

OXFORD IB PREPARED



ENGLISH B



IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

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OXFORD

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www.oxfordsecondary.com/ib-prepared-support

1

APPROACHES TO LEARNING (ATLs)

The aims of this chapter

Being able to use cross-curricular Approaches to Learning (ATLs) is an essential part of any English B course. In this chapter you will:

- ✓ familiarize yourself with the five broad Approaches to Learning: Thinking skills, Communication skills, Social skills, Research skills and Self-management skills

- ✓ learn how these ATLs relate to your acquisition of English
- ✓ undertake a series of questionnaires to assess the development of your ATL skills
- ✓ decide which skills you need to develop in order to become a better learner.

HOW CAN I BECOME A BETTER LEARNER IN ENGLISH B?

Some essential questions to start this chapter

- What are the most important skills that you have already developed for language learning?
- What do you already know about Approaches to Learning in English B?
- What other questions do you have about becoming an excellent student in English?

What are these ATL skills?

There are five broad categories of ATL skills you will learn to use in this book:

- Thinking skills
- Communication skills
- Social skills
- Research skills
- Self-management skills.

Why are Approaches to Learning important in English B?

The answer is very simple; they are an essential feature of all IB courses, including English B. *IB Prepared: English B* will help you to develop a variety of learning strategies and these strategies are called Approaches to Learning (ATLs).



How do these ATL skills relate to language learning?

Look at these examples. They illustrate the connections between developing your ATLs and developing your English Language Acquisition skills. As you read this section, make notes on any points that will help you to become a better learner in English B.

Approaches to Learning	Learning English
<p>Thinking skills</p>	<p>All the activities in <i>IB Prepared: English B</i> are designed as concept-based inquiries. As you learn to communicate better in English, you are also investigating important notions, such as Identities and Sharing the Planet. In these books, you will also learn about five essential concepts related to communication: Audience, Context, Meaning, Purpose and Variety.</p> <p>As you examine these abstract ideas, you are also practising thinking skills in English. For instance, when starting a new inquiry, you will ask yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you know already about this idea? • What else do I need to know about it? <p>These questions will allow you to develop the skills of “gathering and organizing relevant information”. During the subsequent inquiries, you will have many other opportunities to practise thinking skills in English, such as “analysing and evaluating issues and ideas to formulate an argument”.</p> <p>Then, having completed an inquiry, you will reflect on what you have learned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have I learned about this topic? • What more do I still want to learn? • Where can I find out more information? • What new skills have I acquired in this section? • In what ways have I improved? • What skills do I still need to develop? <p>As you improve your thinking skills, such as “Generating new ideas and questions”, you are also practising and developing your English.</p>
<p>Communication skills</p>	<p>All the skills you develop for English B are focused on communication. For example, during the course, all the communicative tasks you perform require you to think and reflect, either with your peers, your teachers, or even with yourself. As you learn to communicate your new ideas, you improve your fluency in English, too.</p> <p>Moreover, in the assessments, you practise writing in paper 1, you test your listening and reading skills in paper 2 and you use your interactive oral skills for the internal assessment.</p>
<p>Social skills</p>	<p>All your investigations in English B lend themselves to further research. For example, you can find answers to any additional questions generated by an inquiry by doing an internet search on an English language search engine. Additionally, you need to decide whether the information you are looking at is trustworthy. This is the skill of “using collected data to identify solutions and to make informed decisions”. As you gather this new information, you are interacting with English in a very natural manner.</p> <p>In addition, you can use research skills to individualize your learning. As you conduct your inquiry, look up difficult new vocabulary and check language structures and any items of grammar that you are not sure of: “using collected data to identify solutions and to make informed decisions”.</p>
<p>Research skills</p>	<p>Effective group work is one of the most important mechanisms for improving the quality of your English. Simply put, the more you interact with others, the more English you practise and learn. For this reason, all the activities in this book have been designed as potential collaborative, group-learning activities.</p> <p>Group work is also a very useful tool for developing communication skills in English. Cooperative learning provides situations for you to challenge yourself and each other: “listening actively to other perspectives and ideas”.</p> <p>Group work also promotes higher-level thinking skills. For example, in this book you will identify and discuss the key linguistic concepts present in a text. Discussing these concepts in pairs or groups will help you to test the limits of what you understand and can communicate: “revising understanding based on new evidence”. As you discuss and debate these abstract ideas with each other, your language abilities will improve too.</p>
<p>Self-management skills</p>	<p>In this book, you will also have significant opportunities to self-check your work, manage errors and develop strategies for improving the overall standard of your English. This is the skill of “planning strategies and taking action to achieve personal and academic goals”.</p> <p>Moreover, you can use all your ATLs to become a much more efficient student. For instance, you can develop planning strategies for the completion of written tasks and establish routines for submitting completed work on time: “setting personal and academic goals that are challenging and achievable”.</p>

Summing up

The importance of ATLs in English B

Now reflect on what you have read. According to the text above, how do ATLs improve your ability to learn and use English? Think about what you have learned so far, and then add other ideas of your own. Categorize your answers according to the five ATL skills.

