

GESE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Graded Examinations in Spoken English
Elementary stage

Grades 4-6 | CEFR levels A2-B1

About this booklet

This booklet provides teachers with a comprehensive breakdown of the requirements and some preparation techniques for Trinity Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE) Grades 4-6.

About Trinity College London

Trinity College London is a leading international exam board and independent education charity that has been providing assessments around the world since 1877. We specialise in the assessment of communicative and performance skills covering music, drama, combined arts and English language. With over 850,000 candidates a year in more than 60 countries worldwide, Trinity qualifications are specifically designed to help students progress. Our aim is to inspire teachers and learners through the creation of assessments that are enjoyable to prepare for, rewarding to teach and that develop the skills needed in real life.

At the heart of Trinity's work is the belief that effective communicative and performance skills are life enhancing, know no boundaries and should be within reach of us all. We exist to promote and foster the best possible communicative and performance skills through assessment, content and training that is innovative, personal and authentic.

Contents

The Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE).....	2
GESE Elementary stage (Grades 4-6, CEFR A2.2-B1.2).....	3
The Topic phase.....	4
The Conversation phase.....	6
GESE Grade 4 (CEFR A2.2) – Introduction.....	7
GESE Grade 4 – Language.....	8
GESE Grade 4 – Example activities.....	10
GESE Grade 5 (CEFR B1.1) – Introduction.....	17
GESE Grade 5 – Language.....	18
GESE Grade 5 – Example activities.....	20
GESE Grade 6 (CEFR B1.2) – Introduction.....	27
GESE Grade 6 – Language.....	28
GESE Grade 6 – Example activities.....	30
The next steps – GESE Intermediate stage.....	35

The Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE)

The Graded Examinations in Spoken English are designed for all learners of English. There are 12 grades in total, so whatever your students' level of English there is an exam that they can take.

Trinity's GESE exams assess a range of speaking and listening skills and test what a candidate can actually do, rather than just what they know. Preparation for GESE exams focuses on the development of authentic communicative skills and on building the confidence to use English in real life.

Each GESE exam is conducted in person by a Trinity examiner. All Trinity examiners are highly trained and experienced. The exam consists of a one-to-one conversation with the examiner.

The 12 grades of GESE are divided into four stages:

Initial	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced
Grades 1-3 5-7 minutes	Grades 4-6 10 minutes	Grades 7-9 15 minutes	Grades 10-12 25 minutes
			Topic presentation
			Topic discussion
		Candidate-led discussion of topic	Interactive task
	Topic discussion	Interactive task	Listening task
Conversation	Conversation	Conversation	Conversation

This booklet has been prepared to help teachers prepare their students for the Elementary stage, Grades 4-6 exams.

Full details of Trinity's GESE exams can be found in the latest edition of our Exam Information booklet at trinitycollege.com/GESEexaminformation

Assessment

At the Elementary stage, the examiner assesses the candidate's performance by awarding a letter grade A, B, C or D for Task fulfilment for the Topic and Conversation phases. In simple terms, these levels can be classified as follows:

- ▶ A – Distinction (reflects an excellent performance)
- ▶ B – Merit (reflects a good performance)
- ▶ C – Pass (reflects a satisfactory performance)
- ▶ D – Fail (reflects an unsatisfactory performance).

The combination of the two letter grades, ie the one awarded for the **topic** and the one awarded for the **conversation** provides the overall level of achievement.

The examiner notes their assessments on a tablet. The centre receives an email within a couple of days of the end of the exam session with provisional results and key areas where the students can improve.

Certificates for successful candidates are usually sent to exam centres for distribution within four weeks of the completion of the GESE exam session. Certificates for GESE exams taken at UK Secure English Language Test (SELT) centres are usually sent within seven days of the exam.

GESE Elementary stage (Grades 4-6, CEFR A2.2-B1.2)

Introduction to the Elementary stage

Candidate profile

By the end of the Elementary stage, the candidate can:

- ▶ understand the main points of clear speech on familiar matters
- ▶ enter into conversation, express personal opinions and exchange information on familiar subjects of personal interest or related to everyday life
- ▶ demonstrate a sufficient range of language to describe experiences and events and give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

This profile is based on the level B1, Independent User, on the Common European Framework of Reference.

Elementary stage exam format

		Assessed	Not assessed
1	Greetings and setting at ease		✓
2	Topic discussion	✓	
3	Conversation task	✓	
4	End of conversation and leave-taking		✓

Overview of the Elementary stage

The Elementary stage exams have two phases. Each phase lasts up to five minutes. In the first phase, the **Topic discussion**, the candidate has a conversation with the examiner on a topic of personal interest which they have prepared before the exam. The candidate gives a completed topic form to the examiner. The candidate can make their own form or use the Trinity form. The examiner will use the topic form to ask questions about the topic the candidate has chosen to talk about.

In the second phase, the **Conversation**, the examiner and candidate have two short discussions about two of the subject areas listed for the conversation. The examiner will start the conversation.

The Topic phase

Introduction

Candidates begin the exam by talking to the examiner about a topic that they have chosen and prepared.

The purpose of the topic discussion is to create a natural exchange of information, ideas and opinions between the candidate and the examiner. By choosing their topic the candidate has something they want to tell the examiner and the examiner is interested to find out. This task allows the candidate to show what they can do in English to the best of their abilities.

Choosing the topic

A good choice of topic is very important. Candidates should make sure that:

1. it is of personal interest
2. it will allow them to use the communicative skills of the grade, eg responding to and asking questions
3. it will allow them to use the functions and language of the grade.

1. Personal interest

Candidates can choose any topic they like, but it is best to choose a topic that they are interested in and have some personal involvement with, eg a visit to the countryside, a celebration with friends. This makes it easier to talk about. If the candidate doesn't know very much about the topic and they are trying to remember certain facts, they may not feel so relaxed in their exam.

2. The communicative skills of the grade

Communication skills are very important in a conversation and it is the same in our GESE exams. The candidates are expected to take part in the topic discussion by asking and answering questions about their topic. At Grades 5 and 6 the candidates are also asked to make comments, give reasons and explanations.

How many questions should candidates ask in the topic discussion?

