

Mastering English for CXC

Teacher's Guide

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Introduction

This *Teacher's Guide* provides notes on selected lessons in the accompanying textbook, *Mastering English for CXC*, also by Clive Borely and Hollis Knight.

English grammar has to be taught, and the textbook and this *Teacher's Guide* are intended to support both teacher and students in achieving this goal. Language teaching is no longer a litany of grammar rules to be memorised by a bored, frustrated student. Comparisons between the expression of ideas in both standard English and the students' own dialect, and the difficulties that arise, can make for lessons that are not only informative and pleasurable, but allow for plenty of active participation. The teacher may very well learn from the students some of the rudiments of street language, slang, etc. Needless to say, teachers need to understand and be sensitive to the students' linguistic environment when they are teaching English grammar.

It must be stressed at the outset that it is not our intention for the textbook material to be slavishly followed, nor to allow the textbook to dictate what is to be taught, and when. Ideally, we expect the material to be used over a two-year period, in the fourth and fifth forms. The fifth-form teacher may find, however, as happens quite often, that many skills have not been mastered in the fourth form. We hope that this text will prove helpful for teachers trying to complete the programme in the remaining time available.

The teacher, therefore, should use the text in response to the needs of the students. Some of these needs are almost universal, such as the need to broaden their literacy experiences. In the area of English grammar, students' needs may vary immensely: some may find the correct use of the simple past tense or the present perfect a formidable challenge. The teacher needs to develop an appropriate scheme of work and use the textbook as a means of achieving the set objectives.

Try to avoid the examination approach as you deal with the literary passages. Many students regard extracts in textbooks as something that they are forced to read before being subjected to a test. Help them to understand and enjoy the texts.

When you do come to the issue of answering questions, discourage the students from incorporating the words of the question in their answers. This often leads to clumsy sentences and grammatical errors. If students have read the passage carefully and made an effort to understand the question, they should find it easier to produce correctly worded responses.

Poetry is recognised as the students' bugbear. We have considerable sympathy for students who are asked to decipher a code that they are in no way prepared for. They are turned off because they simply cannot crack the code. Images are lost on them: the ability even to rephrase in ordinary prose what is being said is beyond their immediate reach. All the poems presented in the textbook are intended to show that poetry can be understood, and, more importantly, enjoyed.

The grammar sections in the textbook are intended for revision. We know students have been taught these rules many times before. However, examination scripts indicate that candidates do not put the rules of grammar into practice. It is important for students to recognise the importance of writing grammatically and to take great care in their writing. Encourage them to reread and revise their work before submitting it. Stress the need to follow grammatical rules.

Teaching English is a challenging, but satisfying, job. We hope that English teachers will find practical help and support in both the textbook, and this *Teacher's Guide*.

Chapter 1

Responding to literature, page 1

A strange story: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

This passage is intended as an introduction to the short story. Many young people will consider that this story is not merely strange but stupid and impossible. Help them to realise that the appeal of the story lies in this absurdity.

Help the students (by reading the story aloud to the class, if necessary) to see the light-hearted nature of the story and the devices the author uses to indicate that he is not being serious. The second sentence is a good example. The question section should be used as an aid to discussion, rather than as a comprehension test to be evaluated examination-style.

If you can, introduce the students to other stories by O’Henry. ‘The gift of the Magi’ is perhaps one of the best known short stories.

Chapter 2

Responding to literature, page 7

Memories of an early schooling: Syllabus area: Understanding (C), Expression (C)

This passage shows students how the seemingly ordinary events of their lives can be described in an interesting and personal way. As well as answering the questions, the passage should stimulate them to write accounts of their own experiences in an interesting and entertaining way, in the writing section on page 8.

Students who tend only to ‘read the lines’ in their search for meaning will soon realise that they need to read ‘between the lines’ and pull together bits of information from different parts of the passage to reach a full understanding of the text. Help the students to master these skills.

Reading comprehension, page 9

The Internet versus hurricane damage: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C)

Good prose writing contains appropriate images. In this passage, the writer says: ‘one gets to see the Caribbean from afar’ (lines 2 and 3) and ‘from the other end of the telescope’ (line 11). Understanding these is crucial to a full appreciation of the passage.

Use the passage as a starting point for a discussion of the question of how others see us and how we would prefer to be seen. The students’ responses can be saved for argumentative writing at a later date.

Writing, page 13

Writing a report 1: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

In the exercise in this section, the student are asked to write a factual report based on information provided in a conversation between two friends. The language of the speakers is informal and contains some dialect expressions, which will not be acceptable in the formal report. Many students tend to write

reports by stringing chunks of the text together without trying to interpret the passage and render it in their own words. Guide them to write original reports. Encourage them to use the checklist on page 15.

Chapter 3

Responding to literature, pages 16 and 18

Manu and Moving again: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C)

Some traditional carnival characters were designed to scare the spectators as they went through the streets. The Jab Jab was one of these characters. These characters actually engaged in contest with opposing bands or characters and sometimes suffered serious injury.

Encourage the students to focus on these questions:

- What drives Manu to do the things he does?
- Considering that this is merely a carnival portrayal (or is it?), is Manu being foolish?

