

LANGUAGE SKILLS

In previous CTET exams, 2 questions in 2011, 5 questions in 2012, 2 questions in 2013, 3 questions in 2014, 7 questions in 2015 and 3 questions in 2016 have been asked. The whole content covered in this chapter is significant for examination.

Languages are generally taught and assessed in terms of 'four skills' i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. The proper order or procedure involved in learning a language is Listening (L), Speaking (S), Reading (R) and Writing (W). Thus, LSRW is the process of language acquisition. Listening and reading are known as **receptive skills** while speaking and writing are known as **productive skills**. All language learners will need to develop their skills in each of these areas and language class should incorporate activities related to all these skills.

According to NCF 2005 speech and listening, reading and writing, are all generalised skills and children's mastery over them becomes the key factor affecting success at school.

6.1 Listening

Listening comprehension is the receptive skill in the oral mode. As it is said that speaking is gold but listening is diamond, one should give importance to other's words while having a conversation and need them what they want to communicate overall. Listening skills provide strength to our pronunciation skills. Additionally, we really mean what we listen to and understand.

6.1.1 Listening Situations

Listening situations can be classified into two kinds, which are as follows

1. **Interactive listening** includes face-to-face conversations and telephonic calls, in which we are alternately listening and speaking and in which we have a chance to ask for clarification, repetition, or slower speech from our conversation partner. Locally available resources include folklore and story telling, community singing and theatre. As a sector of language learning, listening can be enriched by music which includes folk, classical and popular compositions.

2. **Non-interactive listening** situations are listening to the radio, TV, films, lectures or sermons. In such situations, we usually don't have the opportunity to ask for clarification, slower speech or repetition.

6.1.2 Micro-Skills for Listening

Richards (1983, cited in Omaggio, 1986,) proposes that the following are the micro-skills involved in understanding what someone says to us. The listener has to

- retain chunks of language in short-term memory.
- discriminate among the distinctive sounds in the new language.
- recognise stress and rhythm patterns, tone patterns, into national contours.
- recognise reduced forms of words.
- distinguish word boundaries.
- recognise typical word-order patterns.
- recognise vocabulary.
- detect key words, such as those identifying topics and ideas. Guess meaning from context.
- recognise grammatical word classes.
- recognise basic syntactic patterns.
- recognise cohesive devices.
- detect sentence constituents, such as subject, verb, object, prepositions and the like.

6.2 Speaking

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. It, like the other skills, is more complicated than it seems at first and involves more than just pronouncing words.

6.2.1 Speaking Situations

There are three kinds of speaking situations in which we find ourselves

1. **Interactive** It includes face-to-face conversations and telephonic calls, in which we are alternately listening and speaking and in which we have a chance to ask for clarification, repetition or slower speech from our conversation partner.
2. **Partially Interactive** Some speaking situations are partially interactive, such as when giving a speech to a live audience, where the convention is that the audience does not interrupt the speech. The speaker nevertheless can see the audience and judge from the expressions on their faces and body language whether or not he or she is being understood.
3. **Non-Interactive** Some few speaking situations may be totally non-interactive, such as when recording a speech for a radio broadcast.

6.2.2 Micro-Skills for Speaking

Here are some of the micro-skills involved in speaking. The speaker has to

- pronounce the distinctive sounds of the language clearly enough, so that people can distinguish them. This includes making tonal distinctions.
- use stress and rhythmic patterns and intonation patterns of the language clearly enough so that people can understand what is said.
- use the correct forms of words. This may mean, e.g. changes in the tense, case or gender.
- put words together in correct word order.
- use vocabulary appropriately.
- use the register or language variety that is appropriate to the situation and the relationship to the conversation partner.
- make clear to the listener the main sentence constituents, such as subject, verb, object by whatever means the language uses.
- make the main ideas stand out from supporting ideas or information.
- make the discourse hang together, so that people can follow what you are saying.

6.3 Reading Skill

Reading is readily accepted as a focus area for language education. A child's education is considered incomplete if the child does not have the ability to read. But in India reading does not get as much importance as it should get.

According to NCF 2005 our schools, labs are burdened with information absorbing and memorising tasks so pleasure of reading is missed out.

Opportunities for individualised reading need to be built at all stages in order to promote a culture of reading and requires nurturing of school and community libraries.

