY RESOURCES FOR CEGEP ESL INSTRUCTORS 189

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038

Ministerial and Program Authorities 189
Pedagogical Material and Professional Development 189
Using These Resources 189
APPENDIX E: COMMON CLASSROOM CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES 191
APPENDIX F: STUDENT-FRIENDLY RUBRICS 193
F.1 Mid-Term Oral Presentation Checklist (Unit 6) 193
F.2 Final Writing Exam Checklist (Unit 14) 193

Published by: Zenith Academic Press | Contact: +1 438 449 8038