ATL Thinking Skills

Metacognition

Metacognition is a very powerful thinking tool. Simply stated, metacognition means thinking about thinking. It is an activity that helps us to reflect on our thinking processes. It can, therefore, help us to assess our performance and behaviour in school and the wider world.

Furthermore, metacognition can play a major role in your language learning. For example, if you can identify and express ideas about your ATL skills in English, you are improving your ability to think about abstract concepts in English too. As a result, your ability to communicate abstract ideas in English will develop as well. This is a huge bonus.

How do my ATLs help me to become a better learner?

Each ATL can be broken down into sets of sub-skills. For example, self-management includes:

- managing your time effectively
- planning short- and long-term assignments
- keeping and using a planner for your assignments and deadlines
- meeting all your intermediate and final deadlines.

These sub-skills can be classified into four levels: **Understanding, Practising, Using** and **Transferring**. The table below expresses each level as a series of “can do” statements.

Level 1: Understanding	Level 2: Practising	Level 3: Using	Level 4: Transferring
I can recognize the skill when others use it and I can copy someone else using it.	I can use the skill in familiar situations, or use it with some help.	I can use the skill whenever I need to and in less familiar situations.	I can use the skill I learned in English B in other subjects and in other areas of my life.
I can ask the right questions when I make mistakes.	I can understand why I make mistakes and can get help to improve.	I can usually correct my own mistakes.	I can teach others how to use the skill.

Therefore, it could be that for “Managing your time effectively” you are at Level 3 while for “Meeting all your intermediate and final deadlines” you are only at Level 1.

The questionnaires below can help you assess which ATL skills you possess. Make notes and give each sub-skill mentioned a rating from 1 to 4, where Level 1 is “Understanding” and Level 4 relates to “Transferring”. Once you have finished the exercise, decide what and how you can improve.

Note: These lists are not meant to be exhaustive. They simply contain those ATL skills which you are most likely to use in the study of English B.



ATL Self-management Skills

Making sure you understand what you are reading

As you read the lists of ATLs, identify any vocabulary you do not understand, and check the meaning of those words or concepts.



ATL Thinking Skills

Connecting elements of the English B course

The English B course has several elements:

- the aims and objectives of the course
- inquiry-based learning
- the related themes and concepts
- approaches to learning (ATLs)
- the assessments for English B.

How do all these elements help you to learn English? You might wish to discuss this question with your teachers.

After you have discussed the question, use the list opposite to see which thinking skills you have used in this exercise.

Questionnaire: Assessing your thinking skills (on a scale of 1–4)

Critical thinking skills

- Collecting and organizing relevant information
- Interpreting information
- Evaluating evidence and arguments
- Coming to reasonable conclusions and understanding general principles
- Testing generalizations and conclusions
- Analysing and evaluating issues and ideas to formulate an argument
- Considering ideas from multiple perspectives
- Using mental models to explore complex systems and issues
- Identifying problems and challenges
- Revising understanding based on new evidence
- Developing contrary or opposing arguments
- Proposing and evaluating a variety of solutions
- Identifying and predicting possibilities and trends

Creative thinking skills

- Generating new ideas and questions
- Applying existing knowledge to generate new ideas
- Brainstorming to generate new ideas
- Practising visible thinking strategies and techniques
- Using visual diagrams to generate new ideas
- Considering new perspectives and alternatives
- Creating new solutions to old problems
- Using existing ideas in new ways
- Generating metaphors to explain an idea
- Making unexpected or unusual connections between objects and/or ideas
- Making good guesses, asking “what if?” questions
- Creating original works and ideas

What have you learned about your critical and creative thinking skills? Study your results and make notes on how you can improve them.