Reading can be classified into the following types

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Silent Reading | 2. Aloud Reading |
| 3. Intensive Reading | 4. Extensive Reading |

6.3.1 Importance of Reading Skills

Importance of reading skills are

- Without being able to read, a human being is deprived of gaining knowledge.
- A person can face many hurdles due to inability to read.
- In today's world of specialisation, only attending school or college is not sufficient. A person must be able to acquire more knowledge in his area of profession from reference books.

- In today's world reading helps a person to analyse a situation by reading newspapers magazines etc. and act accordingly.
- Reading can help a person to utilise his leisure time.
- Critical thinking can develop only by vast reading of many thinkers so reading is an integral part of a person's development.

6.3.2 Characteristics of Reading Skills

Characteristics of reading skills are

- Reading involves complex cognitive skills.
- Reading is selective as it is based on the reader's choice.
- Reading should be clear and fluent.
- Reading should be enjoyed with correct intonation and pronunciation.

6.3.3 Aims of Reading Skills

Aims of reading skills are

- Read any language or English with fluency, accuracy and expression.
- Read confidently.
- Able to comprehend the text.
- Cultivate the habit of reading in the learner.
- Reading of additional materials like story books, poems etc with enjoyment.
- Establish a relationship between spoken words and printed words.

6.3.4 Micro-Skills Involved in Reading Skill

Micro-skills involved in reading skill are

- **Decipher script** is an alphabetical system that means establishing a relationship between sounds and symbols.
- Recognise vocabulary.
- Pick out key words, such as those identifying topics and main ideas. Recognise basic syntactic patterns.
- Reconstruct and infer situations, goals and participants.
- Distinguish the main idea from supporting details.
- Adjust reading strategies to different reading purposes.

6.3.5 Methods Involved in Reading and Writing

Methods involved in reading and writing are

Methods of Teaching Reading Skills

The Phonics Method It is probably the best known and widely used method to teach reading and writing in the English language. It relies on children being taught the alphabets first and then the sound of those alphabets. Then they can blend them together to make simple words.

Methods of Understanding by Reading

Methods of understanding by reading are

- (i) **See and Tell Method or Look and Say Method** With this method children learn to recognise whole word or sentences rather than individual sounds. Student is supposed to look at a picture and then utter the word related to that picture. Because of familiarity of pictures children associate the word easily.

In next step short sentences are introduced in place of individual words. A picture is displayed and the learner is shown a short sentence related to the picture. By making word cards, different sentences can be created. This method was adopted by psycho-linguists but teaches the learners to learn through rote memorisation.

- (ii) **The Language Experience Method** This method supported children's concept of development and vocabulary growth while offering many opportunities for meaningful reading and writing activities through the use of personal experience and oral language.
- (iii) **The Context Support Method** When learners initially learn to read, it is important to choose books that really interest them. e.g. if boys like cars, choose a book with pictures and simple words about cars. Some books are especially written to support this method of learning.

6.3.6 Errors Generally Made in Reading

Some errors generally made in reading are

- Read with getting stuck at many places. Wrong posture while reading, keeping the book very close to eyes.
- No fluency or speed Not able to recognise correct words.
- Lack of intonation according to emotions of a particular text.
- Lack of guidance while reading.

These problems related to reading can be prevented by providing appropriate linguistic environment, selection of reading material according to the mental level and interest of the learners.

6.4 Writing Skills

Writing is the productive skill in the written mode. It, too, is more complicated than it seems at first and often seems to be the hardest of the skills, even for native speakers of a language, since it involves not just a graphic representation of speech, but also the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way. Writing skill is an important aspect of language teaching as writing skills reinforce oral and reading work.

According to NCF 2005, writing ability should be placed in the same domain as artistic expression and not to receive it as merely a skill developed for office work. During the primary years writing abilities should be developed

holistically in conjunction with sensibilities associated with talking, listening and reading. At secondary level routine tasks like letter writing or essay writing should be less emphasised so that imagination and originality are allowed to play a more prominent role in education.

6.4.1 Aims of Writing Skill

The main aims of developing writing skill are to

- communicate the thoughts and feelings in written form.
- answer questions in the examination competently.
- develop literature, books, articles etc.
- able to write fluently following proper grammar rules.
- able to express and organise ideas systematically.
- learners are able to follow different techniques of writing.

