



UNIVERSITY OF  
**WEST LONDON**

---

LONDON COLLEGE OF MUSIC EXAMINATIONS

**University of West London  
London College of Music Examinations**

# **Guidelines for Teachers – ESOL**

**ESOL Syllabus – Early Learning  
ESOL Syllabus – Steps**

**by John Beilby  
Senior Examiner**

# CONTENTS

<b>Introductory Note</b> .....	2
<b>Early Learning</b> .....	2
Individual Assessments .....	2
Group Assessments .....	6
<b>Steps</b> .....	9
Step 1 .....	9
Step 2 .....	11
Step 3 .....	13

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The ESOL syllabuses in Early Learning and Steps are available online:

<[http://www.uwl.ac.uk/files/LCM/lcm\\_exams/syllabuses/esol.pdf](http://www.uwl.ac.uk/files/LCM/lcm_exams/syllabuses/esol.pdf)>.

They were prepared by John Beilby, Senior Examiner, as a development of the concept and format as established by Stephen Hazell, Chief Examiner in Drama and Communication.

In 2013, syllabuses and guidelines will be published for ESOL Grade Examinations, based on the same underlying principles and format.

## EARLY LEARNING

### OVERVIEW

The Early Learning syllabus is designed for children in kindergartens, in nurseries and in infant school reception classes, as well as for older learners beginning to develop their skills in spoken English. It aims to provide encouragement and a basis for assessment in interactive oral and communication skills.

The assessment report will be compiled during the examination and couched in positive terms. The report will not include marks but will award Pass, Merit or Distinction.

## EARLY LEARNING (INDIVIDUAL) ASSESSMENTS

### Stage I

The teacher is welcome to sit in on this assessment and to help, as necessary.

*Exchange greetings with the examiner.* The examiner will welcome the candidate and ask his/her name. Just a simple “Hello, my name is.....” is all that is needed but longer responses are welcome.

#### I. Performance

***Show and tell the examiner what it is like being your favourite animal.***

Choose an interesting animal and think about what your animal eats, what it likes doing, and where it lives. Think of key words associated with these activities and practise including them in a sentence, for example:

*“I am a **horse**, I like to eat **grass** and to **gallop** in the **field** where I live.”*

*“I am a **mouse**, I love to eat **cheese** and to **squeak** and **scamper** around the **house**.”*

*“I am a **lion**, I like to **roar** and **hunt** other **animals** in the **jungle**.”*

Candidates are encouraged to include actions and movement associated with the chosen animal and key words, using the available space. The use of simple props and costume is permitted but not necessary.

## 2. Discussion

**The examiner will:**

**(a) talk with you about your favourite animal;**

Practise responses to such questions as:

“Why do you like horses?” (eg) *“I like horses because they are big and strong.”*

“Would you like to ride a horse?” *“Yes, I would like to ride a horse.”*

“What do horses like to eat?” *“Horses like to eat grass.”*

“What sounds do mice make?”

“Tell me two things you like about mice?”

“Do you have a pet mouse?”

“What do lions like to do?”

“Why are lions your favourite animals?”

“Can you roar like a lion?”

**(b) ask you some simple general questions about yourself.**

Practise responses to such questions as:

“Tell me your name again?”

“How old are you?”

“Do you have a brother or a sister?”

“What do you like to eat?”

## Stage 2

The teacher is welcome to sit in on this assessment and to help, as necessary.

*Exchange greetings with the examiner.*

### I. Performance

**Show and tell the examiner what it is like to play your favourite game.**

Choose a game you really enjoy playing. Imagine you are telling someone who has never played the game before! Think about some of the rules and best ways to play. Practise saying things like: “...is my favourite game. Some of the rules are....This game is fun because....” Act out how to play your game.

Think of key words associated with the game and practise including them in sentences, for example:

**“Hide and Seek** is my favourite game. **Two** people **play**. One **player** has to **hide** and the other one has to **find** him/her. This game is **fun** because I like to find **places** to **hide away**.”