Number of questions	at least one	two
Grade 4	✓	
Grade 5	✓	
Grade 6	✓	✓

3. The language of the grade

When choosing a topic, look at the language of the grade that the candidate needs to use. For example, if the candidate chooses Food as a topic for Grade 5, it is important that the functions, grammar and lexis for Grade 5 are used.

At Grades 4-6, it is best not to choose topics that relate to social and abstract issues. The language required to meaningfully discuss the topic will probably be above the candidate's language level and the examiner will find it difficult to ask appropriate questions from the grade. Candidates won't gain credit for language they use that is above the grade they are taking.

Recitation

Candidates must not prepare their topic as a written script to memorise and recite. Remember that the Topic phase should be a spontaneous discussion between the examiner and candidate, not a monologue

Other points about recitation:

- ▶ it is immediately obvious to the examiner that it is not natural spoken language
- ▶ the stress of reciting makes the candidate nervous
- ▶ the intonation and speed of speaking are different when someone recites
- ▶ the examiner will gently interrupt if a candidate recites
- ▶ recitation is taken into account in the assessment.

The topic form

The candidate must bring a completed topic form into the exam room. This can be completed by a person other than the candidate, as written skills are not assessed in these exams. The form can be created by the candidate or downloaded from the Trinity website.

The topic form (see pages 12, 22 and 32) is very helpful for the candidate, both in preparing the topic and in the exam room.

They should:

- ▶ divide the topic into the four/five/six points that they want to talk about
- ▶ make sure there is enough to talk about for up to five minutes
- ▶ indicate the language functions, grammar and lexis they are going to use.

Please note that the examiner will not ask questions about the points on the topic form in any fixed order. The candidate may also bring in photos or other visual aids.

Exam procedure

- ▶ The examiner introduces the Topic phase by saying:

We're going to start with your topic. Can I have your topic form please?

- ▶ The candidate gives their topic form to the examiner.
- ▶ The examiner will then say:

So, we're going to talk about ...?

- ▶ The candidate tells the examiner the title of their topic.
- ▶ The examiner asks questions and the candidate talks about the topic.
- ▶ After five minutes, the examiner will end the Topic phase by saying:

Thank you ... and now we're going to talk about something different.

The Conversation phase

In this task the candidate has two short conversations with the examiner. The purpose is to give the candidate the opportunity to exchange information, ideas and opinions with the examiner on familiar topics of interest which are listed in the Exam Information booklet.

Candidates should:

- ✓ be familiar with the six subject areas for the conversation
- ✓ listen and respond to the examiner's questions
- ✓ tell the examiner their views
- ✓ ask the examiner a question(s).

Candidates should not:

- × learn and memorise information about the subject areas
- × recite information they have learnt – see page 5.

How many questions should candidates ask in the Conversation task?

Number of questions	one	two
Grade 4 (no question)		
Grade 5	✓	
Grade 6		✓

Exam procedure

- ▶ The examiner chooses one subject area listed for the grade and says:

Let's talk about...

- ▶ The candidate and examiner exchange ideas, opinions and information about the subject area. After approximately 2-2.5 minutes, the examiner changes the subject for discussion by saying:

Thank you. Now let's talk about...

- ▶ The candidate and examiner exchange ideas, opinions and information about the second subject area. After about 2-2.5 minutes the examiner brings the Conversation phase and the exam to an end.

GESE Grade 4 (CEFR A2.2) – Introduction

At Grade 4, candidates talk about their present activities, past experiences and future plans. They can also talk about their likes and dislikes and make simple comparisons. They will use the grammar listed for Grade 4 such as the past tense and '*going to*'. The six conversation areas listed for this grade are about personal experiences, so candidates will have the vocabulary needed to talk about familiar subjects: Holidays, Shopping, School and work, Hobbies and sports, Food, Weekend and seasonal activities.



GESE Grade 4 – Language

Exam format

Total exam time: 10 minutes

The exam consists of two assessed phases:

- ▶ Discussion of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 5 minutes).

Candidate performance

In addition to the communicative skills listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Topic phase

- ▶ Give information about the prepared topic in a series of limited long turns about the four discussion points on the topic form
- ▶ Answer questions on the prepared topic and participate in informal discussion, during which the examiner might request more information, facts or details
- ▶ Ask the examiner at least one question about the topic area
- ▶ Take the opportunity provided to include samples of the language functions and language items listed on page 9, where appropriate

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately to questions
- ▶ Make appropriate contributions with short statements
- ▶ Communicate limited information in simple and direct exchanges

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Talking about past events
- ▶ Talking about future plans and intentions
- ▶ Expressing simple comparisons
- ▶ Expressing likes and dislikes
- ▶ Describing manner and frequency

Grammar

- ▶ Past simple tense of regular and common irregular verbs
- ▶ Going to future
- ▶ *Like + gerund/infinite, eg I like shopping, I like to read books*
- ▶ Adverbs of manner and frequency
- ▶ Comparatives and superlatives of adjectives
- ▶ Link word *but*

Lexis

- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the topic area
- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the subject areas
- ▶ Adverbs of frequency, eg *sometimes, often, never*
- ▶ Adverbial phrases of frequency, eg *every day, once a week*
- ▶ Expressions of past time, eg *yesterday, last night*
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ The clear pronunciation of vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▶ Appropriate weak forms and intonation in connected speech
- ▶ Three different ways of pronouncing 'ed' past tense endings, eg *played, walked, wanted*
- ▶ Avoidance of speech patterns of recitation

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the list below.

- ▶ Holidays
- ▶ Shopping
- ▶ School and work
- ▶ Hobbies and sports
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Weekend and seasonal activities

Please note Grade 4 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see guidance notes on page 4).

Grade 4 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level A2.2.

GESE Grade 4 – Example activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare students for a Trinity GESE Grade 4 exam. These activities will show teachers how they can develop their own classroom materials to practise the communicative skills and language needed for Grade 4. There are videos of GESE Grade 4 exams at trinitycollege.com/GESE-elementary

Please note the suggestions given in this booklet are only examples of some of the many ways of practising for the real exam. The suggestions are NOT models to be memorised. Examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help the candidates demonstrate the required language of Grade 4.

