

TEACHER ALERT

MARCH 2015

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Welcome to our first bulletin for 2015. Most of the information in this edition has come from recent questions from teachers and some from our Examiner Seminar early this year. We continue to welcome your questions so please do not hesitate to send them in through National Office.

This year there is a new revamped syllabus for Professional Speaking.

There are two syllabuses currently under review: Theatre in Action and Oral Communication for Speakers of Other Languages. If you have any suggestions or ideas for these they will be most welcome - please send them in through National Office.

Audience Numbers in Examinations

In ALL modules where an audience is called for - e.g. Public Speaking Grade 8, Professional Speaking, Diploma levels in Speech and Drama and Public Speaking - the number of audience members stated DOES NOT include the examiner. Other candidates sitting within the group MAY be counted as one of the prescribed audience members.

NB: All examinations where an audience is prescribed require **at least four in number**, with the exception of Public Speaking Grade 8 modules which state only **three**.

2012 Speech and Drama Syllabus (and 2014 Diploma)

Grade 5: Module 1: Group characterisation:

All characterisations throughout our Speech and Drama syllabus may be presented in groups. SNZ is aware that our 2012 syllabus for Speech and Drama is not as clear as it should be in this area; especially for teachers new to SNZ.

Page 7 of the syllabus 'Introduction to Junior grades' gives guidance for group work - that it is perfectly acceptable and that '*group presentations may be less than, but should not exceed, the total of individual times for that section.*'

However this is not reiterated at the beginning of the notes to senior work. In fact Speech New Zealand encourages group work in all characterisations as this naturally arises in plays. Do remember that the maximum number in a group for Grade examinations is four. If you have a larger group wanting to do drama work together, we suggest you explore the Theatre in Action syllabus which caters for pairs and/or larger groups.

Grade 7: Module 1: Discussion on formation of vowels and consonants.

*There has been some confusion about 'how much' is necessary for this section and the following are Board guidelines: **NB: These are different in the Public Speaking syllabus.** Remember examiners and candidates only have a very brief time for discussion so these guidelines become a menu of possible elements for discussion:*

The following is an expansion of the achievement objectives:

- to explain the formation of consonants e.g. two organs of articulation coming together to interrupt the airflow
- to know the function of consonants e.g. to give crispness and clarity to language
- to know the organs of articulation
- to define some specific consonants and how they are made.
- to explain the formation of vowels e.g. an open air flow shaped by the position of the lips and/or the tongue
- to know the function of vowels e.g. to give beauty and musicality to language
- to know that there are long and short vowels, and to understand and explain the terms neutral vowel, monophthong, diphthong, and triphthong.
- to give examples of each type of vowel sound.

Again SNZ is looking to help students build a firm base of knowledge and understanding for future grades and diploma work.

Grade 8: Module 1: Discussion on voice and speaking in relation to poetry speaking:

If you want further information on what is required for this please go to SNZ website under Resources, Speech and Drama – Poetry and you will find several very useful articles, including one written especially to support this module *Voice, Speaking and Interpretation*.

Other articles there also have good tips and articles for teaching verse speaking for all ages.

Grade 8: Module 1 and 2: Discussion on ‘literary period’:

In Grade 8 Modules 1 and 2, where both call for discussion on ‘literary periods’, it is the broad social and historical aspects of that period which are open for discussion. What are the events that influence the writing of the period?

It is important, too, to explore some contemporaries of the writers presented. Students are then able to place their own poet (or playwright) more firmly within the context of the period and be aware of influences of events and other writers, e.g. a student presenting a poem of Byron, as well as looking at other works by Byron, also might be aware of novels by Jane Austen which were written around the period as well as other Romantic/Lake poets. That way they can be more confident of an informed well rounded discussion introducing their own ideas and opinions and supporting these with examples from the literary period.

The purpose of more in-depth study at this level is part of the ‘stair-casing’ towards diploma exams.

Grade 8: Module 3 Com: Section 2: Impromptu talk

This information came out some time ago, however there have been further queries so we have reprinted here:

The impromptu talk now has a different focus – *on an aspect of preparing for performance or presentation*. This includes aspects of preparation for presenting a talk as well as, possibly, reading aloud, characterisation or verse speaking.

On the surface it could look a little daunting – but in fact, these are all skills that students have built up in working up to, or at Grade 8 level.

The preparation of a talk (the public speaking aspect) would be still relevant to a speech and drama candidate.

The topic and audience will be chosen after discussion with the candidate.

Work to discover aspects of presentation/performance that particularly interest your students and follow that lead.

Possibly explore audiences that your students might find different.

The types of talks that might be set up:

- Audience: School class that is preparing to give seminar talks in English *or*, say, a junior class preparing for speech competition.
Topic: Some key factors that would be useful for class members in preparing their talks.

For a student who was specifically interested in theatre and involved in school productions:

- Audience: House drama participants.
Topic: Some key factors that would be useful for actors in preparation of their roles.

By following the ideas above, I am sure you and your students will come up with a whole range of ideas for talks.

Look for

- What your students know already.
- What audiences/situations might they think of as realistic.
- How can they explain what they know in a way that connects with that audience.
- Also think of examples/anecdotes from their own work that might add interest and enliven their ideas.

All the above are drawing on their own experiences of Speech and Drama learning up to this level.

2014 Speech and Drama Diploma

ASB and Advanced ASB Performance: Module 2:

It is perfectly acceptable for candidates to present a shared characterisation in this module. The timing would be extended as in Grade examinations.

2014 Public Speaking and Communication Syllabus

Grade 7 Module 3: The importance of vowels and consonants.