Candidates should act out their chosen game, either as they are describing it, or at the end of their spoken description.

## 2. Discussion

**The examiner will:**

**(a) talk with you about the game you chose;**

Practise responses to such questions as:

“Why do you like to play hide and seek?” (eg) “I can play it with my friend.”

“Where do you play hide and seek?” “We play at my house.”

“Who usually wins?” “My friend!”

“Do you like to hide or seek/look?” “I like to hide.”

**(b) ask you some simple general questions about things you like.**

Practise responses to such questions as:

“What other games do you like to play?”

“Do you watch TV?” “Which programme do you like?”

“My favourite colour is blue – which is your favourite?”

“Do you like music?”

## Stage 3

The teacher is welcome to sit in on this assessment and to help, as necessary.

Exchange greetings with the examiner.

### I. Performance

**Show and tell the examiner what it is like being ONE of the following: a bus driver, a nurse, a teacher, a shop worker, a farm worker OR you can choose a different occupation of your own.**

Choose an occupation. Think about some of the things the worker does in the job and practise including them in sentences. For example,

*“I am a bus driver. I climb into my seat and drive the children to school. I stop when the bell rings once and start when the bell rings twice. My bus is big and red and can go fast.”*

Act out your occupation. Simple costume and/or props may be used but are not an examination requirement.

At this stage, the candidate will be able to speak and act out at the same time.

## 2. Discussion

**The examiner will:**

**(a) talk with you about the occupation you chose;**

Think about why you chose that particular occupation and what is special about it.

Practise responses to such questions as:

“Why do you like buses?”	(eg) “I like buses because they are big”.
“Do you ride a bus to school?”	“Yes, I ride a yellow bus to school.”
“Why is the bus driver important?”	“The bus driver takes me to school.”
“Tell me something a bus driver does”.	“The bus driver stops when the bell rings”

**(b) ask you some simple general questions about your life outside the home.**

Be ready to answer such questions as:

“What is the name of your best friend?”  
“What is the name of your school?”  
“Which subject do you like at school?”  
“Who is your favourite teacher?”

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR (INDIVIDUAL) STAGES

All candidates who complete the assessment will be awarded a certificate. In order to pass with MERIT, the candidate will:

- *be confident, with good eye contact*
- *be clear and fluent in speech*
- *use a variety of appropriate vocabulary*
- *use suitable body movement and action*
- *need little or no prompting in conversation*

and to pass with DISTINCTION will:

- *be confident, with good eye contact, concentration and focus*
- *be clear, fluent and expressive in speech*
- *use a good variety of appropriate vocabulary*
- *be expressive and ‘in character’ with body movement and action*
- *be able to maintain the conversation*

# EARLY LEARNING (GROUP) ASSESSMENTS

A group of between 5 and 9 in number is considered suitable and each candidate should wear a large name badge. Before the Performance begins, the children will introduce themselves. TEACHERS are expected to take an active part in the group work in both sections of the assessment. The examiner will sit to one side to observe the Performance leaving the teacher to initiate activities and control the group. For the Discussion it is helpful to have the children sitting in a circle with the teacher. The examiner will join the circle. The Report will be compiled as the assessment progresses, mentioning especially the strengths of the 'ensemble'.

## Stage I

Exchange greetings with the examiner. The children will introduce themselves, one by one. This can be in the form of a game or by a more formal introduction, aided by the teacher.

### I. Performance

***Take part in a group performance of a poem or action rhyme, from memory.***

The teacher chooses a poem or action rhyme which lends itself well to group performance. (An action rhyme is a rhyme that is accompanied with body movements, such as jumping, clapping, stretching and acting out actions). The poem/rhyme chosen could have different children performing different lines and/or actions, a stronger child leading, some solo or small group lines, the group performing all together, and so on. For example:

#### Dance your fingers

(Have the children mimic your – or a leader's – actions, dancing fingers in the air and on the body. The rhythmic nature of this rhyme and the emphasis on 'dancing' lend themselves to further movement ideas.)

