88 Mainline

SKILLS A

Teacher's Book

L.G.Alexander R.H.Kingsbury

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Longman Group Limited London

Associated companies, branches and representatives throughout the world

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First published 1975 Second impression 1977

ISBN 0 582 51954 3

Printed in Singapore by Huntsmen Offset Printing Pte Ltd.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS COURSE: New Concept English

Integrated Courses No single course can hope to meet the varying requirements of students of English as a foreign or second language. This basic consideration has led directly to the need for providing an integrated network of courses which are defined in terms of agerange, level and content. The original books comprising the New Concept English series (First Things First, Practice and Progress, Developing Skills and Fluency in English) were written at a time when it was common practice to put a single course to a great variety of uses (many of which were never originally intended). This series has now been extended to include courses which meet more specific needs. In the more recent courses (Target and Mainline) the methods employed in the original series have been substantially developed, improved and refined. The table on the inside front cover gives some idea of the range of courses which have been completed or are in preparation. In terms of this table, Target is a more suitable choice for 11 or 12 year-old beginners than First Things First. Mainline Progress and Mainline Skills are more suitable than Practice and Progress and Developing Skills where there is a need for greater textual sophistication and variety and more elaborate forms of presentation and exploitation.

Advantages of the Network as a Whole A uniform system of grading is employed so that an integrated network of independent yet interlocking courses becomes available. The whole complex is organized in terms of levels, thus allowing students using other materials to transfer to this network if they wish to. Furthermore, the network makes it possible to go on adding even more specialized materials (which we might think of as 'variants') in the future. The advantages of such a comprehensive range of materials will be immediately obvious. Here are some of them:

From the students' point of view:

Students can

- select the kind of English they want to learn and classes can be organized accordingly.
- work with materials which are relevant to their age-range and interests.
- switch from one course to another without being faced with acute structural and methodological problems.
- undertake the study of more than one course within the network at any one time if they wish to.

From the teacher's point of view:

The teacher

- is relieved of the monotony of having to work with the same materials over a considerable number of years.
- can aim at precisely-defined objectives when working at particular levels.
- may have to make only minor modifications to meet special needs.
- can easily adapt the materials for use in either intensive or long-term courses.

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General Aims

Mainline Skills is a general intermediate English course, though it can also be used to prepare students for examinations in English as a foreign language. In this respect, it will be found particularly suitable for such examinations as the Cambridge First Certificate in English or the Trinity College examinations at Grades XI and XII. The course has been specifically designed to meet the needs of non-native teachers. It does not assume that the learner will inevitably visit the English-speaking world or necessarily have a special interest in it. As has already been suggested, Mainline Skills A and B can be used as an alternative to Developing Skills in situations where it would obviously be more suitable. Mainline Skills A and Mainline Skills B independently bring students up to the level of examinations like the Cambridge FCE. Students working on short-term intensive courses can prepare for examinations of this kind using either Skills A or Skills B. Students working on long-term courses would be well advised to complete both Skills A and Skills B before sitting for an intermediate level examination. The completion of Mainline Progress A and B or Practice and Progress is not a necessary pre-requisite for students who are at the right level for this course.

Assumptions

It is assumed that students about to start this course

- are secondary (i.e. 14+) or adult.
- are not necessarily highly motivated to learn.
- have completed a pre-intermediate course of some kind, but preferably a modern one which aims at developing aural/oral as well as reading and writing skills.
- require some kind of remedial work to consolidate what they have learnt so far, regardless of the course(s) they have used.

Specific Aims

- 1 To provide highly integrated audio-visual and audio-lingual materials which have been designed to meet all the usual linguistic requirements we would expect to find in an up-todate course.
- 2 To train students to use English rather than to teach them about it. The intention is to enable students to experience language in meaningful situations and contexts.
- 3 To train students in all four skills: listening and understanding, speaking, reading and writing in that order. Particular emphasis has been placed on communication.
- 4 To make it possible for the teacher to use in the classroom many of the techniques which have been developed in the language laboratory. The aim throughout is to enable the teacher to apply up-to-date methods of language-teaching in the classroom without the need for sophisticated equipment.
- 5 To provide the teacher with material which will enable (him) to conduct each lesson with a minimum of preparation.
- .6 To enable the untrained teacher, or the teacher whose command of English is limited, to master audio-visual/audio-lingual techniques with a minimum of effort.