There has been some confusion about 'how much' is necessary for this section and the following are Board guidelines:

NB: These are different in the Speech & Drama syllabus.

Remember examiners and candidates only have a very brief time for discussion so these guidelines become a menu of possible elements for discussion:

The achievement objectives expand as follows:

- To explain the formation of vowel and consonant sounds in general terms:
 - To know the organs of articulation
 - **To explain the formation of consonants e.g.** two organs of articulation coming together to interrupt the airflow
 - **To explain the formation of vowels e.g.** an open air flow shaped by the position of the lips and/or the tongue

- To explain the importance of vowel and consonant sound in speaking
 - **the function of consonants** - to give crispness and clarity to language
[It is useful to be able to give an example of some of these]
 - **the function of vowels** - to give beauty and musicality to language
[It is useful to be able to give an example of monophthong, diphthong and triphthong]
 - **without these speech will not have resonance and credibility**

- To explain how voice and speaking influence the credibility of a public speaker.
 - A thin voice lacks resonance and authority
 - A voice that is unclear or speech that is ill-defined is difficult to understand and also lacks authority
 - For credibility the speaker should not only use a logical argument (logos), be appropriate for the particular audience (pathos), but also connect directly with the audience with sincerity and clarity (ethos).

2015 Professional Speaking Syllabus

This is a new syllabus. If you do not have a copy, please check the website or request hard copies from your Local Secretary or the office.

Do also ensure you are working from the correct syllabus.

Value has been added in the 2015 Professional Speaking syllabus with:

- A change of focus in the title of each of the three levels:
Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Diploma
- Information for Employers is available on these exams with a new one written for Certificate level
- A number of extra options/changes to meet circumstances of candidates.

NB: Omission in printed syllabuses - Diploma level - Section 1 Make a Pitch: learning outcomes omitted in print-out – insert is attached in syllabus.

Please note the following important points when you work with this syllabus:

- **‘Written statement of the communicative demands of your occupation or intended occupation.’** The syllabus specifies word limit - 250 Certificate and Advanced Certificate levels, and 300 Diploma. Frequently these are well over word limit and information is not always relevant to ‘communication demands.’ Do double check these as precise wording and adherence to relevant information are important skills in the professional world.
- This information also assists the examiner in preparing relevant impromptu situations for the examination.
- **Certificate level:** Section 5: Take part in a role play, telephoning or interviewing exercise. Please note in these that the **examiner** selects the exercise AND decides on the grouping for each exercise.
- **Diploma level:** ‘**Before commencing sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 specify the intended audience, the circumstances and the context of each exercise.**’ This, together with the information provided of the communicative demands of an occupation assists the examiner in making assessments that are within the context of each exercise.
- **PowerPoint Presentations:** Candidates need to understand skills of using PowerPoint – There is new information on this under Resources on SNZ website: ‘Power Point Revival, Business Presentations that Persuade, Engage and Get Results - OWN THE ROOM’.
- **Audiences:** The requirement is for a minimum of four people in the audience. In practice, especially at Diploma level, the audience may be a larger group of colleagues and managers. This is of great benefit to the candidate as the audience participates by asking questions relevant to the topic and business background.

Certificate of Attainment and Task Variation

The Board has spent some time reviewing these options.

Please note that English as a Second Language does not come under Certificate of Attainment. These students should be sitting either OCESOL or a syllabus of their choice where they will be examined in English, e.g. Many migrant candidates are sitting Certificate of Professional Speaking with exceptionally good results without any dispensation for English as a second language. Part of their challenge and their learning is to ensure their language skills are clear and suited to the situation.

Certificate of Attainment or a Syllabus Variation in module examinations:

- Where applicable these may apply to just the one module. The Certificate will show either 'CoA' (for Certificate of Attainment) or 'Modified' (for Syllabus Variation) beside the module.
- If all three modules are sat under Certificate of Attainment the Certificate will state 'Certificate of Attainment'.

Sometimes candidates who enter with CoA do not require this consideration to pass the level. Examiners have discretion as to whether to pass a candidate as Certificate of Attainment or whether it was not required to achieve the examination. When examiners feel that C of A is not required they will speak directly with the Local Secretary who will then contact the teacher concerned. It may be that *without* the C of A the pass might be at a lower level, in this case the teacher and candidate will then make the choice.

A special offer for Leadership Examinations

As part of Speech New Zealand's celebration of 50 years helping our nation to communicate we are making a special promotional offer on our Leadership examinations – for both levels.

Speech New Zealand has seen a large growth in this syllabus in schools and would like to promote the value of understanding the skills involved and in speaking in Leadership in all schools.

- Enter 5 students - and you receive a free copy of our Communicating in Leadership resource booklet.
- Enter 10 students - and you receive a free copy of our Communicating in Leadership resource booklet - AND - 1 free entry.

This offer is effective until the end of 2015.

The Communicating in Leadership resource booklet is valued at \$25 and contains invaluable teaching points to assist you in working with both the Introductory Leadership and the more senior Leadership examination.

The free entry can be used to reduce the cost of entry to other students or maybe to encourage a student who is less able to pay for the exam entry.

You might also use this as a promotional tool to help you get more teaching within a school environment.

SNZ Teaching Resources

Do explore www.speechnz.co.nz for further resources to use in teaching towards our syllabuses. If you struggle to find information on teaching aspects of our syllabus please ensure you connect with us and we will do our best to help.

Remember when you order books - teaching or otherwise - from Amazon or Fishpond through the icons on the front page of our website, then you are also supporting Speech New Zealand.

Best wishes and enjoy your teaching in 2015.

Pam

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Helping our Nation to Communicate for 50 years