*Dance your fingers up,  
Dance your fingers down,  
Dance your fingers to the side,  
Dance them all around.*

*Dance them on your shoulders,  
Dance them on your head,  
Dance them on your tummy,  
And put them all to bed. (Rest head on hands at side of face, to finish.)*

## Five fat peas

*Five fat peas in a pea pod pressed,*

(children hold hand in a fist)

*One grew, two grew, so did all the rest.*

(put thumb and fingers up one by one/add voices through the line)

*They grew and grew*

(Voices getting louder and raise hands very slowly)

*And did not stop*

*Until one day*

*The pod went POP!*

(POP extra loud and children clap hands together)

The rhyme could be repeated using different actions.

## **2. Discussion**

***The examiner will talk with the children about the presentation.***

Often the examiner will begin by thanking everyone and asking a general opening question such as “Did you enjoy that?” It can be helpful if the children raise their hands if they wish to respond, but understandable if some call out in their enthusiasm! The examiner will gently broaden the discussion to include who did what, which parts were harder to get right, which actions were the most fun, and so on. The examiner will try to include as many children as possible and the teacher is encouraged to support and help the examiner, especially with any shy children.

## **Stage 2**

Exchange greetings with the examiner. The children will introduce themselves, one by one. This can be in the form of a game or by a more formal introduction, aided by the teacher.

### **I. Performance**

***Take part in a story that is led by your teacher.***

The story might be a scene from an existing story for children, or one prepared/devised by the teacher to suit the particular group of children. The use of simple costumes and props may be included but are not an examination requirement.

Select (or devise) a story (or scene from a story) you think would work well, one with characters that have strong personalities and clear roles. In the preparation stages you can talk with the children about the characters, what happens in the story, where it takes place, what the problem is and how it is solved. What happens at the beginning? The middle? The end?

Stories which include opportunities to explore different feelings – anger, sadness, fright, happiness, caring, pride, and so on – allow the children to develop the drama through facial expression, body language and vocal variety. Many stories will have action opportunities within them. Even the simplest piece of costume can enhance the character and add to the sense of fun and self-worth of the child.

The children should be able to contribute most of the teacher-led story speaking in chorus and with simple dialogue supported by action. There might be a small group of children narrating the story (with the teacher) and the others (characters) contributing simple dialogue at key points, but all should be involved in the drama of the story, including appropriate movement.

## **2. Discussion**

***The examiner will talk with the children about the story and their part in it.***

The focus of the discussion will be on the children's enjoyment, preparation, what happens to characters in the story and the nature of the individual characters:

*"Did you enjoy acting out the story?"*

*"Did you know the story already?"*

*"Who was the kind/nasty character?"*

*"Which part of the story was happy/sad/scary?"*

*"Which was your favourite line?"*

*"Who made the costumes?"*

## **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR (GROUP) STAGES**

All candidates taking part will receive a certificate. In order to pass with MERIT, the group will:

- be focussed on the task
- work well as a team
- respond readily to the teacher, and to the examiner in discussion
- enjoy themselves as well as giving enjoyment
- give a fluent, well prepared performance
- show good evidence of engaging with the dramatic elements in the story

In order to pass with DISTINCTION, the group will:

- be alert, well organized and focused on the task
- work well as a group with sympathetic awareness of one another
- respond with enthusiasm and accuracy to the teacher, and to the examiner in discussion
- enjoy themselves as well as giving enjoyment
- give an imaginative and well characterized performance
- show strong evidence of engaging with the dramatic elements in the story.

# STEPS

## OVERVIEW

Steps examinations are a valuable bridge from Early Learning to Grade examinations. They are designed for young people who have acquired a basic competence in simple English but are at the beginning of extending their range of vocabulary and grammatical forms. The preparation for the examination will enable them to acquire a performance confidence, the beginnings of presentational skills, and the capacity to hold a conversation, in elementary English, with the examiner.