Compare the two Manus, i.e. the one in the first extract (*Manu*) with the one portrayed in the second (*Moving again*).

Factual writing: Relating an incident, page 22

A good catch: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

If your class is not easily stimulated, you may have to do some of the preliminary activities given on page 23 as a class or group exercise. Try to get the students to stretch their imaginations. Do not accept every response; challenge them to defend their suggestions and invite others to comment.

Chapter 4

Responding to literature, page 25

A front seat in a war: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C)

This passage allows students to explore the different attitudes people adopt in order to cope with death. Examine the actions of the characters in the passage and ask: is war responsible for their actions?

Understanding poetry, page 26

I shall return: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

The poet, Claude McKay, was a West Indian who migrated to the USA, where he lived for many years. This poem expresses his longing for home.

Allow the students to read the poem silently two or three times and then ask one of the better readers to read it to the class. The questions on page 27 are intended to stimulate discussion and reflection, not as a test. When the poem has been fully discussed, students could write their responses to the questions as practice for the examination.

Questions regarding the forms of poetry (rhyme and rhyme, etc.) are not usually examined in the CXC examination. It is helpful, however, to deal with these aspects as it gives the students a fuller appreciation of poetry and can help them in their own efforts to write poetry, if they are so inclined.

Personal writing, page 30: Syllabus area: Expression (C)

These written exercises are intended to help students develop their own style of writing. They need to pay attention to basic grammar and punctuation, but they should not be inhibited about what they want to say. Of course, vulgarity and obscenity must be discouraged.

Chapter 5

Responding to literature, page 32

Samdaye: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

This is another extract from the novel, *Between Two Seasons* (the others are on pages 16 and 18) and should be treated in a similar fashion to the earlier extracts.

Understanding poetry, page 23

Grass: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

This poem is rather different from the one in Chapter 4. The message of the poem is quite profound. Help the students to discover it. Here the poet lets the grass do the talking. What is the grass saying to us? What does the poem cause us to reflect on?

Reading comprehension, page 34

The Breakfast Shed: Syllabus area: Understanding (D), Expression (D)

This passage is a piece of persuasive writing, although it appears on first reading to be a merely factual description. Help the students to find the elements that show the writer's enthusiasm for the breakfast shed and how this is used to encourage others to patronise the place.

You can use the material in this passage for aspects of the syllabus that deal with other persuasive techniques. Students can be asked to write advertisements or conceptualise radio and TV commercials on the breakfast shed in general, or to highlight the delicacies of a particular vendor.

Chapter 6

Responding to literature, page 40

Helen, my double: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C), Expression (C)

The narrator of the passage lives in the world of her book, which is set in England. She considers this world the real valid world and she consequently regards her own life and environment as inferior. She describes some of the things she did during this period of her life. Ask the question: is she laughing at herself?

This is an excellent example of how writing can be humorous on one level and yet contain a serious message on another. Several ironies need to be explored here, including one that Caribbean people have had to deal with, for a long time preferring foreign things to their own. Explore reasons for poor self-image. What does the passage tell us about the search for identity? How do you think Caribbean people have succeeded in finding themselves?

You may need to explain the following words:

- *Washicong* is the word used by Trinidadians for canvas shoes, tennis shoes, sneakers.
- Chaffinches and blue tits are birds found in the UK and Europe. Cowslips and honeysuckle are flowering plants.

Give the students a creative writing task based on the Discussion exercise on page 42.

Reading comprehension, page 42

A unique way to study: Syllabus area: Understanding (B)

Follow the instructions given in the text.

Letter writing, page 44: Syllabus area: Expression (B) and (D)

In this exercise there are no right or wrong views. The important thing is that the students' letters should express their views clearly and persuasively with good supporting arguments.

Grammar, page 45

The past tense: Syllabus area. Understanding (A)

Allow the students to read the passages in the exercise for a couple of minutes, then ask individuals to read the passages aloud using the verb forms they selected. Let the rest of the class listen silently and take note of any mistakes they might have heard, and correct them afterwards. Stop the student after a couple of sentences if it is clear that he or she is not up to the task. After discussing the corrections, ask the class to write the passages using the correct forms of the verbs.

Past participles: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A)

This is an important aspect of the course as the past participle is probably the form of the verb that is most frequently misused by examination candidates. The list of verbs given contains some of the most commonly used verbs. Extend this list according to your students' needs.

The exercise on page 48 should be done in the way as the past tense exercise on page 45.

Chapter 7

Responding to literature, page 50

The beginning of a friendship: Syllabus area: Understanding (C), Expression (C)

The idea of feeling lonely or disconsolate in a crowd is one many students can relate to. We need also to improve the way in which we treat newcomers. Ask those who have travelled abroad: how does it feel to be in a big city? Follow the instructions given in the text.

Grammar, page 53

Simple sentences

The aim of this section is to make students aware of the structure of the English sentence and how complex sentences are generated from simple sentences.

We all learnt in our grammar classes that a simple sentence has only one finite verb. This is perfectly true, but some simple sentences are more elaborate than others - they may contain qualifying words and clauses. Examples are given at the beginning of the section 'Phrases, clauses and complex sentences' on page 54. Simple sentences which contain only the essential elements required for the sentence type are called basic sentences.