Questionnaire: Assessing your communication skills (on a scale of 1–4)

Communicating through interaction

- Using different techniques to communicate with different audiences
- Using different techniques to communicate for different purposes
- Interpreting and using modes of non-verbal communication
- Negotiating ideas and knowledge with fellow students and teachers
- Using appropriate forms of writing for different purposes and audiences
- Using a variety of media to communicate with a range of audiences
- Sharing ideas with multiple audiences using different digital platforms and media
- Collaborating with peers and experts using a variety of digital platforms and media

Media literacy skills

- Locating, collecting, recording and checking information from a variety of media
- Organizing, analysing, evaluating, information from text-based and digital sources
- Synthesizing and ethically using information from both text-based and digital sources
- Using citations correctly
- Making informed choices about personal viewing and reading experiences
- Understanding the impact of media representations and modes of presentation
- Seeing things from different perspectives and taking information from different sources
- Communicating information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and text types



ATL Communication Skills

How does non-verbal communication work?

Non-verbal communication is communication without words. Study the picture above and ask yourself:

- What is the purpose of the image?
- What context was it created for?

Then, consider these points:

- What message does the image communicate?
- How does the image communicate its message?
- How efficient is the communication?

What can you learn about communication from this exercise?

What can you learn about becoming a better communicator in English?

What have you learned about your communication and media-literacy skills? Study your results and make notes on how you can improve them.



ATL Research Skills

The importance of research skills

Imagine that you are giving a presentation to your class on some aspect of the English B course, such as “Being a global citizen” or “Having a multilingual identity”. In order to prepare your presentation, which of the research skills opposite will you need to employ? What can you learn about the importance of research skills from this exercise?

Take a moment to think about the subjects you have chosen for further study and your ideal career. Then discuss this question: “Why do we need to acquire research skills now in order to succeed in the future?”

Questionnaire: Assessing your research skills (on a scale of 1–4)

Information literacy skills

- Accessing information from various sources
- Interpreting and evaluating information
- Using critical thinking skills to analyse and interpret information
- Making connections between various sources of information
- Creating new information
- Using collected information to identify solutions and to make decisions based on evidence
- Reporting results of research

Media literacy skills

- Locating, collecting, recording and verifying data from a variety of media
- Organizing, analysing, evaluating, information from different sources and media
- Synthesizing information from a range of sources and media
- Using citations correctly and ethically
- Making reasoned decisions about information you have listened to, read or viewed
- Understanding the impact of media representations and modes of presentation
- Identifying different perspectives from multiple and varied sources
- Communicating information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats

What have you learned about your research skills? Study your results and make notes on how you can improve further.

**Questionnaire: Assessing your social skills
(on a scale of 1–4)**

Collaborative and team-building skills

- Building agreement and consensus
- Listening actively to other perspectives and ideas
- Encouraging others to contribute
- Sharing responsibility for decision-making
- Practising empathy
- Helping others to succeed
- Defending your own rights and needs
- Giving your own ideas and opinions
- Negotiating effectively

What have you learned about your social skills? Study your results and make notes on how you can improve them.



ATL Social Skills

Collaborative learning

English B is an inquiry-based course. Why is group and pair work so relevant to such an approach to language learning? In what ways can you use technology in a collaborative manner to further improve the quality of your English language development?

Make a list of all the collaborative activities that you can undertake inside and outside the classroom to improve the quality of your learning.

**Questionnaire: Assessing your self-management skills
(on a scale of 1–4)**

Organization skills

- Managing time effectively
- Planning short- and long-term assignments
- Keeping and using a planner for work
- Working towards intermediate and final deadlines
- Creating and following plans to prepare for summative assessments (examinations and performances)
- Setting personal and academic goals that are challenging and achievable
- Planning strategies and taking action to achieve personal and academic goals
- Using appropriate strategies to organize information
- Understanding and using a variety of learning styles

What have you learned about your self-management skills? Study your results and make notes on how you can improve them.



ATL Self-management Skills

Prioritizing your needs

Are you an efficient learner of English? When you have completed the self-assessment exercise, decide which ATLs you need to improve most urgently. Make a personal list of skills that you need to improve most and then organize the list to create a plan of action for your revision.

Summing up

Improving ATLs to become a better learner in English B

Now reflect on what you have read. How do ATLs improve your ability to learn and use English? Think about what you have learned so far, and then add other ideas of your own.

How can I practise my ATL skills in *IB Prepared: English B*?

In *IB Prepared: English B*, specific ATL activities that you can practise are signposted at various stages of each chapter. In this chapter, for example, you will have found various ATL boxes like those on the previous page. For each activity, note the skills you are using and become a far more efficient learner.