Activity 1 – Choosing a topic

This activity will guide students to a topic that they are genuinely interested in and want to talk about with the examiner.

These are some of my favourite things

Each student makes a list of their favourite things.

Example

traditional clothing	music/band	playing guitar
a friend/friends	playing computer games	birthday present
school trip		

In pairs, students show each other their grids and ask each other questions about some of the favourite things in the grid:

'Who/where/what is it?'

'Tell me more.'

'How often do you ...?'

'When did you ...?'

'Are you going to ...?'

'What was the best ...?'

'Can you compare ... and ...?'

What language of the grade are they practising? Look at page 9 for functions and grammar.

What subjects do your students feel most comfortable talking about?

Perhaps one of these would be good for their Grade 4 topic discussion?

Activity 2 – Discussing the topic

Which language functions below correspond to points on the topic form on page 12?

- ▶ Expressing likes
- ▶ Talking about past events
- ▶ Expressing simple comparisons – superlatives
- ▶ Talking about future plans

As they prepare for the exam, students can collect useful vocabulary for specific details, eg for the topic form shown:

- ▶ exciting atmosphere
- ▶ crowds of people
- ▶ the stage, costumes, sound effects

Look at the grammar for Grade 4 on page 9.

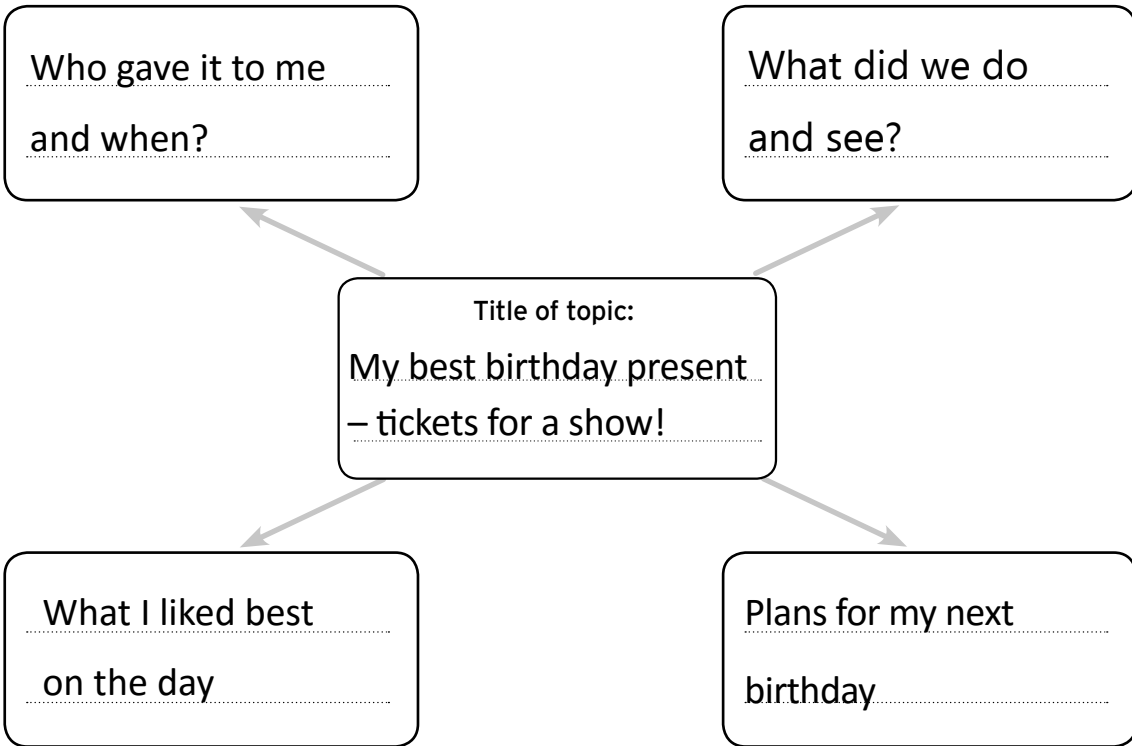
Which structures do these points use?

Your students can ask each other questions about these points.

What questions can they ask?

TRINITY
COLLEGE LONDON

**Graded Examinations in Spoken English
Topic Form – Grade 4**



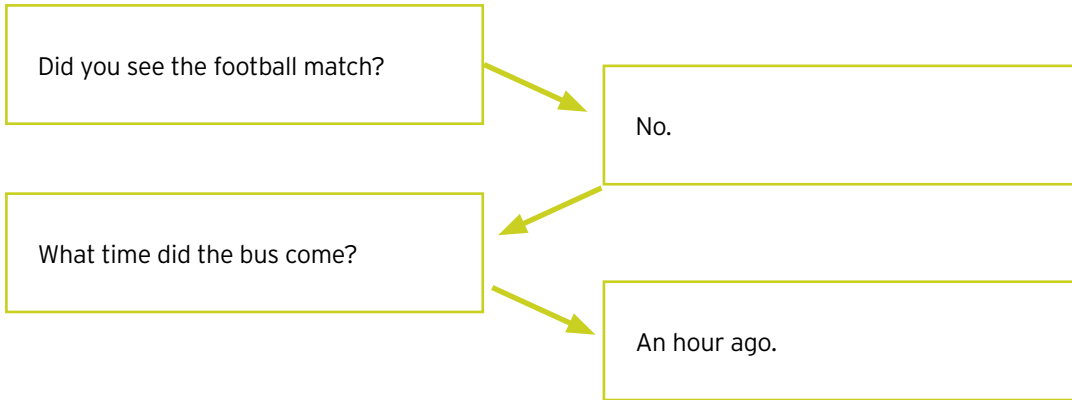
Activity 3 – Preparing for the conversation phase

The best place to start is with the communicative skills for Grade 4:

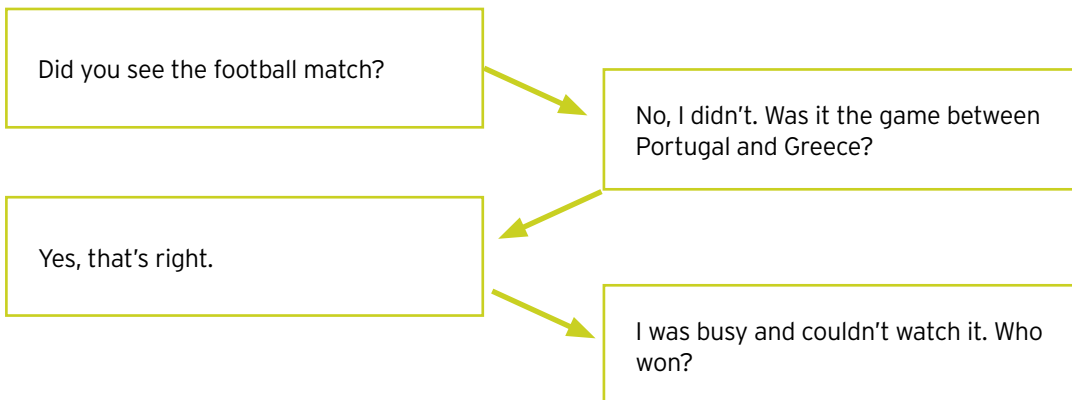
'Simple and direct exchanges' of questions from the examiner and responses from the candidate.

In the classroom, you practise question and answer routines with your students. You can adapt these activities very simply to help the students use this language in a natural conversation.

Does the following sound natural to you?:



In a natural conversation, the exchange doesn't come to a complete stop after one question and answer. Look at the dialogue below:

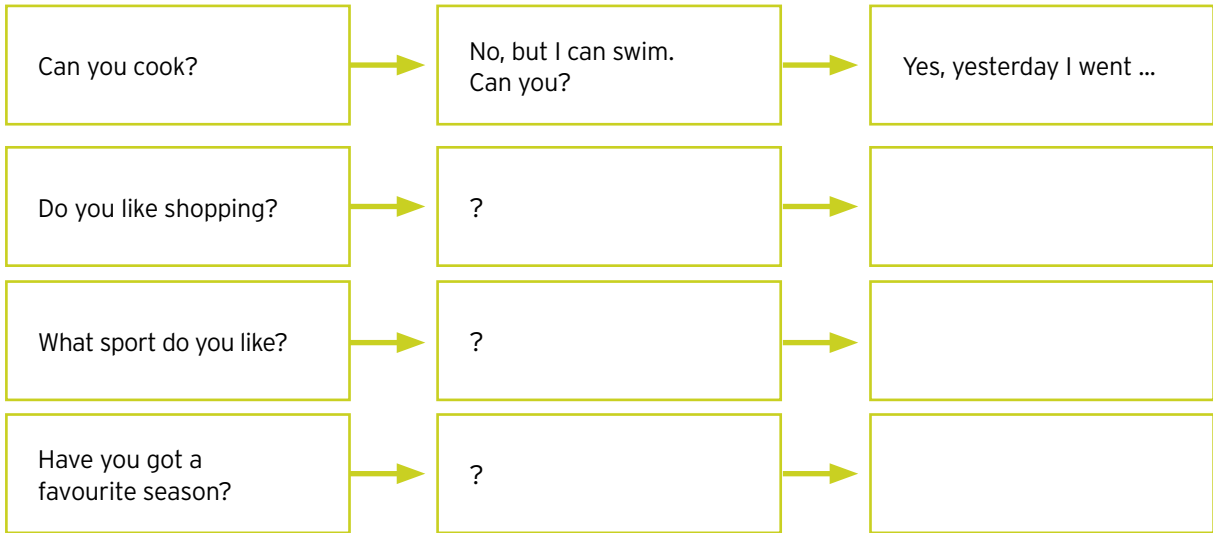


Look at the communicative skills on page 8. The important words in the communicative skills are 'responding', 'contributions' and 'information'.

Activity 4 – Extending very short Yes/No answers into a personal response

The link word 'but' is useful to extend the answer 'No' and change the direction of the conversation.

Prepare Yes/No questions about the conversation subject areas, for example:



Students practise in pairs, responding to questions with more information.

Now look at the language functions on page 9.

If you spend time on each of these, you will find that your students practise the grammar and lexis for the grade.

Activity 5 – Expressing likes and dislikes

This can be a very simple question and answer exchange (reasons and 'because' are not required until Grade 5). Work on vocabulary to develop ways of making a more personal response to simple questions about likes and dislikes.

Give students a grid to collect adjectives for things they like/dislike in each of the conversation areas.

	Holidays	Shopping	School/work	Hobbies & sports	Food	Seasonal activities
Likes						
Dislikes						

Students practise in pairs, with student A asking:

'Tell me about ...' or

'What's your favourite ...?'

Student B's response should include an *adjective*.

Talking about likes and dislikes is a good way to practise keeping the exchange going.

Student B can return a question to student A: *'Do you like ...?'*

You can also practise phonology/intonation of short responses to a statement, showing surprise or agreement, eg *'Really?'*, *'Oh!'*

As the students are working on adjectives, you can add another language function: Expressing simple comparisons and the related grammar point: comparatives and superlatives of adjectives.

Activity 6 – Preparing for the other language functions

Select another language function and note the related grammar, lexis and phonology.

For example:

talking about past events	past simple tense	common irregular verbs	three ways of pronouncing 'ed'
---------------------------	-------------------	------------------------	--------------------------------

Prepare several questions for each conversation subject area.

Students work in pairs. Student A asks a question.

Remind student B to respond and contribute as much information as possible.

Student A can also respond to the answer. One way is to repeat part of the answer with a rising intonation:

<i>'We went to Sardinia.'</i>	<i>'Sardinia?/Did you?'</i>
-------------------------------	-----------------------------

GESE Grade 5 (CEFR B1.1) – Introduction

At Grade 5, candidates have mastered the Grade 4 language and are ready to progress to the next grade. At Grade 5 candidates talk about subjects of general interest – festivals and means of transport – as well as their own personal experiences.

Candidates can talk more about their likes and dislikes, by expressing preferences and giving reasons. The grammar used to talk about the topics is expanded and includes the present perfect tense to refer to events in the indefinite and recent past, contrasted with the past simple when talking about specific times. At Grade 5 the candidate asks the examiner questions to find out more about them.