Chapter 8

Understanding poetry, page 61

There will come soft rains: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

The poem should be approached in the way recommended for the other poems presented earlier in the book.

Explore the images in the poem and the unusual word combinations, for example 'shimmering sound', 'tremulous white', 'feathery fire'.

Note how the poem seems to minimise the importance of humans in the overall scheme of things. Ask the question: do you think the poet is correct?

Discussion, page 61

This section is not intended to be an exercise. There are no right or wrong answers to be marked. The questions are intended to guide the students, working in groups, in their thinking and to help them to form their own opinions.

Writing, page 63

Narrative writing 1: Syllabus area: Expression (C)

There are a number of written tasks given to the students with the book. It is important that teachers read all of these and give the necessary help and encouragement to the student writers. Ensure they use correct grammar and punctuation, but the actual treatment of the topic should reflect a sympathetic reading.

Chapter 9

Responding to literature, page 65

Another failed project: Syllabus area: Understanding (C), Expression (C)

In this extract, we are trying to dig a little more deeply into the unexpressed motives, attitudes and relationships between characters. We can learn a lot about people from what they do and say rather than what the author says about them. The questions help the students to discover these.

Note: Stephanie St Pierre (line 33) is Aubrey's mother.

Writing a script, page 67

This should be undertaken as a group activity. Help the students to enter into their roles and to think and act in the way their characters would behave in real life.

Understanding poetry, page 67

A newcomer. Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

It is important for students to appreciate the special nature of poetry. Help them to enjoy the language, rhythm and rhyme (if any,) and other techniques used by the poet. In particular, they should learn to enjoy the sound of the poem. Read it aloud with good diction and expression, but without affectation.

The purpose of the questions is to lead the students to discover the deeper meanings intended by the poet. Help them to visualise the scene and what appeals to the poet. Compare the child in the poem with other children they have met in this book. Think about Zulma, for example, in Chapter 7. How are they alike? How are they different?

Help the students with the images in the poem:

- ‘the crowd/That tumbled round’ (lines 2-3)
- ‘crept from a sun-spotted/Thicket by mistake to this grey city’ (lines 6-7)
- ‘Just stumbled out of childhood’ (line 9)
- ‘So quicksilver a wisp’ (line 13)
- ‘The three lost suns still glowed’ (line 23).

Students need first to discover the essence of the comparison that an image suggests. What does the word ‘stumble’ suggest? Why does the poet use this word to describe the girl’s journey out of childhood?

Grammar, page 68

Problem words and phrases: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A)

In the exercise on page 69, and others like it throughout this book, the aim is to point out some of the students’ non-standard use of language. This is often the result of well-established language patterns - of both the students themselves and the community in which they live. You may need to devise your own, additional exercises to give them further practice. Include oral work, together with drills and conversation practice.

Answers to exercises, page 71

All, all of, the whole, every

- 1 all of them/them all
- 2 were all urged
- 3 we can all
- 4 us all/all of us
- 5 were all rescued
- 6 the whole set/group/cargo of animals

Some and any

- 1 a) There wasn't any paint ...
b) Was there any pain ...?
- 2 a) I'd like some, thanks.
b) I don't want any, thanks
- 3 a) yes, I have some
b) No, I don't have any

Chapter 10

Responding to literature, page 73

Kaiser. Syllabus area: Understanding (C), Expression (B) and (C)

Use the guidelines given in earlier chapters.

Understanding poetry, page 74

A negro labourer in Liverpool: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

Follow the guidelines given in previous chapters. Explore the following phrases and images:

- 'A dark shadow/Amidst dark shadows' (lines 5-6)
- 'Piercing through impassive crowds' (line 15)
- 'Searching longingly' (line 16)
- 'That might flicker understanding' (line 18).

Grammar, page 75

Modal auxiliaries: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A)

This is a very important area of language learning. The dialect use of modals is very deeply ingrained and is a part of the everyday language of all Caribbean people. Make use of the suggestions made for page 68 in Chapter 9.

Chapter 11

Understanding literature, page 81

Mr Hardaker. Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

This passage has been divided into two parts to make it easier for students who might find it difficult to tackle longer passages in one session. However, if some students are capable of reading the whole passage and responding to the questions that follow, you should allow them to do so.

The teaching approach should be the same as for earlier pieces in the book.

Writing, page 84

Summary skills 2: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

The ability to write summaries is important, but it takes time to acquire the skill. We have tried to help the student by breaking the task down into stages and giving practice in each stage. Further exercises in this skill will follow.

Grammar, page 85

Will and *would*: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A)

The comments about dialect in previous chapters (for pages 68 and 75) are relevant here also.

Answers to exercise, page 87

1 Yes, I *can* make the table for you. I *made* one only last week for Mr John. But I am finishing a job right now. You *will* have to wait until next week.

2 No, I am sorry. When I was younger I *could* do it, but it's too strenuous for me now. I *would* have liked to help you, but I *can't*. If you want I *can* ask my son. He's also a builder. I'm sure he *will* be able to help you.

3 What *would* you like for breakfast, sir?

What *can* I have?