For those who learn English from early years, the Steps will be appropriate for their first years in a full school setting, but the examinations are equally appropriate and valuable for the development of speakers who start learning at a later stage.

The assessment report will be compiled during the examination and couched in positive terms. Marks will be awarded in the usual way: 65% is the Pass level, 75% Merit and 85% Distinction.

## Step 1

The teacher may be present for this examination.

*Exchange greetings with the examiner.* The candidate may initiate the greeting, otherwise the examiner will give a welcome and wait for a response.

### I. Performance

***EITHER perform a poem for the examiner, from memory, chosen from the Step 1 material in the LCM Anthology, OR perform an own choice prose piece of a similar standard, from memory.***

All of the Step 1 poems in the Anthology give good opportunities for the development of understanding of English and the use of expression in speech. Preparation will include investigating the story of the poem, the characters, vocabulary, the rhythm and mood. It is helpful to practise performing to others and getting their reaction: *Could you hear me? Was I too quick/slow?*

'Slugs' by John Kitching has a clear rhythm and plenty of interesting 'doing' words such as *crawl, watching, scurry, popping* to explore and act out. Slugs and beetles are distinctive creatures in their appearance and habits and to explore this will add further understanding.

*Slugs, slugs  
Crawl through the grass,  
Watching all the beetles  
As they scurry past.*

*Slugs, slugs  
Crawl so slow,  
Leaving tracks of silver  
Wherever they go.*

*Slugs, slugs  
Crawl along the wall.  
Popping little horns out,  
Make no sound at all.*

'Teddy Bear' by Tricia Hawcroft could be thought to be about longing and loneliness. Most children would like another toy, or a teddy bear, but the poignant last line here, '*For a teddy bear for some folks is always a best friend*' is a clue to the way the poem might be approached. Again, the rhythm is apparent and there are opportunities for emphasis on key words such as *wish, share, any, always, friend*.

*I wished I had a teddy bear  
That I could call my own,  
Someone who would share with me  
My thoughts when I'm alone.  
He need not be a big one  
And colour I don't mind,  
Fat or thin, old or new  
A bear of any kind.  
I'd always keep him with me  
Until the very end  
For a teddy bear for some folks  
Is always a best friend.*

It is not expected that the candidate will 'act out' on the day, but the use of gesture, and facial expression (common in our every day communication) is appropriate.

## **2. Presentation**

***Tell the examiner three things about your favourite foods(s).***

Think of some of the things you like to eat and the reasons why you like them so much. Preparation could include making a list of favourites and next to each one giving the reasons, or finding pictures of different foods and putting them together in tasty combinations!

In the assessment, the examiner will introduce this section by inviting the candidate to say three things about his/her favourite food(s). This is a presentation (not a discussion) so the examiner will simply listen. For example,

*"My favourite food is ice-cream. My favourite flavour is chocolate. I like to eat ice-cream on hot days because it keeps me cool. Ice-cream melts quickly."*

## **3. Discussion**

***Reply to the examiner who will ask about parts of the body.***

Think about facial features – eyes, nose, mouth – as well as arms, hands, legs and feet. How many fingers and how many toes?

Use of a picture, drawing or cut-outs can all help to make this fun – placing the ears correctly on a cut-out head, attaching the toes to the feet, etc. 'Point-to' games are useful here, too.

For the assessment, the examiner will use either a picture/drawing, or pointing. For example,

Examiner points to the eyes of the girl in the picture: *"What are these?"*  
Candidate replies: *"Those are her eyes."*

Examiner asks: "How many toes do you have on one foot?"

Candidate replies: "I have five toes on one foot."

Examiner, pointing to the picture: "Can you show me her hands?"

Candidate points to the hands, saying: "Here are her hands." (or) "These are her hands."

## Step 2

Exchange greetings with the examiner.

