

CHALLENGES 2: EVALUATION RE: Common Europe Framework

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Introduction

Challenges 2 covers virtually all lower Waystage specifications (A.2.1) and quite a few higher Waystage descriptors (A.2.2). As with *Challenges 1*, it is important to remember that, while *Challenges 2* contains activities that present and practise language, tasks and strategies relating to ‘can do’ statements, this does not automatically mean that students will be able to fulfil them. This will depend on the students, their previous learning experiences, the number of hours of class etc. There is also always going to be an important gap between the input that learners receive and what they are capable of actually achieving.

At each level, *Challenges* covers the basic CEF objectives for the corresponding CEF level and a few for the next level. The rationale behind this is that, as mentioned before, students need time to assimilate both language and strategies before they can be said to be actually capable of carrying out the performance objectives established by the CEF.

The only specifications that are not covered are those related to work or adult situations which would be beyond teenage learners both cognitively and experientially. For example, *Challenges 2* does not cover descriptions of jobs or study experiences which are clearly not relevant to 11-16-year-old students.

On the other hand, *Challenges 2* does cover areas which are not reflected in the CEF descriptors. This is particularly the case in writing where project work is important. Drawing graphs, writing leaflets, narrating a story and describing an even are all covered in *Challenges 2*.

Although *Challenges* takes into account the specifications of the UCLES exams as part of the broader European framework, it is most definitely *not* an exam book. It would be relevant for any educational system with its own exams that are informed by the CEF.

TOPICS

How well does the book cover 'the topics which are the subject of discourse, conversation, reflection or composition' (CEF p. 51/2)

1. *personal identification*

personality (M1); personal interests/jobs (M2); life stories/childhood (M3); family roots (M3); appearance/faces/clothes (M5); teenage identity and style (M9);

2. *house and home/environment*

rooms and furniture/traditional houses (M9)

3. *daily life*

communication/keeping in touch (M1); routines (M2); life in the past (M3); everyday gadgets (M8); household chores (M9)

4. *free time/entertainment*

hobbies and interests (M1); computer games (M2); films/stories (M3); mysteries/stories (M4); film special effects (M5); performance/dance/circus/music (M7); science fiction (M8); sports stars (M10); songs/stories (Time Out)

5. *travel*

travel brochure (M1); holidays/tourist information (M6)

6. *relations with other people*

friends and keeping in touch (M1); relations with neighbours (M2); families (M3);

7. *health and body care*

sports (M10); make up/style (M5)

8. *education*

school competition (M1); school experiences (M3)

9. *shopping*

clothes shopping at a market (M5)

10. *food and drink*

eating out/food and drink/menus (M2)

11. *services*

tourist information (M6)

12. *places*

description of a country (M1); multicultural city (M2); science museum (M8); getting round London (M9); the Antarctic (M10); around the world story (Time Out)

13. *language*

text messages (Time Out)

14. *weather*

covered in Challenges 1

15 *technology* inventions/science museum (M8) * not in CEF list

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES

A.2 WAYSTAGE

A 2.1 'it is at this level that the majority of descriptors stating social functions are found (e.g everyday polite forms of greeting.....)' p. 31 Also included v. basic transactional specifications.

A.2.2 more active participation in conversation + ability to sustain monologues.

1. SPEAKING

CEF Descriptors	Challenges 2
Speaking- Interaction	
A.2 Can indicate when he/she is following	showing interest (M4 p.43)
A.2.1 Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters to do with free time.	general / exchange of info: questionnaires (M1p.11) / surveys (M5 p. 55) / info gaps (M4p.41)
Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going on his/her own accord.	general / social exchanges covered systematically (units 3/6/9/12/15/18/21 /24/27/30)
Can understand what is said clearly, slowly and directly to him/her in simple everyday conversation; can be made to understand if the speaker can take the trouble.	<i>general descriptor</i>
Can handle very short social exchanges but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord, though he/she can be made to understand if the speaker will take the trouble.	<i>general descriptor</i>
Can use simple everyday polite forms of greetings.	politeness in service encounters (M2p.23); M5 p.53); M6p.63)
Can make and respond to invitations and suggestions.	suggestions/invitations (M7p.73)
Can make and respond to apologies.	apologies (M10 p.103)
Can say what he/she likes or dislikes.	preferences (M1p.13)
Can discuss everyday practical issues in a simple way when addressed clearly, slowly and directly.	<i>general descriptor</i>
Can discuss what to do, where to go and	arranging to go out

make arrangements to meet.	(M7p.73)
Can say what he/she thinks about things	opinions about style (M9 p.91)
Can communicate in simple and routine tasks using simple phrases to ask for and provide things, to get simple information and to discuss what to do next.	<i>general descriptor</i>
Can get simple information about travel, use public transport: buses, trains and taxis.	asking for tourist information (M6 p.63)
Can ask and give directions, buy bus tickets.	asking and giving directions (M9 p.93)
Can ask about things and make simple transactions in shops	clothes shopping (M5 p. 53)
Can give and receive information about quantities, numbers, prices etc.	asking about quantities (M6 p.61) prices (M2 p. 23/M5 p.53)
Can make simple purchases by stating what is wanted and asking the price.	clothes shopping (M5 p. 53)
Can order a meal.	at a café (M2 p.23)
Can exchange information for simple and routine tasks.	exchange of info: questionnaires (M1p.11) / surveys (M5 p. 55) / info gaps (M4p.41)
Can ask and answer questions about what they do at work and in free time.	interests (M1 pp 10/11)
Can ask for and give directions referring to a map or plan.	asking and giving directions (M9 p.93)
Can ask for and provide personal information.	<i>personalisation throughout book</i>
Can answer simple questions and respond to simple statements in an interview.	<i>general descriptor</i>
Can say he/she didn't follow.	classroom language (M3 p.36)
A.2.2.	
introductions; giving thanks.	Giving thanks (M10 P. 102)