- 7 To provide students with material which is interesting and engaging in itself to the extent that it deals with topics and a style of presentation they can immediately respond to.
- 8 Finally, it is assumed that large classes will be the rule rather than the exception and the recommended techniques show an awareness of this problem.

Time Allocation

1 Long-term Courses

The Intermediate stage of *Mainline* consists of two books: *Skills A* and *Skills B*. Each book contains 30 Teaching Units (60 Lessons, each of which is designed to take from 35 to 50 minutes' lesson time). Assuming the academic year to consist of 30 weeks, these Lessons can be distributed in a variety of ways according to the amount of classroom time available. Here are a few suggestions:

Two periods a week:

1st Period: Text and Guided Conversation Exercises

2nd Period: Situational/Functional Drills and Language Review

The Written Exercises would then be set as homework

Three periods a week:

1st Period: Text and Guided Conversation Exercises

2nd Period: Situational/Functional Drills and Language Review

3rd Period: The Written Exercises would be done in class

Four periods a week:

1st Period: Text and Guided Conversation Exercises

2nd Period: Situational/Functional Drills and Language Review

The Written Exercises would be set as homework

3rd Period: The next Text and Guided Conversation Exercises 4th Period: Situational/Functional Drills and Language Review

The Written Exercises would be set as homework

Obviously a number of ready solutions will present themselves. Where an extra session is available (as in solution two above) written exercises may be set as homework and the classroom time may be spent on extensive reading, revisions or other activities suggested in this book: e.g. singing, listening comprehension, games, dictations, etc. But from the above it can be seen that depending on the amount of classroom time available it is possible to complete Skills A and Skills B over a two year period or within a single year.

When planning a curriculum a teacher's first task is to work out the number of lessons actually available in the academic year in relation to the number of lessons in the course and to allocate the time accordingly.

2 Short-term Intensive Courses

Conditions vary considerably in schools and language institutions where intensive courses are held, ranging from a limited number of lessons per week over a three or four month period to high-intensity situations over a period of one or two months. For this reason, it is not possible to make practical suggestions about the distribution of the material. But working in multiples of 15 and/or 30 it is possible for the teacher to arrange a timetable which aims at completing one or both books. It will be found in practice that Skills B is not more demanding than Skills A and vice-versa. (See under Framework page 5.)

The Compo-

Mainline Skills consists of:

nents of the Course

2 Students' Books (for students and teachers)

2 Teacher's Books (for teachers only)

Contents

Each Students' Book contains:

Contents list: titles of texts, and summary of functional/

linguistic content

30 Teaching Units (60 Lessons)

Answers to quizzes, etc.

New vocabulary: lesson by lesson

Each Teacher's Book contains:

Contents list

General introduction and outline of method

Notes on each lesson and any additional indispensable

material (e.g. listening commentaries)

Instructions for language games Texts for listening comprehension

Dictations

Achievement Tests - Teacher's Notes

Key to written exercises General structural index General vocabulary index

General index to language functions

Optional Material

Two sets of students' test materials

Accompanying audio aids (e.g. tapes, cassettes, etc.)

Audio tapescript

Longman Structural Readers, Stages 5 & 6 (for extensive reading

only).

Longman Simplified English Series (for extensive reading only).

Longman Integrated Composition and Comprehension Series -

(for additional writing practice if necessary).

Exercise **Books**

The students will need two: one for written exercises and the other for dictation. A vocabulary notebook is NOT required.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE MATERIALS

Page Lavout

Each Teaching Unit (2 Lessons) consists of four pages:

- 1 1st Left-hand page: the 'text'
- 2 1st Right-hand page: guided conversation
- 3 2nd Left-hand page: situational/functional drills and language review
- 4 2nd Right-hand page: written exercises

How the

The operation of the course in the classroom is basically quite simple. In one lesson of between 35 and 50 minutes the text is presented and used as a basis for guided conversation (1 and 2); in the next lesson, situations and language functions related to the text are drilled and particular points in grammar are reviewed (3). Written exercises (4) may be done in class or set as homework, depending on the number of lessons available. (See under Time Allocation, page 3.)