6.4.2 Micro-Skill or Characteristics in Writing

Here are some of the micro-skills involved in writing. The writer needs to

- use the orthography correctly, including the script, spelling and punctuation conventions.
- use the correct forms of words. This may mean using forms that express the right tense or case or gender.
- put words together in correct word order.
- use vocabulary correctly.
- use the style appropriate to the genre and audience
- make the main sentence constituents such as subject, verb and object, clear to the reader
- make the main idea distinct from supporting ideas and information
- make the written text coherent
- write the content according to the mental level of the reader.

6.4.3 Handwriting

A good handwriting attracts the readers. A good handwriting should be legible and written in simple and clean script with proper spacing. There are various factors that render the handwriting bad. Some cautions to be taken while writing are as follows

- Good and appropriate posture.
- Distance between note book and eyes.
- Holding pen or pencil in a proper way.
- Use of calligraphy notebooks for practice.
- Proper writing material should be used.
- Writing keeping in mind the margin in the note books.
- Word formation should be straight, not slanting.
- Teacher's handwriting should be legible and bold.
- Use of proper punctuation marks.
- Proper classroom environment for the learner.
- Select words with the right strength and vigour.

CHAPTER EXERCISE

1. Faulty reading habit is due to
 (1) sub vocalisation
 (2) finger pointing
 (3) regressive movement
 (4) All of the above
2. Reading habit is important due to the following reasons
 (1) increases vocabulary
 (2) makes us knowledgeable
 (3) helps in getting information
 (4) All of the above
3. Command of language gives a feeling of
 (1) confidence
 (2) satisfaction
 (3) security
 (4) None of the above
4. The general aims of teaching prose are
 (1) to enable students to listen, speak, read and write Eng-prose
 (2) to enable students' to comprehend the thought
 (3) to enrich student's active and passive vocabulary
 (4) All of the above
5. Learners benefit from guided reading. It should be done at
 (1) primary level
 (2) upper primary level
 (3) secondary level
 (4) higher secondary level
6. Loud reading is done to assess
 (1) phonemic sounds
 (2) pronunciation
 (3) intonation
 (4) None of the above
7. Which of the following statements about reading is/are correct?
 (1) It is done in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge or in order to have critical perspective about ideas
 (2) It involves the interpretation of ideas symbolised by written or printed language
 (3) All of the above
 (4) None of the above
8. In reading 'scanning' means
 (1) quick survey of the text
 (2) examining everything closely and minutely
 (3) predicting the content
 (4) for comprehension
9. The initial stage in the development of writing skill is
 (1) free hand drawing
 (2) controlled drawing
 (3) acquaintance with written
 (4) None of the above
10. What does scribbling mean?
 (1) Listening carefully
 (2) Reading aloud
 (3) Writing quickly and carelessly
 (4) Stammering
11. Through silent reading, the learners may become proficient in
 (1) vocabulary (2) grammar
 (3) speaking skills (4) writing skills
12. Which is not a quality of good hand writing?
 (1) Legibility
 (2) Distinctiveness
 (3) Space
 (4) Absence of uniformity in the size of letters
13. The and the must share the same linguistic codes while learning a language.
 (1) speaker, writer
 (2) writer, listener
 (3) speaker, listener
 (4) reader, listener
14. If a student makes pronunciation errors, the best way to help him/her is to
 (1) provide him/her correct pronunciation without humiliating the learner
 (2) call parents of the learner and complain
 (3) scold the child
 (4) None of the above
15. Writing is the representation of speech sounds.
 (1) alphabetical (2) systematic
 (3) phonetic (4) graphical
16. Stress, rhythmic patterns and intonation patterns of the language, and appropriate vocabulary are the micro skills involved in which of the following?
 (1) Listening (2) Reading
 (3) Speaking (4) Writing
17. Which statement is true in the context of language skills?
 (1) All skills are learnt together not in a graded manner
 (2) All language skills are independent of each other
 (3) Language skills are learnt step by step as LSRW
 (4) Language skills do not affect each other
18. A child reads 'She bought three apples' as 'she bought tree apples' and explains it as 'apples from trees'. How would you rate this child's reading skills?
 (1) She reads without comprehension
 (2) She reads with spelling errors
 (3) She reads with comprehension
 (4) She reads carelessly
19. According to NCF 2005, the teaching to reading in schools is burdened with
 (1) memorising task
 (2) answering questions after reading
 (3) All of the above
 (4) None of the above
20. Reading skills can be developed by
 (1) asking students to read texts even if they do not understand it in one go
 (2) promoting a culture of reading
 (3) providing interesting books in the school to community libraries
 (4) All of the above
21. A teacher gives a headline of a newspaper about 'power shortage' and asks students to write five sentences on their own. Which type of writing is being developed by the teacher?
 (1) Review writing
 (2) Product writing
 (3) Controlled writing
 (4) Guided writing