### I. Performance

***EITHER perform a poem for the examiner, from memory, chosen from the Step 2 material in the LCM Anthology, OR perform an own choice prose piece of a similar standard, from memory.***

The Step 2 material in the Anthology is a little longer, in some cases, and more complex in others, providing real opportunities for story-telling and the use of greater expressive subtlety. (See notes under Step 1.)

'Yes' by Mary Ann Hoberman has an intimate and conversational feel between mother and child and lists some of the different situations in which the child finds him/herself saying 'yes'. Preparation could include exploring these and how we might react differently to them, and the effect of these reactions on how we say 'yes'! There are good acting-out opportunities, linking facial expression and gesture to different 'yes' scenarios:

Yes

Yes

I like yes

I like it when I ask for things

And when you say yes

Yes

Yes

Let's take a walk

Let's bake a cake

Let's sing a song

Yes

Yes

And yet sometimes

I don't like yes

Like when you say

You've made a mess

Please clean it up

Or

Time for bed

Or

Time to go

And then I guess

That I like yes

A little less

Yes?

Yes.

'The Loo at the top of the stairs' by Enid Barraclough explores the theme of being frightened within a seemingly comic situation and a clear story-line. We have all been frightened at some time and, often, by something harmless and inoffensive! Think of some scenes to act out:

*Alone in the house... a sudden noise in another room... approaching the room nervously... only to find the open window rattling in the breeze!... closing the window... the relief...*

How is the story in the poem different? How do we react when we are nervous, or frightened? What happens to our body language and movement? Our voices?

*I don't like the Loo at the top of the stairs,  
It's white, and it looks like a ghost!  
I know that it isn't, but that doesn't help –  
It's the Loo that I'm frightened of most.*

*If someone forgets and leaves the door wide  
I can see it up there in the gloom;  
I think I'll be brave and go up the stairs  
And pass by that dark little room.*

*I go up each step till I'm just half way  
But that is the most I can do –  
I make a dash down and wait in the Hall  
Till the door is shut fast on the Loo!*

## **2. Presentation**

***Tell the examiner four things about your school.***

Think about what the examiner might find interesting about your school, especially anything unusual or personal to you. You could include any extra activities you take part in.

Preparation could include making a list of special things about your school and deciding which four would provide the most interesting, varied and comprehensive account.

In the assessment, the examiner will introduce this section by inviting the candidate to say four things about his/her school. This is a presentation (not a discussion) so the examiner will simply listen.

## **3. Discussion**

***Reply to the examiner, who will ask about the room and things in it.***

Think about some of the features, furniture and items likely to be in the exam room and practise including them in sentences.

Examiner: "How many windows can you see?"

Candidate: "I can see four windows." (or) "There are four windows in this room."

Examiner: "What am I holding?"

Candidate: "You are holding a pen."

Examiner: "What is this?"  
Candidate: "That is a book."

At this level, the examiner will expect the candidate to be able to respond to 'follow-up' questions. For example,

Examiner: "What colour is this pencil?"  
Candidate: "The pencil is red."

Examiner: "How many red pencils are there in the box?"  
Candidate: "There are three red pencils in the box."

### Step 3

Exchange greetings with the examiner.

#### I. Performance

***EITHER perform a poem for the examiner, from memory, chosen from the Step 3 material in the LCM Anthology, OR perform an own choice prose piece of a similar standard, from memory.***

Choose a poem or prose piece which you enjoy. Practise reading it out loud to your teacher, family and friends. Try it in different ways to find the best way of enhancing the character of the piece. Act out the story.

'School' by Tricia Hawcroft is a fun poem about a first day at school, describing it in some detail. As with many poems for children, there is a 'twist' at the end! All school-age children will be able to identify with at least some of the feelings and events here. There are good acting-out possibilities and opportunities to talk about what happened on our first day and how we felt.