Framework

A grading system has not been superimposed on the material in Mainline Skills A and B. Grading systems are essential for learners at lower levels, since they systematize the presentation of new material and greatly facilitate learning. Thus, at the beginners' level, a sequential or linear system ensures orderly progression. At the pre-intermediate level, a cyclical system consolidates all that has been acquired so far, while at the same time introducing the students to more complex structures. From this point on (i.e. at the intermediate level) there are two requirements which must be met: the revision of structures acquired at the earlier stages; and the introduction of new structures which have never been met before.

Mainline Skills revises a large number of structures which will have been practised at the earlier stages. New structures, however, are to be acquired through a process of random accretion. The presentation of new materials cannot be artificially systematized for an indefinite period. At this level it is vital to free the materials from superimposed frameworks so that the students will be exposed to different registers drawn from real-life usage. Language features are therefore acquired as and when they are encountered. The main focus in Mainline Skills is not on grammatical structure as such, but on situational and functional aspects of language. The question to be answered at this level is not: 'What structures does the student need to know?' but 'What functions does the student need to perform?' In other words, what does the student want to do through language, what does he require to meet his behavioural needs? To cope with this objective, most of the drills that appear on the 2nd left-hand pages are not based on grammatically-defined concepts, but on situational/functional requirements. Grammar is treated as a by-product of these. In practice, this means that students are introduced to the kind of language they will need to communicate socially, to participate in argument, to give advice, to report facts and events, to talk about cause and effect, to provide a commentary, to express emotion and so on. Very often a variety of grammatical structures which are nevertheless situationally or semantically related may be practised in a single drill. The aim throughout is to develop in the student a high degree of communicative competence.

The Students' hand page

THE TEXTS

Book: 1st left- The word 'text' is used loosely to describe any material which appears on this page. Texts may take the form of dialogues, prose passages, etc., or may be purely visual. Each text establishes the topic area and/or the situations and language functions which will be practised.

> Length: The main feature that will be noticed is that the texts are short so that they may be presented rapidly, the emphasis being not so much on presentation but on exploitation. The shortest texts are in the region of 150 words; the longest not more than

> Subject-matter: Skills A and Skills B each contain 30 texts. The form of these texts and their distribution in Skills A is as follows:

- 1 Five Situational Dialogues
- 2 Five Talking Points
- 3 Four 'Look and Listen' pages
- 4 Two 'Look and Speak' pages
- 5 Three Literary Texts
- 6 Eleven General Texts
- 1 Situational Dialogues. (Units 1, 7, 13, 23 and 28.) These present the kind of language which would be appropriate in some usual situations: e.g. meeting an old friend at an airport; choosing a present in a shop; talking about a show during the interval; visiting a doctor following an accident during a holiday; being late for an appointment with an acquaintance. The language used in these dialogues was originally unscripted and recorded 'live' by native speakers who assumed the roles of the characters in each situation. The transcripts were then edited to yield acceptable reading versions, while at the same time retaining many of the essential features of live speech. These edited versions now appear in the course book and are presented in strip form so that the setting for each situation is vividly defined.
- 2 Talking Points. (Units 4, 9, 18, 26 and 30.) These texts present the kind of language that would be appropriate when conducting a discussion. They focus on some common topics: e.g. women's liberation; the good old days; honesty; the Olympic Games; regional rivalry within a country (North versus South). Just as in the Situational Dialogues, the discussions were originally recorded 'live' by native speakers, who were free to argue in any way they wished and the transcripts were edited to yield acceptable reading versions, while at the same time retaining many of the essential features of the language of argument. The edited versions now appear in the course book and, where possible, additional background information about each topic is provided in the form of statistics, diagrams, charts, etc.

- 3 'Look and Listen'. (Units 10, 15, 19 and 29.) These pages are, for the most part, visual. The student is invited to look at the page and simultaneously to listen to an accompanying commentary. The commentaries have been recorded but are also given on pages 38, 44, 48 and 59 in this book. The following topics are dealt with: doodles; children at play; renting a car; a modern painting.
- 4 'Look and Speak'. (Units 6 and 25.) These pages are mainly visual. They contain pictorial material which in real life might be expected to evoke comments. Two topics are presented: festivals, and cartoons about cities.
- 5 Literary Texts. (Units 3, 17 and 27.) These present three examples of modern literature: two prose extracts one by W. Somerset Maugham and one by George Orwell and a poem by D. H. Lawrence.
- 6 General Texts. (Units 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 16, 20, 21, 22 and 24.) The intention here has been to present the student with subject-matter which has a wide appeal. No specialized knowledge is assumed. The topics dealt with are likely to appear in magazines, newspapers, TV, etc., in virtually every part of the world. The texts are presented (sometimes with slight modification) as they originally appeared in various publications together with the original illustrations or a slightly adapted form of them. They cover a wide range of styles and registers, dealing with such topics as: posing a personal problem and seeking advice; banking; advertising; map-making; fringe benefits; health; dreams; the language of instructions; readers' letters (about the English language); other people's homes, etc.

