

GUIDE TO THE ALGERIAN ENGLISH CURRICULUM

FOR

**MIDDLE SCHOOL
YEAR 4
(MS4)**

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I. INTRODUCTION

This section should be written by the Algerians describing the curriculum reform project and how this document fits into its development.

II. OVERVIEW

Overview of the Curriculum Guide

The *Curriculum Guide to MS4* is designed to support teachers in understanding and implementing the Algerian English Curriculum for the fourth year of middle school. The *Guide* describes the approach to teaching and learning that underlie the curriculum; details the competencies for each year of English study as well as specific objectives for the final year of middle school; and it provides discussion and examples of pedagogy and assessment using the curriculum. The appendix contains sample themes and a sample unit.

Section I explains the **history** of the project. **Section III** explains the **guiding principles** and corresponding **teacher competencies**. **Section IV** describes the **competency-focused approach** that is the basis of the curriculum. **Section V** describes the **Algerian English Framework**, an overview of the competencies for all seven grades of English language instruction. **Section VI** provides an **expanded curriculum for Middle School year 4** including an entry and exit profile and specific objectives for the year. **Section VII** describes the type of **pedagogy** that promotes learning of the competencies. **Section VIII** describes the kind of **classroom assessment** that supports achievement of the learning targets. The **Appendix** contains suggestions for materials writers, sample themes and topics, a sample unit and unit analysis.

Definition of curriculum

A curriculum is the interplay of planning, classroom teaching and learning, and evaluation in a specific context (Graves 2008). A successful curriculum includes a clear educational plan, sound educational practice and effective evaluation. The educational plan defines the educational purposes, objectives, and outcomes. Classroom practice is guided by the educational purposes, strives to fulfill the objectives and is aimed toward the outcomes. Evaluation both measures attainment of outcomes and provides data for adjusting planning and teaching to better promote learning.

The educational purposes of the Algerian English Curriculum are framed in a set of **Guiding Principles** that are the foundation of the curriculum plan. These are found in Section III. They are responsive to the social and educational context in Algeria, derive from sound educational theory and are appropriate for Algerian learners and teachers. The Guiding Principles are organized around a view of *language*, a view of *learners and learning* and a view of *teachers and teaching*.

An effective curriculum is aimed at student learning. Teaching and learning in the classroom are the heart of a curriculum. Without teaching and learning, there is no curriculum. A curriculum guide outlines clear and achievable learning outcomes for students. It also provides guidelines for what teachers need to know and be able to do in order to help learners attain those outcomes through classroom experiences.

The guidelines for teachers are described as **Teacher Competencies**. These can be found in the second part of Section III, after the Guiding Principles. They describe the core teaching skills, knowledge and attitudes teachers need in order to fulfill the Guiding Principles and help learners attain the learning outcomes.

Learning in the Algerian English Curriculum is aimed at development of competencies. Learning outcomes are described in terms of competencies. The **Competency-based approach** is described in Section IV. There are three types of competencies for language learning, interactive, interpretive and productive. The interpretive and productive are further subdivided:

- interactive competency--the ability to participate in spoken interactions
- interpretive competency-- the ability to understand and interpret what one reads and hears
- productive competency—the ability to express meaning and knowledge in speaking and writing

These competencies are supported by linguistic competency in the areas of pronunciation and grammar, and a repertoire of strategies for supporting communication and enhancing learning skills.

In Section V, the competencies for the entire seven years of language study are described in **The Algerian English Framework**. These specify the targets for each of the competencies for each of the seven years of English instruction.

In Section VI, the competencies for Middle School Year 4 (MS4) are expanded into curriculum specifications that provide guidelines for how to help learners attain the target competencies. The **expanded curriculum** includes: The Entry profile for the MS4 student and the Exit Profile. The entry profile describes what students should know and be able to do with respect to each competency at the beginning of the fourth year of middle school. The exit profile describes what students should know and be able to do by the end of the fourth year of middle school.

Section VII explains the **pedagogy** that supports the teaching of English as envisioned in the Curriculum Guide. The pedagogy is rooted in the Guiding Principles and aimed at enabling learners to develop the target competencies described in the AEF. The pedagogy is linked to the teacher competencies and examples from the sample unit in the appendix are given for each competency. There is also a typology of task types for teachers to consider as they plan their lessons.

Section VII explains the approach to **assessment** envisioned in Guiding Principle 7: that it is an ongoing part of learning that supports as well as documents individual progress and achievement. In addition to examples of assessment from the sample unit, there is a typology of assessment activities that teachers can consult when planning lessons.

The **Appendix** includes a brief introduction with general suggestions for materials writers, sample topics and themes that span the seven years of the curriculum, a description of a unit cycle, and a sample unit for MS4 that is consistent with the pedagogy that underlies the Guiding Principles and is based on the competencies in the