GESE Grade 5 – Language

Exam format

Total exam time: 10 minutes

The exam consists of two assessed phases:

- ▶ Discussion of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 5 minutes).

Candidate performance

In addition to the communicative skills listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Topic phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately to questions
- ▶ Give information about the prepared topic in a series of linked long turns about the five discussion points on the topic form
- ▶ Answer questions on the prepared topic, and participate in an informal discussion of the topic, during which the examiner will request more information, facts or details
- ▶ Respond to requests for clarification and give reasons for making particular statements
- ▶ Ask the examiner at least one question about the topic area
- ▶ Take the opportunity provided to use the language functions and language items listed on page 19, where appropriate

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately to questions
- ▶ Respond to requests for clarification and give reasons for making particular statements
- ▶ Ask the examiner at least one question about a subject area

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Talking about the future – informing and predicting
- ▶ Expressing preferences
- ▶ Talking about events in the indefinite and recent past
- ▶ Giving reasons
- ▶ Stating the duration of events
- ▶ Quantifying

Grammar

- ▶ Present perfect tense including use with *for, since, ever, never, just*
- ▶ Connecting clauses using *because*
- ▶ Will referring to the future for informing and predicting
- ▶ Adjectives and adverbials of quantity, eg *a lot (of), not very much, many*
- ▶ Expressions of preference, eg *I prefer, I'd rather*

Lexis

- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the topic area
- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the subject areas
- ▶ Expressions relating to past and future time, eg *two days ago, in the future*
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ The clear pronunciation of vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▶ The combination of weak forms and contractions, eg *I've been to ...*
- ▶ Avoidance of speech patterns of recitation

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the list below.

- ▶ Festivals
- ▶ Means of transport
- ▶ Special occasions, eg birthday celebrations
- ▶ Entertainment, eg cinema, television, clubs
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Recent personal experiences

Please note Grade 5 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see guidance notes on page 4).

Grade 5 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level B1.1.

GESE Grade 5 – Example activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare students for a Trinity GESE Grade 5 exam. These activities show teachers how they can develop their own classroom materials to practise the communicative skills and language needed for Grade 5. There are videos of GESE Grade 5 exams at trinitycollege.com/GESE-elementary

Please note the suggestions given in this booklet are only examples of some of the many ways of practising for the real exam. The suggestions are NOT models to be memorised. Examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help the candidates demonstrate the required language of Grade 5.

Choosing a topic

It's important for candidates to use the communicative skills, functions and grammar for Grade 5 in their topic. Now candidates should be able to use 'linked' long turns and 'respond to requests for clarification and give reasons'. The ideal is to find a topic of personal interest, the same as Grade 4, but plan to include some of the language functions and language items listed for Grade 5.

Activity 1 – Memorable experiences

At home, or in class, students fill in each statement with one – or more – ideas:

I prefer _____ing to _____ing. It's much (more) _____(er).

Why is _____ so important for me? It's because _____.

Since I was ____ years old, I have _____.

I've recently _____.

I have never _____, but I want to!

I will never _____.

Add some more statements to the list. What language functions are used? Check on page 19.

In pairs, students say a statement and ask each other questions and ask for more details. Candidates can choose one to develop as their own topic.

Activity 2 – Memorable experiences

Which Grade 5 language functions will the candidate use?

- ▶ Talking about indefinite and recent past
- ▶ Giving reasons
- ▶ Quantifying
- ▶ Stating the duration of events
- ▶ Expressing preferences
- ▶ Talking about the future – informing and predicting

Give each candidate a grid, so they can list:

<i>5-8 points for their topic (eg I will never forget that trip!)</i>	<i>+ the language functions</i>
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	

Practise talking about the points in the grid in pairs.

Choose the best five points.

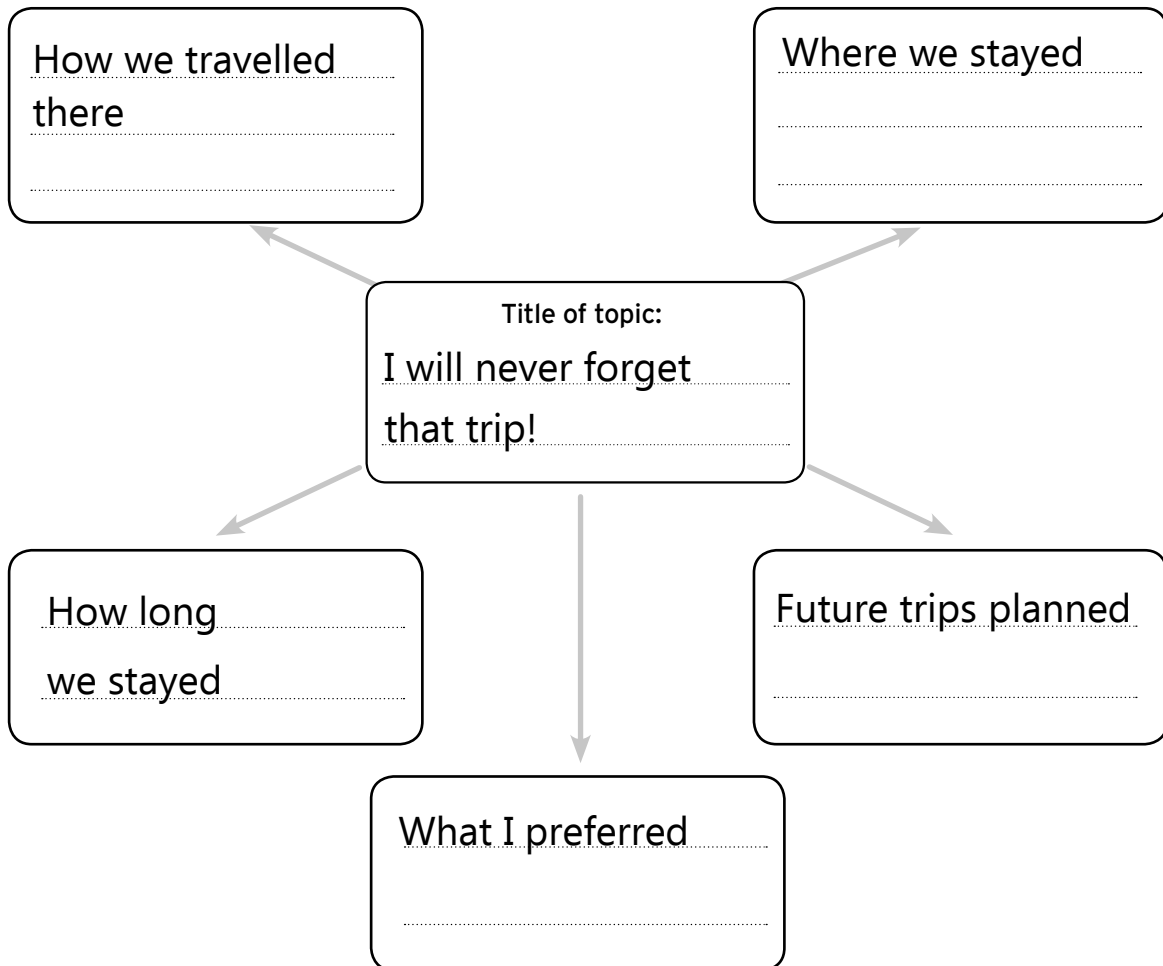
Collect useful vocabulary for specific details, for example:

- ▶ London – very crowded
- ▶ skyscrapers
- ▶ Mexican food – very spicy
- ▶ the accent – easy to understand

TRINITY

COLLEGE LONDON

Graded Examinations in Spoken English Topic Form – Grade 5



Your students can practise making points as questions.

Preparing for the conversation

Although the subject areas are wider and less personal for Grade 5, the exam is not a test of general knowledge. Candidates don't need to learn, for example, new facts about means of transport. The conversation will still be about their personal experience.

Start with the communicative skills for Grade 5. These ask the candidate to take a more active part in the conversation.

- ▶ Respond to requests for clarification and give reasons for making particular statements
- ▶ Ask the examiner at least one question about a subject area

Remember – the conversation will end very quickly if the candidate doesn't fully participate in the conversation with the examiner.

Activity 3 – Keeping a conversation going

Give students a list of Yes/No questions, for example:

Have you ever:

- ▶ won a competition?
- ▶ met someone from ...?
- ▶ swum in a lake?
- ▶ played a musical instrument?
- ▶ driven a car?

Students ask each other questions.

If the answer is 'Yes, I have', ask for more details (*When? Where?*).

Each student looks at the questions you answered 'No' to. Think of a way to keep the conversation going, for example:

'No, I've never won a competition, but...'

Practise the pronunciation of contractions in some present perfect forms.

Activity 4 – Example time lines

Now think of special occasions and recent personal experiences to talk about.

Draw a time line for each subject and fill in a few events.

Special occasions

February	June	October
end of term party	Ivan's birthday	passed driving test

Recent personal experiences

March	August	November
exams	holiday	moved to a new house

Students ask and answer in pairs:

'Have you had any special occasions/interesting experiences recently?'

Activity 5 – Asking the examiner at least one question

Look at the functions 'Expressing preferences' and 'Giving reasons'. In a real conversation, it is usual to ask about personal tastes.

Give each student a grid to fill in vocabulary specific to the subject areas:

Music	Entertainment

If examples are needed, here are some below.

Vocabulary – List as many types as you can think of:

Classical, Folk, Pop, Rock...

Examiner: *'What entertainment is there in your area, apart from television and cinema?'*

If you can't think of anything, be ready to talk in detail about what you like to watch on TV and in the cinema.

Add to this list of useful vocabulary:

Television	Cinema
soaps	action
reality shows	romance

Prepare some questions to ask about preferences and reasons.

- ▶ Students work in pairs.
- ▶ Student A begins the conversation with a question about preferences.
- ▶ Student B responds.
- ▶ Student A asks for more details and/or reasons.
- ▶ Student B responds and then asks student A a similar question.

Activity 6 – Preparing for other subject areas

The remaining subject areas are Festivals and Means of transport.

Work on lexis. Help students to think of as many examples as possible from their personal experience.

Think of ways to use the language functions in a natural conversation. Apart from the ones practised above (Talking about events in the indefinite past – Expressing preferences – Giving reasons) you could include, for example:

Stating the duration of events: *'How long does it (festival/journey) last?'*

Quantifying: *'Are there a lot of (festivals/bicycles) in the area?'*

Talking about the future: *'Will you go ... next year?'*

When the students practise a conversation for Grade 5, they will need to use the grammar items (present perfect tense, adverbials of quantity etc) – see page 19.

GESE Grade 6 (CEFR B1.2) – Introduction

Grade 6 is the final exam in the Elementary stage. At Grade 6 candidates talk about their opinions, intentions and obligations using conditional forms and modal verbs. They talk about things they did in the past using the past continuous.

The six subject areas for discussion are general interest and there is scope for a more complex discussion as candidates ask the examiner more questions and take some responsibility for maintaining the conversation. Candidates are expected to have the vocabulary to be able to talk about Travel, Money, Fashion, Rules and regulations, Health and fitness and Learning a foreign language. The examiner will often ask questions about their personal experience of these, but the candidate should be able to express their opinions and impressions.



GESE Grade 6 – Language

Exam format

Total exam time: 10 minutes

The exam consists of two assessed phases:

- ▶ Discussion of a topic prepared by the candidate (up to 5 minutes)
- ▶ Conversation on two subject areas selected by the examiner (up to 5 minutes).

Candidate performance

In addition to the communicative skills listed for the previous grades, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following communicative skills and meet the language requirements listed below during the exam.