The Students' Book: 1st right-hand page

ORAL EXERCISES: GUIDED CONVERSATION

This page relates directly to the text on the facing left-hand page and sets out to develop conversation skills systematically. The whole emphasis in this oral lesson is on training the students to manipulate question and answer forms, to interpret the texts, and eventually to engage in free conversation. The following areas are generally covered in each lesson:

Presentation of the text

Questions on the text/Interpretation

Asking questions on the text

Oral composition/situational role-playing

General questions

Asking (general) questions

Talking points

Singing or a text for listening comprehension

Presentation always comes first, but after that, the sequence of exercises can vary a great deal from lesson to lesson. For instance, when dealing with an argumentative text the students may be invited to embark immediately on further discussion. Where the sequence is found to vary, the objectives of a particular exercise

will always be clear. The general aim of these pages can be summed up as follows:

- to develop listening comprehension skills.
- to test comprehension, including the ability to cope with interpretative questions.
- to develop the students' ability to formulate questions.
- to develop the students' ability to speak of their own accord as opposed to just answering and asking questions.
- to provide opportunities for general conversation through which students may express their own points of view about topics arising from the texts.
- to give practice in responding verbally to various types of situations.
- to exploit visual material in a way which will help students to describe, narrate, interpret, speculate, etc.

The essential thing to note about this page is that there is a constant effort during the lesson to transfer from discussion of the text to open-ended discussion. This transference is usually indicated by the heading 'General questions'. At this point the students are asked questions of a general nature which are suggested by the text but related to their own circumstances in real life. In other words, we always transfer from 'text-based' exercises to 'life-based' exercises. The final activity (a song or text for listening comprehension) is indicated by reference to appropriate sections of the Teacher's Book.

The Students' Book: 2nd left-hand page

SITUATIONAL/FUNCTIONAL DRILLS AND LANGUAGE REVIEW

Each text establishes a topic area. a register and, above all, some of the situations that may be role-played and language functions that may be drilled. There is always a close relationship between the second left-hand page and the first. The intention behind this lesson is not only to develop the student's control of patterns and to increase his vocabulary, but to provide him with the kind of language he will need in a great variety of situations. The emphasis is always on what the student wants to do with the language he is learning, not merely on the grammatical content. (See the remarks under Framework, page 5.) The lesson is divided into the following parts:

Situational/functional drills, with further practice

Language review

Dictation or game (as shown at the bottom of the Written Exercises page)

Situational/functional drills, with further practice: The title that heads the page defines the broad objective(s) of each lesson (e.g. Welcoming; Expressing personal worries and giving advice/ declining to give advice; Describing a person; Money transactions, etc.). Under the heading Situation there is a brief description of the context and/or purpose of the language to be practised. Usually, also, the role being played by the speaker(s) is stated. Where it is not, this means that the style of language is acceptable in a wide range of formal to informal situations.

Although there is enormous variety in these exercises, they share certain features. Each one begins with a short substitution dialogue, which is taken up and expanded in a 'Further Practice' section. This 'Further Practice' section, which may be controlled or open-ended, teaches the student to cope with a wide variety of situations, using the language which has just been presented to him. Teachers may refer to the 'Teacher's Notes' in this book for a Lesson-by-Lesson commentary on particular difficulties. The range of functions and situations is as follows:

- 1 Social situations: welcoming (Lesson 2); shopping (Lesson 14); exchanging opinions (Lesson 26); discussing accommodation (Lesson 44); discussing ailments (Lesson 46); apologizing (Lesson 56).
- 2 The language of argument: the following lessons deal with language-functions such as agreeing, disagreeing, persuading, asking for clarification, etc.: Lessons 8, 18, 36, 52 and 60.
- 3 Manipulating graphic or other information: in these lessons, information is given at the top of the page and is then used in the exercise material: giving advice (Lesson 4); describing/speculating about people (Lesson 6); making comparisons (Lesson 16); drawing attention (Lesson 20); interpreting photographs (Lesson 30); interpreting symbols (Lesson 32); interpreting instructions (Lesson 40); interpreting a difficult work of art (Lesson 58).
- 4 Other miscellaneous activities: money transactions (Lesson 10); statements and qualifying counter-statements (Lesson 24); cause and effect (Lesson 28); expressing emotions (Lesson 34); dealing with hypothetical situations (Lesson 48); literary appreciation (Lesson 54).
- 5 Phrasal verbs: verb+preposition no transposition (Lesson 12); verb+particle where the particle has very little meaning but strengthens the effect of using the verb (Lesson 42); verb+particle where the particle radically affects the meaning of the verb (Lesson 50).
- 6 Verbs and adjectives + prepositions: Lessons 22 and 38.

Language review: This section immediately follows the situational/functional drills. At this point, difficult structures which occurred incidentally in the preceding drills are briefly explained and then practised orally. Many of the points treated in *Mainline Progress A and B* are reviewed and/or amplified.

Dictation or game: Each lesson ends with a dictation or a game, reference to which is to be found at the foot of the facing page in the Students' Book.

Students' Book: 2nd right-hand page

WRITTEN EXERCISES

The written exercises have been deliberately included in the Students' Book to eliminate the need for a separate workbook. They present a range of work from straightforward multiple choice exercises to more elaborate reading comprehension, guided summary and composition exercises. These pages are generally organized as follows:

1 Multiple choice exercises: These are based, where possible, on

the text given on the first left-hand page. They cover structure and lexis and are all 'synonym-type': that is, the student is required either to re-read or refer to the original text and then to choose the item(s) closest in meaning from the multiple choices given.

- 2 Reading comprehension: This exercise is presented as an alternative to the multiple choice exercises described in I above and occurs in Units 1, 5, 6, 10, 13, 15, $\overline{19}$, 21, 25 and 29. A new text is presented reflecting the topic dealt with in the Unit as a whole, and this is followed by four multiple choice exercises which aim to test reading comprehension.
- 3 Use of English exercises. These cover a great range of well-known problems such as indirect speech, phrasal verbs, word-building, etc. Where such exercises are 'self-checking', students are asked to refer to the basic text, or to the 2nd left-hand page of the Unit. Line or frame references are given in such exercises. Many other exercises, however, cannot be checked by the students, and answers to these are given in the Key to Written Exercises, page 111.
- 4 Guided summary: This exercise is based on the text on the 1st left-hand page, and progresses so that in the final part of the book (Units 21-30) there are no aids or prompts: students are asked to derive specific information from the text. Training is given in the following techniques:
- Units 1-10: writing from notes, using the conjunctions provided.
- Units 11-20: writing notes in answer to a specific question on the text and then writing a summary based on these notes. In Units 1-20, suggested sentence-length is indicated by means of square brackets:].

Units 21-30: writing a summary of a specific aspect of the text. 5 Composition: When the student comes on to this exercise. there is a transference from 'text-based' to 'life-based' exercises (reflecting the sequence in the Guided Conversation work on the first right-hand pages). There are always two topics: a letter, and some other form of extended writing based on the text or on the situational/functional drills. The two exercises are not designed as options, and students should do both of them. It is strongly recommended that the composition exercises be prepared in class before they are done individually. Every effort has been made to present the topics as realistic, practical assignments and to move right away from sterile academic exercises. The Written Exercises may be set as homework or done in class according to the amount of time available. (See under Time Allocation on page 3 for suggestions.) A Key to the written exercises will be found on page 111 of this book.

Vocabulary Control

For practical purposes, the vocabulary of First Things First and Mainline Progress A and B is assumed. As the texts have not been specially written for this course, the vocabulary has not been artificially controlled and regulated. Similarly, the lexical load on the drill pages is entirely determined by the situations, functions and structural points that are dealt with.