Can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her when it is conducted slowly and clearly.	suggestions/invitations (M7p.73)
Can discuss what to do in the evening or at the weekend.	asking for repetition and explanation (M3 p.36)
Can make and respond to suggestions. Can ask for repetition of key points if necessary.	suggestions/invitations (M7p.73)
Can discuss what to do next, making and responding to suggestions, asking for and giving directions.	tourist information (M6 p. 63)
Can deal with practical everyday demands: finding out and passing on straightforward factual information.	(M1 pp.8-11)
Can ask and answer questions about habits and routines.	
Can ask and answer questions about pastimes and past activities.	(M3 28-9/M4 38-9)
Can give and follow simple directions and instructions.	asking and giving directions (M9 p.93)
Can ask very simply for repetition when he/she does not understand. Can ask for clarification about key words or phrases not understood using stock phrases.	asking for repetition and explanation (M3 p.36)

Other interactive functions covered:

Apologising

Giving and receiving advice.

Making and reacting to offers.

Can start again using a different tactic when communication breaks down. (B.1.1.)

2. WRITING

CEF Descriptors	Challenges 2
A. 2 Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because'.	focus on linking p.24/p.44/p.84/p.104)
Can write simple, formulaic notes relating to matters in areas of immediate need.	a lot covered in Challenges 1 / short emails (M10p.104)
Can write very simple personal letters	personal emails (M2 p.24/M10 p. 104)/

	postcard (M6 p. 64) / personal blog (M8 p.84)
A.2.1 Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, living conditions, Can write short, simple imaginary biographies about people.	writing about yourself (M2 p.24) description of an old person's childhood (M3p.35)
A.2.2 Can write about everyday aspects of his/her environment, e.g. people, places, in linked sentences. Can write very short, very basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.	describing places (M1 p. 15) writing a timeline (M3 p.31)/ a story (M4 p.44)

Other writing functions covered.

Write a postcard (A.1) (M6 p.64)

Can narrate a story. (B.1) (M4 p.44)

Draw a pie graph. (M5 p.55)

Leaflet about a building (M9 p.95)

Description of a dance (M7 p.75)

3. LISTENING

CEF Descriptors	Challenges 2
A. 2 Can generally identify the topic of discussion around him/her, when it is conducted slowly and clearly. (NS speakers)	identifying topic (M5 p.47 / M7 p.67 / M8 p. 77 / M9 p.87 / M10 p. 97)
Can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	gist listening (M3 p.27 M4 p.37 / M5 p.53)
Can understand simple directions related to how to get from X to Y, by foot or public transport.	M9 p. 93
Can understand and extract the essential information from short, recorded passages dealing with predictable everyday matters which are delivered slowly and clearly.	specific information (M1 p. 6/13 / M2 p.17/23 / M3 p.27/33 M4 p.43 / M6 p.57/63 M7 p.73/ M8 p. 83)
Can use an idea of the overall meaning of short texts and utterances on everyday topics of a	<i>general descriptor</i>

concrete type to derive the probable meaning of unknown words from the context.	
A.2.1 Can understand phrases and expressions related to areas of most immediate priority, e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment – provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated. Can follow the changes of topic of factual TV news items, and form an idea of the main content.	key expressions covered (personal /family/shops etc) <i>general descriptor / Challenges video</i>
A.2.2. Can understand enough to meet the needs of a concrete type provided speech is clearly and slowly articulated. Can identify the main point of TV news items reporting events, accidents etc where the visual supports the commentary.	<i>general descriptor</i> <i>Challenges video</i>

4. READING

CEF Descriptors	Challenges 2
A.2 Can understand-notices Can find specific, predictable information in everyday material, such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, and timetables. Can identify specific information in simpler written material he/she encounters such as letters, brochures, and short newspaper articles describing events.	notice (M1P.12) brochures (M1p.14 / M6p.60/ menu (M2 p.22) specific information tasks throughout / letters (M1 p.1) / postcard (M6 p.64) emails (M2 p.24/M10p. 104)
A.2.1 Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items. Can understand short, simple personal letters.	<i>general descriptor</i> letters (M1 p.1) / postcard (M6 p.64) emails (M2

	p.24/M10p. 104)
<p>A.2.2.</p> <p>Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday language.</p>	<p>everyday texts covered – articles/ brochures/ leaflets/factual texts (Across Cultures)/letters/ emails/blog/news paper story</p>