Well, you *can* take the special, which is coffee, toast, bacon and eggs and margarine and a fresh fruit. This is reasonably priced and you *can* get it right away. Or we *can* (*could*) prepare you something from the menu.

4 You want me to write an excuse for you saying you *could* not do your homework because you were ill? I *won't* hear of it. And you'd better not ask your mother, because she *won't* do it either.

5 Emma: Hi, Jill, I almost didn't recognise you. In fact, I *would* not have if you hadn't been with your mother. Where are you going?

Jill: I have to go to New York. My father arranged an interview for me with the dean of the university where he works. It was all very sudden. The interview is on Monday and I'll (*will*) have to do a lot of reading before that. I do hope I can make a good impression.

Emma: That's nice. I know you *will* be successful. But what *will* (*shall*) I do at the office now? I won't have anybody to lime with. I guess I'll have to listen to all Rosemary's woes until you return.

6 Candice: Peter, I just got this invitation to attend the launching of a new political party. Do you think I *should* go? What will the people in the office think?

Peter: What does it matter what other people think? You can't let other people determine what you *should* (*will*) do and what you *shouldn't* (*won't*).

Indirect speech 2, page 88: Syllabus area: Expression (A) and (B)

The exercise on page 88 is important.

- 1 There are several different ways of reporting each of the statements given. Use the example as a guide. The essential aim is to convey all the important information. Pay special attention to the main verb. The students should choose verbs that convey the speaker's mood as suggested by the actual words spoken. Words like 'said' and 'asked' are usually too weak to convey the required meaning. Encourage them to use verbs like 'complained', 'demanded', 'pleaded', 'begged', 'urged', 'exhorted' and 'wondered'.
- 2 Writing the minutes of a meeting is a very important skill; it combines the skills of summarising and reporting. Discuss the exercise with the class before letting them embark on it.

Chapter 12

Responding to literature, page 90

The registry clerk: Syllabus area: Understanding (C), Expression (B) and (C)

In this passage, the author, V.S. Naipaul, now Sir Vidia Naipaul, recalls his first job in Trinidad before he left to study in England. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2001.

Follow the suggestions made in earlier chapters in teaching this lesson. As with the other passages, get the students to write a description of some experience of their own which is similar to the one in the passage.

Understanding poetry, page 92

At the theatre: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

This is a fun poem. Help the students to see the writer's irritation and the things that annoy him. Ask the students if they think that the writer is describing an incident that really happened, or is generalising about people who behave badly at the theatre. Is there an attempt to change the behaviour of certain theatre- or movie-goers?

Grammar, page 93

May, might and could: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A)

This is another area where the students' own dialect can make learning difficult. Approach this part of the chapter in the same way as for similar earlier sections.

Answers to exercise, page 94

- 2 a) It might ...
b) I think you should ...
c) You could ...
- 3 a) You must evacuate your homes ...
b) You should ...
c) It might be advisable to ... or ... You might wish to ...
d) may be, or might be
- 4 a) would, or could

- b) couldn't you have told me
- c) You might wish to take ... it might benefit you ...

Writing, page 95

Summary skills 3: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

This is a continuation of the summary skills sections in Chapters 7 and 11. Help the students to work their way carefully through pages 95-7.

Chapter 13

Responding to literature, page 100

The coming of the briefcase men: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C)

Follow the guidelines given in earlier chapters.

Reading comprehension, pages 102-3

Science in the early twentieth century: Understanding (B)

Tell the students that the dash (- ... -) is used instead of parentheses (first paragraph of 'Science in Germany'), and that in this case it is equivalent to a phrase introduced by 'that is ...'.

The two passages in this section are useful for probing cause-and-effect relationships and for developing the skill of 'reading between the lines', i.e. looking for meanings that are not openly stated .

Responding to literature, page 104

The widow's mite: Understanding (B)

Explain where the title comes from. Some students could be asked to relate the original parable to the class. Discuss the aptness of the title of the story.

Reading comprehension, page 105

Controlling crime?: Syllabus area: Understanding (D)

Students often find it difficult to deal with this type of writing in the examination. Take time to help them appreciate the attitude of the writer and how this is reflected in the choice of expression. It might be useful for the students to read the letter aloud and discuss the tone of voice, which should be used.

Help them by pointing out the special features of the letter. Why, for example, does the writer make the rather obvious statement in the second sentence and then follow it up with a question. Does the writer expect the question to be answered, or is it rhetorical? Are other rhetorical questions used? What is the effect of this device?

Focus on the second paragraph. Why does the writer say that the government's response to crime is 'curious ... to say the least'? What other words could the writer have used? What effect does the use of

the weaker word achieve? Why does the writer give the details of the government's reaction in the rest of the paragraph?

What do the terms 'other 'ologists' and 'rah rah rah rah' indicate about the writer's attitude? Does the writer mean what he or she says in the last sentence? What does the writer really mean? What is this type of writing called?

Writing, page 106

Describing a place: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

Follow the advice and suggestions given in the lesson.