Communicative skills

In the Topic phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately to questions
- ▶ Give information about the prepared topic in a series of sustained turns about the six discussion points on the topic form
- ▶ Make the sequence of events clear by referring back to previous events and forward to forthcoming events
- ▶ Answer questions on the prepared topic, and participate in informal discussion of the topic, responding to the examiner's requests for more information, facts or details
- ▶ Ask the examiner at least one question about the topic area
- ▶ Take the opportunity provided to include samples of the language functions and language items listed on page 29, where appropriate

In the Conversation phase

- ▶ Show understanding of the examiner by responding appropriately to questions
- ▶ Provide information and offer opinions where appropriate
- ▶ Start to play a limited part in initiating and maintaining the conversation
- ▶ Ask the examiner at least two questions about the subject areas

Language requirements

Language functions

- ▶ Expressing and requesting opinions and impressions
- ▶ Expressing intention and purpose
- ▶ Expressing obligation and necessity
- ▶ Expressing certainty and uncertainty
- ▶ Describing past actions over a period of time

Grammar

- ▶ Zero and first conditionals, using *if* and *when*
- ▶ Present continuous tense for future use
- ▶ Past continuous tense
- ▶ Modals connected to the functions listed above, eg *must*, *need to*, *might*, *don't have to*
- ▶ Infinitive of purpose

Lexis

- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the topic area
- ▶ Vocabulary specific to the subject areas
- ▶ Further expressions relating to future time, eg *the day after tomorrow*, *in a year's time*, *in ... years' time*
- ▶ Common phrasal verbs
- ▶ Phrases and expressions relating to the language functions listed above

Phonology

- ▶ The clear pronunciation of vocabulary specific to the topic and subject areas
- ▶ Sentence stress to clarify meaning
- ▶ Basic intonation and features of connected speech at sentence level
- ▶ Intonation patterns of more complex question forms
- ▶ Avoidance of speech patterns of recitation

Subject areas for the Conversation phase

Two subject areas will be selected by the examiner from the list below.

- ▶ Travel
- ▶ Money
- ▶ Fashion
- ▶ Rules and regulations
- ▶ Health and fitness
- ▶ Learning a foreign language

Please note Grade 6 candidates should **not** select their topic directly from the list of subject areas above (see guidance notes on page 4).

Grade 6 communicative skills and language requirements have been mapped to CEFR level B1.2.

GESE Grade 6 – Example activities

In the following pages there are some examples of how you can prepare students for a Trinity GESE Grade 6 exam. These activities will show teachers how they can develop their own classroom materials to practise the communicative skills needed for Grade 6. There are videos of GESE Grade 6 exams at trinitycollege.com/GESE-elementary

Please note the suggestions given in this booklet are only examples of some of the many ways of practising for the real exam. The suggestions are NOT models to be memorised. Examiners will use a range of methods and questions to help the candidates demonstrate the required language of Grade 6.

Choosing a topic

Activity 1 – What makes you ‘tick’?

Fill in this fact file about your opinions and impressions

When I hear my favourite song, I _____

I often feel happy, when _____

I could never _____

I think it's crazy for people to _____

It's important to _____

Where will I be in two years' time? I think I'll _____

Activity 2 – Imagine...

Imagine you are the leader of your city/college council. Suggest some changes.

What language is being used? Look at page 29 for functions and grammar.

Preparing the topic form

After this activity, candidates should choose something that they have strong feelings about as the theme for their topic. Candidates can use, for example, a Grade 4 subject, if it is given a Grade 6 focus. For example, 'Shopping' at Grade 4 can become 'Internet shopping versus high street shopping' at Grade 6.

Activity 3 – Which Grade 6 language functions will the candidate use?

Give each candidate a grid, so they can list:

<i>5-8 points for their topic (Internet shopping versus high street shopping)</i>	<i>+ the language functions</i>
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	
*	

Practise talking about the topic in pairs.

Select the six main points that could be used on the topic form.

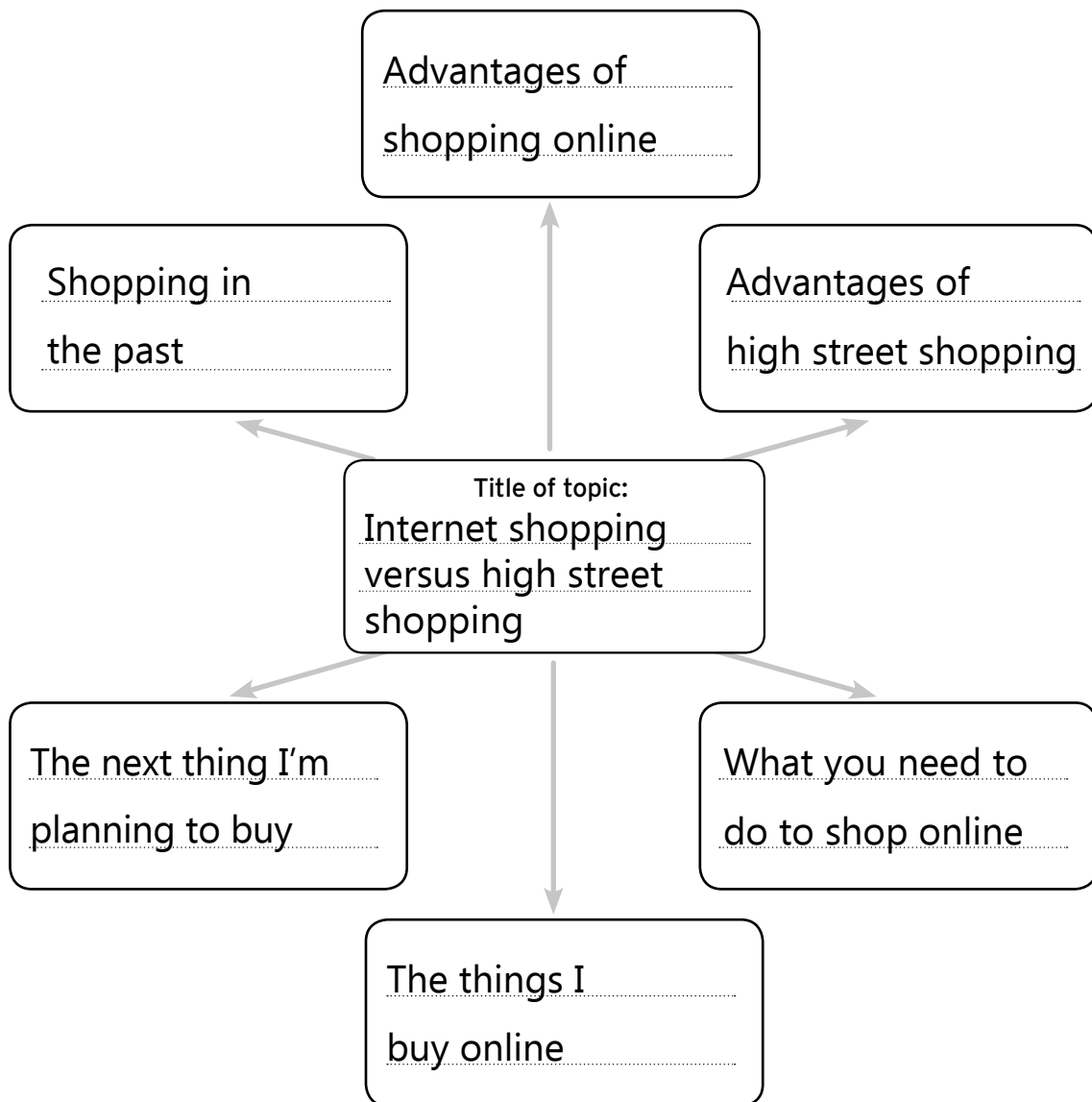
Collect useful vocabulary for specific details, for example:

