

QUALIFICATIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS

ISCPET

(The Illinois State-wide Curriculum Center for Preparation of Secondary School Teachers of English (ISCPET) is a federally-supported five-year study of ways of improving teacher preparation. The preliminary lists of qualifications that follow are the working guide for the institutions involved in the study. The lists and an abridgment of an accompanying statement by J.N. Hook of the University of Illinois, director of the study, are provided by the editors for personal reflection and reaction.)

In addition to the lists, there is consensus among those involved in the study that any teacher of English should possess at least basic knowledge of social science, natural science, and the humanities other than English, including at least a fair command of a foreign language.

Division into five lists has been for coherence in presentation; the competencies are inseparable and the professional and academic qualifications necessarily interact. No relation between a qualification and a course should be assumed.

The "minimal" level of qualification describes the competencies to be expected of a secondary school teacher who has no more than a minor in English, but may also describe the competencies of an English major whose ability is only mediocre or whose college preparation has been of less than average quality.

The "good" level of qualification describes competencies reasonable to expect in able or fairly able English majors whose ability and college preparation have been average or better in quality.

The "superior" level of qualification describes competencies to be expected in highly able persons whose college preparation has been of very good or excellent quality; it is likely to include graduate work and may require some years of teaching experience.

The "minimal" qualifications are not recommended by those who have prepared the preliminary statement. Rather, they

are basic to attaining the "good" qualifications. Each college or university engaged in preparing secondary school teachers of English should, in the opinion of those responsible for this report, attempt to prepare teachers who have attained at least the "good" level.

--J.N. Hook

1. KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGE

Minimal	Good	Superior
An understanding of how language functions	A detailed understanding of how language functions, including knowledge of the principles of semantics	Sufficient knowledge to illustrate richly and specifically the areas listed under "good"
A reasonably detailed knowledge of one system of English grammar and a working familiarity with another system	A detailed knowledge of at least two systems of English grammar	
A knowledge of the present standards of educated usage; knowledge of the various levels of usage and how those levels are determined	A thorough knowledge of levels of usage; some knowledge of dialectology, a realization of the cultural implications of both	
	A knowledge of the history of the English language, with appropriate awareness of its phonological, morphological, and syntactic changes	

2. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Minimal	Good	Superior
Ability to recognize such characteristics of good writing as substantial and relevant content; organization; clarity; appropriateness of tone; and accuracy in mechanics and usage	A well-developed ability to recognize such characteristics of good writing as substantial and relevant content; organization; clarity; appropriateness of tone; and accuracy in mechanics and usage	In addition to "good" competencies, a detailed knowledge of theories and history of rhetoric and of the development of English prose
A basic understanding of the processes of composing	Perception of the complexities in the processes of composing	Perception of the subtleties, as well as the complexities, in the processes of composing
Ability to analyze and to communicate to students the specific strengths and weaknesses in their writing	Ability to analyze in detail the strengths and weaknesses in the writing of students and to communicate the analysis effectively	Ability to give highly perceptive analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the writing of students, to communicate this exactly, and to motivate students toward greater and greater strengths
Ability to produce writing with at least a modicum of the characteristics noted above	Proficiency in producing writing with at least considerable strength in the characteristics noted above	Proficiency in producing writing of genuine power; ability and willingness to write for publication

3. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN LITERATURE

Minimal	Good	Superior
Acquaintance with the most important works of major English and American authors	Familiarity with the important works of major English and American authors; knowledge of the characteristics of various genres and of major works in English and American literature in the genres	In addition to the "good" competencies: Intensive and extensive knowledge of one or more major authors and of at least one genre, and one period; knowledge of major works of selected foreign writers, both ancient and modern, and of comparative literature
Awareness of the patterns of development of English and American literature from their beginnings to the present	As part of the awareness of patterns of development, a knowledge of such backgrounds of English and American literature as history, the Bible, mythology, and folklore	
Ability to read closely an unfamiliar literary text of average difficulty with comprehension of its content and salient literary characteristics	Ability to read closely an unfamiliar literary text of above-average difficulty with good comprehension of its content and literary characteristics Familiarity with a considerable body of literature suitable for adolescents	Familiarity with major critical theories and schools of criticism

4. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN ORAL COMMUNICATION

Minimal	Good	Superior
An understanding of basic principles of preparing and presenting an oral report	An understanding of the principles of group discussion, group dynamics, oral reporting, panel discussions, classroom dramatizations, and choral reading; an understanding of the relationships between speaking and other facets of English	In addition to the "good" competencies: touches of expertise and showmanship that a professional speaker, oral interpreter, or actor possesses
An awareness of the role of listening in communication	A knowledge of current information relative to listening techniques	
An ability to speak with clarity and in conformity with present standards of educated usage	An ability to speak clearly and effectively, and in conformity with present standards of educated usage	
An ability to read aloud well enough for ready comprehension	An ability to read aloud well enough to convey most aspects of the interpretive art—meaning, mood, dominant emotions, varying emotions, overtones, and variety	

5. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH		
Minimal	Good	Superior
Some understanding of basic principles of educational psychology	Knowledge of educational psychology, especially of the learning process and adolescent psychology	Competence in the knowledge and application of educational psychology; detailed knowledge of the stages of language growth in children and youth
Introductory knowledge of American secondary education	Knowledge of the philosophy, organization, and educational programs of American secondary education now and in historical perspective	
A basic understanding of the content, instructional materials, and organization of secondary English programs	A good understanding of the content, instructional materials, and organization of secondary English programs, and of the role of English in the total school program	A thorough understanding of the content, instructional materials, and organization of secondary English programs, and of the role of English in the total school program; knowledge of principles of curriculum development in English
A basic knowledge of ways to teach English, with an awareness of the importance of developing assignments that guide students in their study of language, written and oral communication, and literature	A wide knowledge of effective ways to teach English, to select and adapt methods and materials for the varying interests and maturity levels of students, and to develop a sequence of assignments to guide and stimulate students in their study of language, written and oral communication, and literature	A thorough knowledge of the most effective ways to teach English, to select and adapt methods and materials for the varying interests and maturity levels of students, and to develop sequential assignments that guide, stimulate, and challenge students in their study of language, written and oral communication, and literature
Some knowledge of corrective and developmental reading techniques	Moderate knowledge of corrective and developmental reading techniques	A relatively thorough knowledge of corrective and developmental reading techniques
Understanding of basic principles of evaluation and test construction in English	Broad understanding of basic principles of evaluation and test construction in English	Thorough understanding of basic principles of evaluation and test construction in English

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 16	Spring Meeting, Minnesota Reading Association	Red Wing
May 2	Proposals for 1967 Summer Institutes Due	U.S.O.E.
6-7	Spring Convention, Minnesota Council of Teachers of English	Bloomington
June 13-17	Annual Conference on Reading	Concordia College, Moorhead