A final word of advice: in order to be a really effective learner, make a conscious effort to identify each of these skills as you use them. For example, as you prepare to write a text, say to yourself, "I am using the strategy X to organize this information".

Reflections on Chapter 1: How can I become a better learner in English B?

- What new lessons about ATL skills have you learned in this chapter?
- What useful tips about studying in English B have you learned?
- Which study skills in English B can you use in your other subjects and elsewhere?
- What new questions do you still have about becoming a more efficient student?

Use your research skills to find answers to these questions.

ATL Skills: Overview

Study the photograph opposite. Which ATL skills has the speaker used in the preparation and presentation of his ideas?

In groups, debate this question: "In the long-term, the skills we develop in school are far more use to us than the subject-specific knowledge we acquire".



Beyond the classroom

How can I transfer my ATL skills to the world beyond the English B classroom?

ATLs are transferable. You will find that you will be able to apply and refine the same ATL skills to your tertiary studies and, ultimately, they will transfer to the world of work and your future professional career.

ENGLISH B

Offering an unparalleled level of assessment support at SL and HL, IB Prepared: English B has been developed directly with the IB to provide the most up-to-date and authoritative guidance on DP assessment.

You can trust IB Prepared resources to:

- Ensure that learners fully understand assessment requirements with clear explanations of each component and model answers
- Maximize assessment potential with strategic tips, highlighted common errors and sample answers annotated with expert advice
- Build students' skills and confidence using exam-style questions, practice papers and worked solutions

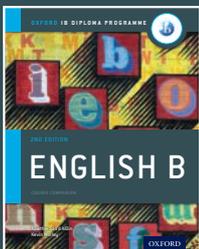
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2 PAPER 1 PRODUCTIVE SKILLS: WRITING

Differences between standard level (SL) and higher level (HL) in paper 1

Standard level	Assessment details	Higher level
Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes Standard level students write a response of 250–400 words. Tasks require standard level students to cover two language functions. For example: • describe a situation and suggest a solution • narrate what a person did and explain why they did it • describe and compare the advantages and the disadvantages of something in a situation such as a holiday destination.		Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes Higher level students write a more complex response of 400–600 words. Tasks at higher level should require students to cover three language functions and use higher order communication skills. For example: • describe a situation, suggest a solution AND explain the importance of using that solution (linking persuading) • evaluate a potential solution, make a recommendation and persuade readers to accept it.
In English B standard level, you write texts for a variety of purposes. For instance, you might: • write a descriptive text • write personal correspondence • make comparisons between people, places or events • narrate stories and provide a detailed account of the events • express your thoughts and opinions on a cultural topic.		In English B higher level, you must use higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, synthesis and interpretation. Also, you could be asked to complete a project. This might include describing, narrating, comparing, exploring, persuading, justifying and evaluating. For instance, you might: • present and develop ideas and justify them • construct and support arguments with explanations and examples • explain a problem, discuss the effects and offer a solution.

Assessment tip
Know your examination paper
A successful approach to paper 1 – Writing involves:
• understanding how the examination paper is organized
• knowing how to respond to a specific prompt
• organizing your time to maximize your marks.

Analysis
A: In the sample standard level paper 1, the three themes covered are: Identities, Experiences and Sharing the planet.
Question: Which theme is related to which question?
Justify your answer:
B: At standard level, each prompt requires you to cover two functions.
Questions: For questions 1–3, what are the two functions mentioned in each prompt?
C: There are five different text type options featured in each standard level paper.
There are three different text types per prompt.
Questions: In each prompt, explain why the examiner graded the text types in the order shown:
[1] = most appropriate,
[2] = acceptable, [3] = least appropriate.

Example of a standard level (SL) paper 1

Instructions
Complete one task. Use an appropriate text type from the list below for your chosen task. Write 250 to 400 words.

- Many students in your school buy take-away lunches from local cafes. This has created a major litter problem for the local community around your school. Write a text in which you describe to your fellow students the problems caused by their litter and suggest ways to improve the situation.
[Dialog (3)] [Essay (2)] [Speech (1)]
- A sports magazine is running a competition for the best campaign to improve awareness of healthy lifestyles among teenagers. Write a text for this competition, in which you describe the ideas for your campaign and explain why they would be really effective.
[Dialog (2)] [Proposal (1)] [Speech (3)]
- Recently you underwent a life-changing event that gave you a new way of looking at the world. Write a text in which you share with an audience what happened and explain what you have learned from the experience.
[Dialog (1)] [Essay (2)] [Proposal (3)]

Note: In the actual paper 1 there are no numbers against the text types.



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