- ▶ quick and easy
- ▶ meet people in the community
- ▶ easy to return things

Remember to find some natural points in the topic to ask the examiner questions.

TRINITY
COLLEGE LONDON

**Graded Examinations in Spoken English
Topic Form – Grade 6**



What language functions and grammar will the candidate use? Look at page 31.

GESE Grade 6 – Preparing for the conversation

Begin with the communicative skills for Grade 6. There are two extra requirements than at Grade 5 level, as the candidate now has a more equal role in the conversation:

- ▶ offer opinions where appropriate
- ▶ play a limited part in initiating and maintaining the conversation.

Activity 4 – Offering opinions

Begin by writing simple *Dos* and *Don'ts* in note form.

For example, Learning a foreign language

Do ✓	Don't ×
listen to songs, films	worry about making mistakes
practise speaking	try to translate

Students tell each other their points. Ask for more details and reasons.

If you listen to songs in English, you can improve your understanding.

You must practise speaking in English as much as possible.

You shouldn't try to translate from your language.

If you make a mistake, don't worry about it.

What language functions and grammar are the students using? See page 29.

Students can do this activity with each of the subject areas in turn.

Activity 5 – Initiating the conversation

Students should practise taking a more active part in the conversation.

The first way is to ask the examiner a question.

Ask a student to be the examiner.

Tell the other students they may ask the 'examiner' questions about each of the subject areas.

The aim is to find out interesting things about the examiner's opinions and experiences.

Repeat with a different student and different questions.

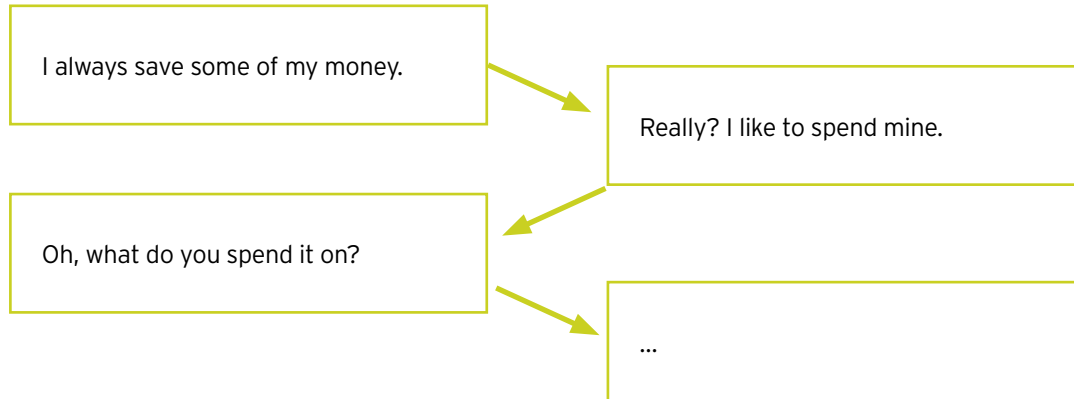
Activity 6 – Maintaining the conversation

The fourth activity practised one turn, the fifth activity practised a series of question and answer sequences. A natural conversation is often difficult to divide up into turns: after the question and answer, the first person will naturally add a comment, and so on.

Students work in pairs and see how long they can keep the conversation going.

Work on each conversation area in turn, beginning with a strong opinion or impression.

For example: Money



Remember, in the Grade 6 conversation the candidate is expected to ask the examiner at least two questions.

The next steps – GESE Intermediate stage

Introduction to the Intermediate stage

Candidate profile

By the end of the Intermediate stage, the candidate can:

- ▶ understand complex and extended speech used in the discussion of reasonably familiar subjects
- ▶ communicate with some spontaneity and engage in extended conversation by giving clear descriptions and expressing and explaining views on most general subjects
- ▶ initiate, maintain and end the discourse with effective turn-taking
- ▶ demonstrate a sufficient range of language to produce stretches of discourse, using some complex sentence forms and without much searching for words, while correcting most of his or her mistakes.

Exam format

		Assessed	Not assessed
1	Greetings and setting at ease		✓
2	Candidate-led discussion of a prepared topic	✓	
3	Interactive task	✓	
4	Conversation on two subject areas	✓	
5	End of conversation and leave-taking		✓

Overview of the Intermediate stage

The Intermediate stage exams have three phases and the exam lasts 15 minutes. In the first phase, the **Candidate-led discussion of a prepared topic**, the candidate has a conversation with the examiner on a topic of personal interest which they have prepared some weeks before the exam. The candidate prepares some short notes to give to the examiner. The examiner will use these notes to ask questions about the topic the candidate has chosen to talk about.

In the **Interactive phase**, the examiner starts by reading out a prompt about a situation. From that point the candidate is expected to take responsibility for the interaction by asking questions and making comments.

In the **Conversation phase**, the examiner and candidate have two short discussions about two of the subject areas listed for the conversation. The examiner will choose the subject areas for discussion but the candidate is expected to maintain and keep the conversation going.

Please see trinitycollege.com/GESE-intermediate for more information.