*I had to learn my letters  
And numbers too they said,  
I had to get up early  
But I wished I'd stayed in bed.*

*The other kids were noisy  
And some of them were bad,  
The teacher shouted loud at us  
We must have made her mad.*

*And once the day was over  
I acted really cool,  
But now I know for certain  
I really don't like school.*

*I have to go again it seems  
And so I shed some tears,  
Mum smiled and said that I could leave  
After about twelve years.*

'I'm just going out for a moment' by Mike Rosen is a conversation between two people – we can guess a parent and child. There is a good opportunity here to practise different voices/vocal sounds to help differentiate the two characters. How might the character with the longer lines sound – patient, annoyed, frustrated, all of these at different points in the poem? The 'Why' character could be 'winding-up' the other person, or just inquisitive. Inflection and pace will need some thought.

*I'm just going out for a moment.*

*Why?*

*To make a cup of tea.*

*Why?*

*Because I'm thirsty.*

*Why?*

*Because it's hot.*

*Why?*

*Because the sun's shining.*

*Why?*

*Because it's summer.*

*Why?*

*Because that's when it is.*

*Why?*

*Why don't you stop saying why?*

*Why?*

## **2. Presentation**

***Tell the examiner five things about a favourite possession (which may be brought in for the occasion).***

Choose a possession and think of different ways of describing it, for example its purpose, features, shape, colours, and why it is a favourite. By all means bring in the possession to show the examiner and remember to speak in sentences and tell the examiner five things about it.

## **3. Discussion**

***Reply to the examiner who will ask about your family.***

Think about the different members of your family, including family pets!

The examiner will ask some questions but it is also good if the candidate initiates some of the discussion.

*Examiner: "How many family members do you live with?"*

*Candidate: "There are four of us."*

*Examiner: "Who are they?"*

*Candidate: "My mum, dad, baby sister and me."*

*Examiner: "How old is your baby sister and what is her name?"*

*Candidate: "My sister is six months old and her name is Karen."*

*Examiner: "Would you like to ask me a question?"*

*Candidate: "Yes, thank you. Do you have any children?"*

# ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR STEPS

## 1. Performance

### BELOW PASS

- Incomplete performance
- Lack of understanding of text
- Lack of audibility

### PASS

- Complete performance with only minor inaccuracies which do not significantly interrupt continuity
- Awareness of meaning of text

### MERIT

- Accurate and confident performance
- Good awareness of meaning of text
- Some appropriate movement

### DISTINCTION

- Fluent performance which demonstrates understanding of the piece
- Good awareness of phrasing
- Sound intonation
- Appropriate movement

## 2. Presentation

### BELOW PASS

- Incomplete presentation
- Lack of understanding of presentation material
- Lack of audibility

### PASS

- Complete presentation
- Adequate audibility
- Awareness of content needs

### MERIT

- Confident and purposeful presentation
- Good awareness of content needs

### DISTINCTION

- Fluent, confident and clear presentation
- Sound intonation
- Very good awareness of content needs

## 3. Discussion

### BELOW PASS

- Inability to respond to examiner's questions

### PASS

- Ability to understand vocabulary used by the examiner and respond

### MERIT

- Some fluency and adaptability in responses

### DISTINCTION

- Fluent, adaptable responses displaying a good level of vocabulary

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

'Slugs' by John Kitching reprinted by permission of Trevor Dickinson.

'School' and 'Teddy Bear' by Tricia Hawcroft reprinted by permission of the author.

'I'm Just Going Out for a Moment' from 'Wouldn't You Like to Know' by Michael Rosen © 1977 Andre Deutsch reprinted by permission of Peters Fraser & Dunlop ([www.petersfraserdunlop.com](http://www.petersfraserdunlop.com)) on behalf of Michael Rosen.

**LCM Examinations  
University of West London  
St Mary's Road  
Ealing  
London W5 5RF**

**Tel: 020 8231 2364  
Email: [lcm.exams@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:lcm.exams@uwl.ac.uk)  
[www.uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams](http://www.uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams)**