Despite this lack of restriction, the vocabulary density for each Lesson is 24 new words on average. Mainline Skills B does not assume a command of the vocabulary in Skills A and vice-versa. The words listed in the lesson-by-lesson analysis at the end of the Students' Book are derived from the text for study and the situational/functional drill pages (i.e. the 1st and 2nd left-hand pages). New words to be found in the actual art work are not normally listed – unless they are consciously exploited in the right-hand pages. It will be found that the 1st right-hand page makes use of a slightly wider vocabulary range, for receptive recognition. Similarly, the 2nd right-hand page occasionally introduces new items outside the active range. These are not listed in the vocabulary index.

Students should not maintain private vocabulary notebooks, as important lexical items are frequently re-activated. Nor should they attempt deliberately to add low frequency items to their

active vocabulary.

Tests

Three Tests are provided for Mainline Skills A and three for Skills B. These are closely based on the material taught, and are therefore attainment or achievement tests. At the same time, however, they consciously set out to prepare students for the Cambridge FCE and similar examinations. For this reason, the final Test to accompany each book has been published separately under the title Practice Test A/B for First Certificate English Candidates.

The relationship between the Tests and the course is as follows:

Test 1: Teaching Units 1-10

Test 2: Teaching Units 11-20

Practice Test A/B (FCE): Teaching Units 21-30, but also testing items from the whole course.

Tests 1 and 2 each last 155 minutes (2 hours 35 minutes): Practice Test A (FCE) lasts 5 hours 45 minutes and should be treated as a 'mock exam' for the Cambridge FCE. Despite their length, the Tests can be administered at intervals because they are divided into self-contained sections (Papers). All three Tests to accompany each of the course books cover Composition, Reading Comprehension, Use of English and Listening Comprehension. Full details regarding administration, keys and mark scales are provided in the notes on page 91 and in the separate pack referred to above. An Overlay to facilitate the rapid marking of Reading Comprehension and Listening Comprehension is provided for each Test.

Accompanying Audio Aids

Sets of tapes to accompany Mainline Skills A and Skills B and separately-published tapescripts are available. Taped exercises for each Teaching Unit in the course are divided into five short phases:

Phase 1 A recording of the text (where applicable) for listening purposes.

Phase 2 Question and answer exercises based on each text.

- Phase 3 Pattern drill based on the language review sections.
- Phase 4 Stress and intonation exercise.
- Phase 5 Role-taking exercise, based on or suggested by the text or situational/functional drill.

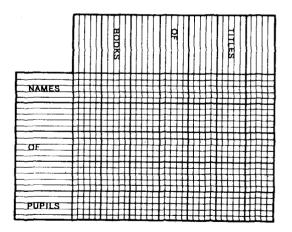
For full details please refer to the Introduction to each tapescript.

Extensive Reading

It is extremely important for students to maintain or acquire the habit of reading English books for pleasure and/or information. Only titles well within the students' reading ability should be recommended. Unfamiliar structures and lexical items should not be too extensive if the students are not to be discouraged. As there are no specially-written readers to accompany Skills A and Skills B, books may be used from the Longman Structural Readers Series, Stages 5 and 6 in the first instance; thereafter, from the Longman Simplified Series. Reading books may be matched to the Teaching Units in Skills A and B in the following way:

Skills A and B Teaching Units 1-10: LSR: Stages 5 & 6
Teaching Units 11-30: Longman Simplified

Class Library Scheme: Teachers may find it useful to run a class library scheme. Each student may be asked to buy one book from each of the three categories. The students may then exchange their books after they have read them. A record of the students' reading may be kept by means of a diagram which can be displayed in the classroom:



A diagonal line may be used to indicate that a book has been exchanged: . A cross may be used to indicate that a book has been read: . In this way, the teacher can tell at a glance what individual students have read at any given time.

Additional Practice in Writing If time is available for additional practice in writing, then the Longman Integrated Comprehension and Composition Series (LICCS) is recommended. The titles in this series have been written by many authors and constitute a ready-made library of books specifically designed to develop writing skills. Stages 5 and 6 of LICCS can be matched to Skills A and B in the following way:

Skills A and B Teaching Units 1-15: LICCS: Stage 5
Teaching Units 16-30: LICCS: Stage 6

These LICCS Stages run exactly parallel to the Written Exercise pages of *Mainline Skills* and contain multiple choice Reading Comprehension, Use of English, Guided Summary and Composition exercises. The techniques for teaching summary and composition are the same as in *Skills*.