- 22.** What is most important in increasing reading competency?
 (1) Practice structures of language
 (2) More attention on pronunciation than comprehension
 (3) Learning material
 (4) Practise questions given in the text
- 23.** Students of class IV can recognise flawed usage of sentence construction when the teacher
 (1) tells them that something is wrong
 (2) gives alternatives as possible corrections
 (3) lets them find the appropriate sentence
 (4) focusses on certain surface errors
- 24.** A student of class IV is feeling thirsty while teaching is going on. He wants to drink water and takes permission from the teacher.
 Choose how he will make the request.
 (1) I want to drink water
 (2) Madam, may I drink some water please?
 (3) Will you allow me to drink some water?
 (4) Water please
- 25.** Silent reading involves
 (1) increase of vocabulary
 (2) correct pronunciation
 (3) learn to absorb or infer the underlying meaning of the text
 (4) increases reading speed
- 27.** Critical thinking will be a by product of
 (1) creative writing
 (2) extensive reading
 (3) listening carefully to others
 (4) All of the above
- 26.** Arti Saxena, English teacher of class VIII, asks her learners to read materials such as children's magazines, other magazines, newspaper, short story books, articles etc. So, that they should develop fluency in the target language. Which type of reading is she encouraging?
 (1) Silent
 (2) Loud
 (3) Intensive
 (4) Extensive
- 28.** The sequence of the writing process would be in the following order
 (1) reviewing, monitoring, translating
 (2) planning, translating, reviewing
 (3) translating, reviewing, monitoring
 (4) planning, monitoring, reviewing
- 29.** Which of the following is a kind of speaking situation in which we find ourselves?
 (1) Interactive
 (2) Partially interactive
 (3) Only (2)
 (4) All of the above
- 30.** An English-Hindi speaking teacher gets posted in a primary school which is situated in a remote area of Himachal Pradesh. Since she does not know the local language, she faces lots of problems. She should
 (1) try to get herself posted out to a suitable place
 (2) focus on the text book only
 (3) use the child's language as a resource while teaching
 (4) encourage the community to learn standard English or Hindi
- 31.** While reading, which one of these help students to understand the relations between different parts?
 (1) Adverbs
 (2) Pronouns
 (3) Proper nouns
 (4) Phrasal verbs
- 34.** When young learners are asked to read a text silently, they should be instructed [CTET Jan 2012]
 (1) to stop reading whenever they encounter a difficult word or phrase
 (2) to infer the meaning of new words from the context and read with comprehension
 (3) to pay special attention to grammar items used in the passage
 (4) to read fast even if they don't comprehend the meaning
- 35.** Reading between the lines as a sub-skill of reading mainly involves [CTET Jan 2012]
 (1) understanding the stated facts
 (2) giving sufficient space between lines
 (3) inferring the unstated using the contextual verbal clues
 (4) identifying the grammatical items
- 36.** Language skills are best learnt [CTET Jan 2012]
 (1) only through written tests and assignments
 (2) if they are taught in an integrated manner
 (3) with the help of challenging and mechanical language drills
 (4) when they are introduced in isolation, one skill at a time
- 37.** Correct speech habits can be developed most effectively through [CTET Jan 2012]
 (1) pronunciation practice
 (2) vocabulary practice
 (3) quizzes
 (4) dictations
- 38.** Notes can be made using a flowchart or a web diagram. The study skill involved is [CTET Nov 2012]
 (1) storing (2) summarising
 (3) retrieving (4) gathering
- 39.** The 'interactional routine' during speaking assessment includes a [CTET July 2013]
 (1) comparing two or more objects/places/events for the assessor
 (2) negotiating meanings, taking turns and allowing others to take turns
 (3) describing one's school and its environs informally
 (4) telephonic conversation with another

Previous Years' Questions

- 32.** "Students need to brainstorm ideas, organise, draft, edit and revise their work," is a 'process' which reflects [CTET June 2011]
 (1) listening skills (2) speaking skills
 (3) reading skills (4) writing skills
- 33.** Reading for comprehension can be best achieved through [CTET June 2011]
 (1) teaching learners to run a finger or pencil under the line being read
 (2) asking the children to read the text aloud
 (3) helping learners speak words softly while reading
 (4) learners reading silently and asking comprehension questions

