



How to Succeed in BGE English

Everyone knows that English is really just about reading, writing, talking and listening... but how do you become a better writer, more fluent reader, or more confident at talking or listening? Below are some strategies and ways to improve your skills in English:

How do I improve my **READING** skills?

- Reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts e.g. Newspaper articles from The Guardian, The Times and The Observer
- Read as much as you can in your personal time – it is amazing how much this helps.
- Try to think critically about what you are reading – *why was it written; what is the writer trying to say and how are you meant to feel when you read it*, are good places to start.

How do I improve my **WRITING** skills?

- Make sure any creative writing you complete includes the golden rule: SHOW, don't TELL.
- Let the reader discover things about a character themselves, e.g. don't say she was scared in a dark room; say *"her hands were sweaty and trembled as she reached for the light switch."*
- Use the SENSES and IMAGERY as well to make your writing as vivid and as interesting as possible.
- Make sure your critical and discursive essays are well researched and well-structured.
- Proofreading your work is essential – don't be afraid to ask someone else to check it over, too.



*Learning
together*

How do I improve my LISTENING and TALKING skills?

- Always make sure, when you work in class, in groups or in pairs, that ONE PERSON SPEAKS AT A TIME.
- Listening to our peers is very important, as it helps us COMMUNICATE effectively.
- When speaking in front of the class or your group, make sure you are prepared.
- Always PRACTICE your presentation first.
- Don't rely on your notes too much.
- EYE-CONTACT – include your audience.

How to be a Good Learner

- BE ORGANISED - always come to class with a pen, pencil, and your jotter.
- If you are off, always be sure to catch up on any work you have missed.
- Try to find a quiet place to work when you have homework.
- Make use of your planner or phone calendar to note down homework.
- Pay attention to any feedback you receive – it is given to help you improve and provide guidance on how to progress.

How to Support your Child's Learning

- Provide access to quality newspapers
- Talk to them about the texts they are studying in class, ask them to summarise the main events, tell you about the characters/ themes/ settings
- Ask to see their notes/jotters- ensure that they have been making their own notes about their texts
- Ask to see their writing. Encourage them to proofread their work looking for any errors.
- Encourage them to engage in personal reading for at least twenty minutes three times a week

Useful Revision Websites

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/topics/z2b2tyc> (language skills)
- Litcharts: <http://www.litcharts.com/>
- Shmoop: <http://www.shmoop.com/literature/>
- Sparknotes: <http://www.sparknotes.com>