Chapter 14

Responding to literature, page 110

Edith: Syllabus area: Understanding (C), Expression (C)

This chapter provides a number of ways in which students can develop a better appreciation of the literary texts they read. The exercises are intended as starting points for class discussion and activity related to the reading. Do not be afraid to spend plenty of time on these activities, as the gains will be quite significant in the long run.

Chapter 15

Responding to literature, page 119

Dolphins of Man O'War Bay: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (D), Expression (B) and (D)

This is a factual account of a remarkable incident. However, in spite of the effort to be objective, the writer's own point of view can be detected. Discuss whether the writer is trying to send a message to the reader.

There are two points of view on the issue of catching the dolphins: that of the hero of the story, Charles, and that of the crowd of fishermen and villagers. Help the class to appreciate the two points of view. Follow the suggestions given in the chapter.

Understanding poetry, page 123

Souls of the lepers: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

This poem was written by a yachtsman. Help the students to imagine the scene as the sailor sees the frolicking dolphins swimming alongside the yacht as it sails past the island of Chacachacare.

Use the suggestions given earlier in this book for teaching poetry.

Writing, page 124

Summary skills 4: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

The main points of summary writing given earlier in the text need to be reviewed (see page 00). Let the students read each other's work to determine whether the main points are all given and that repetition and the inclusion of irrelevant material have been avoided.

Cables and telegrams: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

The students need to know that the way in which cables were transmitted did not allow for punctuation marks. The writer had to spell out the punctuation mark whenever one was required. These spelled-out punctuation marks were counted as words and had to be paid for. Cables, therefore, had to be kept as short as possible to keep the cost down.

Longer writing tasks

The exercises on writing the circular for the Essex Sports Club (no. 1 on page 127) and the application for school places (no. 5 on page 128) are important types of factual writing that the students will find useful in adult life.

Chapter 16

Responding to literature, page 128

A close call: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C), Expression (B)

This extract is from an autobiographical novel, *Angela's Ashes*, by Frank McCourt. It is written in the language of a young Irish boy. The punctuation is not intended to serve as a model for the students, but you could discuss with them the effectiveness of writing the story in this way.

The passage has been broken up into two parts for the convenience of the less able readers. Follow the suggestions for dealing with literary pieces given earlier in this book.

Considering the facts

This section requires a lot of introspection on the part of the students. This is not an exercise that students do very readily. They need to be encouraged to talk about themselves and things that happened to them. An anecdote from your own life might help them to open up a bit. Small-group discussion can be effective, but it is important to monitor the groups to keep them on-task.

Understanding poetry, page 133

The fawn: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

There is a little action in this poem. The poet reflects on her own desire to be at one with the creatures of nature. It is crucial to the understanding of the poem for the students to know what a fawn is. Both the poet's behaviour and that of the fawn at the end of the poem can only be explained through this understanding.

The expression 'Might I have' in lines 14 and 16 may be unfamiliar to some students. Suggest that they use the phrase 'if only I could' to replace it in order to get the meaning. Refer to the section on 'May, might and could' in Chapter 12.

Writing, page 135

Persuasive writing 1: Syllabus area: Expression (D)

This is an important aspect of the CXC syllabus and needs to be given attention. The examination reveals a serious lack of skill in this area. The section contains detailed suggestions and exercises to develop persuasive writing skills.

Chapter 17

Reading comprehension, page 139

I am David Milgaard's mother. Syllabus area: Understanding (B)

This is the true story of a young man who was wrongly sentenced to prison for a murder which he did not commit. The story of the struggle of both the victims and his family to get justice is told by his mother. Students will learn from this passage how effective simple, sincere writing can be. The story has recently been made into a film.

Responding to literature, page 142

A different etiquette. Understanding (B) and (C)

This is a humorous account of an accident. Help the students to see and respond to the humour. Encourage them to see how the author's attitude can be detected in some of the phrases.

Writing, page 144

Persuasive writing 2: Revision: Syllabus area: Expression (D)

This lesson revises the information from the earlier lesson on persuasive writing.

Chapter 18

Responding to literature, page 147

Advice from a stranger. Understanding (B) and (C), Expression (B) and (C)

The author, E.R. Braithwaite, describes the plight of a qualified young West Indian looking for a job in London. Help the students to appreciate the writer's mood and his attitude to the old man who is trying to help him. Reflect also on the man's response to how he is treated. Use the approaches that have been described earlier in this book.

Responding to literature, page 150

Getting married in Ocho Rios: Understanding (B) and (C)

This is an excellent piece of humorous writing. A very frustrating and vexatious episode is retold with typical West Indian humour. The extract has been divided into three parts for ease of management.

Writing, page 156

Persuasive writing 3: Syllabus area: Expression (D)

Persuasive writing techniques are examined and discussed. This section will need to be referred to again when necessary as the students will not acquire the skills after just one or two attempts.

Grammar, page 157

Linking words and interpretative devices: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A), (B), (C) and (D)

Linking words and phrases help the reader to appreciate more fully the writer's intended meaning. In addition, they make the written communication more elegant and forceful. Point out how these and similar words and phrases are used by the writers they have studied in other areas of the syllabus.

Chapter 19

Responding to literature, page 159

Preparing to be a writer: Understanding (B) and (C), Expression (B) and (C)

Use the approaches given in the earlier chapters of the book.