40. Retrieval skills in writing are
[CTET July 2013]

- (1) organising information while reading/listening
- (2) note making and note taking
- (3) diagramming and summarising
- (4) abilities to do extensive reference work

41. A text that requires students to scan in order to understand and analyse the writer's message and purpose could be
[CTET Feb 2014]

- (1) an encyclopedic extract
- (2) a newspaper headline
- (3) a set of instructions to assemble a device
- (4) a poem

42. While drafting a notice, students may be instructed to use language
[CTET Feb 2014]

- (1) direct
- (2) intrigue
- (3) descriptive
- (4) elaborate

43. Among the four language skills, which pair constitutes the reinforcement skills?
[CTET Sept 2014]

- (1) Reading and listening
- (2) Speaking and listening
- (3) Reading and speaking
- (4) Speaking and writing

44. Scribbling is a stage of
[CTET Feb 2015]

- (1) speaking
- (2) listening
- (3) writing
- (4) reading

45. A primary teacher should introduce reading through
[CTET Feb 2015]

- (1) stories
- (2) picture books
- (3) alphabet books only
- (4) phonic teaching

46. Which one of the following would be the best evidence to demonstrate to parents and administrators what students can do with language? [CTET Feb 2015]

- (1) National curriculum and syllabi
- (2) Lists of course goals and objectives
- (3) Marks in a test
- (4) Poems or paragraphs written by students

47. While teaching children to read, at which point should the teacher focus on comprehension?
[CTET Feb 2015]

- (1) When children reach class II
- (2) After children have learned how to decode
- (3) Right from the beginning
- (4) Once children have mastered phonics

48. During the process of language learning, students lack confidence in their pronunciation. How can one overcome this? [CTET Sept 2015]

- (1) Providing scope for special activities with the help of language experts for removing speaking defects
- (2) Correcting mistakes immediately
- (3) Reading aloud in the classroom
- (4) Organising play like tasks in which children can talk to one another

49. What is the main purpose of poetry recitation in a language classroom?
[CTET Sept 2015]

- (1) To appreciate and enjoy the poem
- (2) To give their opinions about the poem
- (3) To become aware of the poet and her work
- (4) To know the historical background of the poem

50. Why is story telling most important in an English language class at primary level?
[CTET Sept 2015]

- (1) It is useful for developing integrated language skills

- (2) It develops moral values among the students
- (3) It improves students' vocabulary
- (4) It creates fun in the class

51. Which one of the following is most important in developing reading skill at primary level?
[CTET Feb 2016]

- (1) Ability to read phrases correctly
- (2) Ability to comprehend the text already read
- (3) Only knowing the correct order of alphabet
- (4) Ability to read words correctly

52. While reading, a learner needs to
[CTET Feb 2016]

- (1) guess the contextual meaning of new words to understand the text
- (2) translate the written symbols into corresponding sounds to grasp their meaning
- (3) perceive and decode letters in order to read words
- (4) understand every word to grasp the meaning of the text

53. Poetry teaching is generally meant for
[CTET Sept 2016]

- (1) learning grammar
- (2) learning punctuation
- (3) enjoyment and appreciation
- (4) language learning

Answers

- | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (4) | 2. (4) | 3. (1) | 4. (4) | 5. (4) |
| 6. (1) | 7. (3) | 8. (1) | 9. (1) | 10. (3) |
| 11. (1) | 12. (4) | 13. (3) | 14. (1) | 15. (4) |
| 16. (3) | 17. (3) | 18. (4) | 19. (3) | 20. (4) |
| 21. (4) | 22. (2) | 23. (2) | 24. (2) | 25. (3) |
| 26. (2) | 27. (4) | 28. (4) | 29. (4) | 30. (3) |
| 31. (1) | 32. (4) | 33. (4) | 34. (2) | 35. (3) |
| 36. (2) | 37. (1) | 38. (2) | 39. (2) | 40. (3) |
| 41. (4) | 42. (1) | 43. (4) | 44. (3) | 45. (1) |
| 46. (4) | 47. (3) | 48. (3) | 49. (1) | 50. (1) |
| 51. (2) | 52. (3) | 53. (3) | | |