Writing, page 161

Paragraph writing and Persuasive writing 4

Pages 161-2 provide help on how to develop paragraphs, including introductions and conclusions. Give the students ample opportunity to practise these skills by assigning them topics which lend themselves to the use of the skills discussed in this chapter.

Reading comprehension, page 162

Letter to a newspaper: Syllabus area: Understanding (D)

As mentioned earlier, students find it difficult to get the essential aim of the writers of this type of letter. Do not set them off on the questions without preparation. Read the first paragraph aloud to the class. Encourage them to get behind the words to discover the writer's mood and attitude. Probe the writer's first few lines: 'I am stunned by, no, appalled at ...' Why does he seem to change his mind about the word that he wants to use? Is there some special effect that he wants to achieve? Why does he call the children 'mere toddlers'? Why does he say 'I don't mean toy cars. I mean family cars'?

When this is done, elicit from the class how the writer feels about the practice he is describing. When the students have discovered this, they can then proceed to a better appreciation of the rest of the letter. They can now proceed to answer the questions as an oral exercise first, followed by reinforcement in writing.

Examination preparation, page 163

From this point on a number of examination preparation lessons are presented. They focus on students' main areas of grammatical and expression weaknesses. Special attention must be given to those areas of weakness that your own students demonstrate.

Answers to exercise, page 165

2 a) is; b) has; c) is; d) are; e) has

3 a) seems; b) are; c) no error; d) are; e) costs; f) no error; g) have; h) have; i) no error; j) makes

Answers to exercise, page 166

1 was; 2 are; 3 there were; 4 there is; 5 there was; 6 there was; 7 there was; 8 there were

Answers to exercise, page 167

1 have; 2 no error; 3 no error; 4 are; 5 are; 6 no error; 7 are; 8 many; 9 many; 10 no error; 11 many; 12 no error; 13 no error; 14 is

Chapter 20

Responding to literature, page 168

Isadora and Rutherford: Understanding (C)

This story (in two parts) is set in the southern United States towards the end of the period of slavery. At the time there were a number of free African-Americans who tried to improve the condition of their lives in America.

The term 'Creole' refers to the white families who had settled in the United States for a number of generations.

There are a number of stories, novels, films and television series set in this period of American history, which the students may have seen or read. A class discussion on the period would be a good introduction to this reading.

Writing, page 172

Persuasive writing 5: Syllabus area: Expression (D)

The work on writing introductions and conclusions is continued here. Give the students a lot of practice in these skills.

Making speeches: Syllabus area: Expression (B) and (D)

The oral aspect of language is an important part of the syllabus. Students should be encouraged to appreciate that their speaking skills (fluency, articulation, pronunciation and correct use of grammar) are very important in life after school. Most people have to be interviewed for jobs and the way in which they express themselves in an interview can be a crucial factor in whether they obtain the job or not. Find time to do oral work with the students. Making speeches, engaging in debates, reading poetry or selected prose passages and acting out plays, are important aspects of the syllabus, even though they are not yet examined.

Chapter 21

Responding to literature, page 177

The burst bubble: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

In this story, a brilliant young man from a poor country district in Jamaica comes up against social class discrimination for the first time at university. Both he and Pearl are students of a Canadian university.

Treat this story in the same way as the other literary selections in this book.

Grammar, page 181

Figures of speech: Syllabus area: Understanding (B), (C) and (D)

The students do not need to learn the definition of each figure of speech. But they do need to be able to recognise them, how they achieve their effect and how they are used by good writers. Many students may well be using these devices without knowing what they are. There is nothing wrong with this as long as the figures of speech are appropriately used.

You may find it useful to teach your students hyperbole and its opposite, understatement (litotes).

- Hyperbole is the deliberate use of exaggeration in order to achieve a heightened effect, for example, 'The bomb hit the ground and exploded and the light of a million suns flooded the landscape.'
- The opposite of hyperbole is understatement (litotes). This is often used to soften the effect of bad news, for example:
 - (a) 'I am sorry said the doctor "I don't think he's going to make it through the night."' Compare this with 'I think he's going to die tonight.'
 - (b) 'The captain of a team that has just been ignominiously beaten says to reporters. "Well, we rather under-performed this afternoon."'

Chapter 22

Responding to literature, page 185

The laughter: Syllabus area: Understanding (B)

In this passage, the author, Heinrich Boll, describes his unusual profession in an interesting way. Follow the instructions in the lesson. Remember the questions in the discussion part of the lesson are intended to

help the students find a greater understanding of the passage and the possibilities that exist for unusual jobs. There is no right or wrong answer to these questions.

Reading comprehension, page 187

Tales from the jingle book: Syllabus area: Understanding (B)

This lesson give the class the opportunity to move out of the realm of words only and explore one of the roles that music plays in our lives. Do not be afraid to let the students be expressive as long as they do not disturb other classes.

Writing, page 190

Writing a report 2: Syllabus area: Understanding (B), Expression (B)

In this part of the lesson, we have given only two examples of tables. Bring into the class charts and diagrams from newspapers and magazines to discuss with the students. The more familiar they are with the ways of presenting data, the better they will perform in the examination.

Chapter 23

Reading comprehension, page 193

Spontaneous healing: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (D), Expression (B)

This passage is longer than those in previous chapters. It is felt that, at this stage, students will be able to handle it. If you feel it is necessary, divide the passage into two parts.

The passage appears on first reading to be a merely factual report. However, more careful reading reveals that the writer is in fact trying to influence the opinions of this readers on the subject of how medicine is practised. Help the students to see how the author achieves this aim. Careful attention to the questions (pages 195-6) will help to achieve this.

Responding to literature, page 196

Claudia's Christmas: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A), (B), (C) and (D)

An African-American girl is given a white doll for Christmas and does not seem appreciate the gift. The passage helps us to understand why.

Use the suggestions for dealing with literary selections given in the earlier chapters of this book.

Examination preparation, page 199

Construction shift: Syllabus area: Understanding (A), Expression (A), (B), (C) and (D)

It is important to show the students that the ability to change one sentence into a number of different forms which mean the same thing is not a meaningless exercise. The different forms, while conveying the same basic information, indicate different emphases or intentions.

Answers to exercise, page 200

- 1 Having seen the movie Ben Arthur, I was encouraged to ...
- 2 Rather than giving the beggar ...
- 3 Upon hearing the news ...
- 4 Hardly had I opened the door that the dog ...
- 5 Having undergone surgery, the old man ...
- 6 Because he took... he dropped off ...
- 7 No sooner had I seen ... than ...
- 8 The conservation of our forest is the task that ...
- 9 Had he not eaten ...
- 10 The patient could not appreciate the ...
- 11 It was unfortunate that As the bill exceeded ...
- 12 People wishing to enter the museum must/have to pass through ...

Equivalent sentences

This is a way of testing the preciseness of students' understanding. Very often we read statements and make assumptions about what the writer is saying that are quite inaccurate. Often, too, we misread words or are mistaken about the meaning of certain words or grammatical structures. The options contain only one correct answer, the others reflect a misreading of the key sentence. You may find it necessary to explain why certain options are wrong.

Answers to exercise, page 201

1 b; 2 a; 3 b; 4 c; 5 c; 6 b; 7 a; 8 b; 10 c; 11 d; 12 a

Chapter 24

Reading comprehension, page 204

Hirohito: Syllabus area: Syllabus area: Understanding (B), Expression (B)

This passage allows students to delve into a little bit of modern history and to become aware of a culture which is very different from their own. The suggestions for research should be followed as far as possible.

Reading comprehension, page 207

Waiting for a taxi: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C), Expression (B)

In this extract taken from Shiva Naipaul's *North of South*, we gain an insight into the culture of another country. Note how the writer treats the situation.

Writing, page 209 and 215

Imaginative writing 1 and 2: Syllabus area: Expression (C)

The exercises given in these sections can be very stimulating. Encourage the students to get involved in them.

Examination preparation, page 211

Examination practice continues with CXC-type tests of Understanding (B), (C), (D) and (E) of *Steelband clash* (page 211) and *Road to Lacovia* (page 213). Discuss the incorrect answers with students to help them to see why their choices were incorrect.

Chapter 25

Responding to literature, page 217

Bigger versus the rat

In this extract from *Native Son*, a relatively minor incident is described in such detail and with such a precise selection of words that the fear, anxiety and determination of the characters are very effectively captured.

Help the students to pick out the details in the description and the very apt selection of vocabulary. People getting up from sleep are not usually very alert. Draw to their attention to the writer's description of each character's waking behaviour. Go on to focus on the sentence, 'the one-room apartment galvanised into violent action' (lines 32-3).

Examination preparation, page 223

Paper 1: Syllabus area: Understanding D

Although this is provided as examination preparation, it would be useful to discuss the question with the class before they start the test. This is an example of the type of advertisement that can be seen almost everyday in newspapers and magazines. It is important for students to realise how language is used to persuade us in advertisements and other types of persuasive writing. In this and other advertisements, the language which conveys the message is reinforced by the pictures that accompany it. Sometimes the pictures are the more powerful influence. Discuss with the class the impact of the picture: what is their immediate reaction to the picture? Does it grab their attention? Evoke sympathy? Stimulate a desire for the product? How does it achieve these effects? Is it a fair use of the medium?

You need to probe the idea that the advertisement achieves its effect not merely by what it does say, but also by what it does not say about the product.

Answers to test, page 223

1 d; 2 a; 3 d; 4 b; 5 c; 6 d; 7 d; 8 c

Chapter 26

Reading comprehension, page 228

Comrades!: Syllabus area: Understanding (D)

Understanding (D) remains one of the areas which students handle very poorly. We suggest you read this passage aloud with the appropriate changes in tone to help students recognise the writer's intention. Help them to pick up signals sent out by the speaker. What is the reason for the first paragraph? How is it to be read? Note the switch in the second paragraph 'But I am afraid'.

The Understanding (D) passages provided in the book are intended to serve several purposes:

- They are, of course, comprehension passages.
- They help the students to identify techniques of persuasion.
- They can serve as models to assist students in the presentation of their own arguments as required in the Expression (D) component of the syllabus.

Focus here on:

- The writer's repeated use of the word 'comrades' and the purpose it is intended to achieve.
- The use of repetition throughout the passage.
- The use of questions.
- The use of emotive words.

All these can become part of the students' own repertoire.

Other passages make use of:

- sarcasm (pages 239 and 278)
- humour as means of commentary or criticism (page 249)
- exhortation or encouragement (page 223).

Writing, page 230

Expository writing 1: Syllabus area: Expression (B)

Expository writing has not so far been seriously tested by CXC, but it quite likely that this will change in the future. Follow the guidelines in the text.

Examination preparation, page 232

Answers to test page 232

1 b; 2 c; 3 b; 4 a; 5 b; 6 d; 7 d; 8 a

Chapter 27

Responding to literature, page 235

Strangely beyond sleep: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C)

In this extract, the writer enters the mind of an old runaway as she curls up in a doorway, trying to escape from the elements after being abandoned by her fleeing companions. Help the students to imagine her position and the thoughts that come to her: how her past experience conditions her expectations of the present.

Understanding poetry, page 237

Mending wall: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

Follow the guidelines given earlier in this book.

In the Caribbean, we are not familiar with the practice of building a stone wall between two very large adjoining country properties. The different sentiments of the two neighbours are revealed in the poem.

Responding to literature, page 241

West Indian wedding in London: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C), Expression (B) and (D)

Help the students to imagine the scene: this is England of 50 years ago. West Indians and their customs were strange to the English then.

Help them to try to enter into the minds of the English onlookers. Ask the students to pick out the instances where an English person comes into contact with a West Indian and note what takes place. Follow the guidelines provided in the chapter.

Examination preparation, page 245

Answers to test, page 245

1 c; 2 c; 3 b; 4 b; 5 b; 6 d; 7 c; 8 a

Chapter 28

Responding to literature, page 247

The greatest thing in history: Syllabus area: Understanding (B)

The terrorist attack on the United States on 11 September 2001 makes this extract even more relevant. Help the students to compare the two events and to realise that such events are not restricted to any one ethnic or religious group.

The passage gives the opportunity to probe some of the realities of war which tend to escape the attention of the public or the news media.

Try to do all the exercises and research projects suggested in the chapter.

Understanding poetry, page 253

Canonization: Syllabus area: Understanding (C)

Follow the guidelines given earlier in this book

Chapter 29

Responding to literature, page 258

Fishing for shark: Syllabus area: Understanding (B) and (C), Expression (B) and (C)

The author of this extract, Arthur Grimble, at the time of this incident was a junior officer in the Colonial Service, posted to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in the Pacific. In this passage he attempts to do something that appears to be quite simple when performed by the islands' inhabitants.

You could use the passage to demonstrate the idea that book learning is not everything. The islanders may have had no education as we know it; their learning is based on the development of life skills and they demonstrated a mastery of the skills of fishing that made a difficult task look very simple.

Writing a report: 3, page 261

Interpreting graphs and charts

This is an important aspect of the syllabus. Graphs and charts help us to 'see the picture' that has emerged. Thus they can make complex information easy to understand, but reading them requires special skills. By asking probing questions, help the students to discover and interpret the wealth of information that can be presented in a chart or graph. It is sometimes necessary to do some calculations to arrive at satisfactory answers.

This is an area of the syllabus where you might need to liaise with the Mathematics teacher in order to help your students to a better understanding of the charts.

Sample CXC English examination papers

Paper 1: Answers to tests

Error recognition, page 264

1 c; 2 b; 3 c; 4 c; 5 d; 6 b; 7 a; 8 b

Sentence completion, page 265

1 b; 2 a; 3 d; 4 a; 5 b; 6 d; 7 a; 8 b

Construction shift, page 265

1 b; 2 a; 3 d; 4 b; 5 a; 6 c; 7 a; 8 b

Responding to literature: practice passage 1, page 266

1 b; 2 d; 3 b; 4 b; 5 b; 6 b; 7 b; 8 a

Responding to literature: Practice passage 2, page 269

1 a; 2 d; 3 d; 4 b; 5 a; 6 c; 7 a; 8 b; 9 c; 10 d; 11 c; 12 b

Understanding poetry: practice passage 3, page 272

1 c; 2 a; 3 c; 4 c; 5 b; 6 d; 7 b; 8 b; 9 d; 10 d

Reading comprehension: practice passage 4, page 274

1 b; 2 c; 3 d; 4 d; 5 a; 6 d; 7 b; 8 b

Paper 2

Section One, page 276

The students are required to give eight rules based on a set of given notes. The responses must:

- contain correct information
- be grammatically correct
- demonstrate a good grasp of spelling and punctuation.

Award a maximum of three marks for each rule written by a candidate. Ask yourself the following:

- Is the answer factually correct? If yes, 1 mark.
- Is it clearly expressed? If yes, 1 mark.
- Is it grammatically acceptable with no spelling or punctuation mistakes? If yes, 1 mark.

Note:

- The answer may not be absolutely flawless. Minor mistakes that may be attributed to haste or oversight may be overlooked.
- A factually incorrect answer cannot be awarded marks for clarity of expression and grammar.