IRISH STUDENT STUDY CARD #14
GAP-FILLING SKILLS

Introduction

You will be required to complete one gap-fill exercise as part of the reading section of the A2 examination. This is the first question in the Reading section of the examination paper. You will be given a text containing gaps and a bank of words from which to select the correct answer for each gap.

Assessment

The gap-fill exercise is Question 1 of Section B in Unit A2 2.

Assessment Objective/s

You will be assessed according to the following criterion:

• AO2: understand and respond to written language drawn from a variety of sources.

You should be able to:
• understand, infer meaning and draw conclusions;
• understand and accurately apply the grammatical system and a range of structures; and
• Look at the mark scheme to familiarise yourself with the requirements of the criterion and guidance on how to achieve the top bands.

Skills

Here are some suggestions to help you prepare for this skills area.

- These exercises are assessing your ability to apply the rules of grammar accurately.
- You should read the sentence in full and decide which part of speech or tense of the verb is required.
- In some cases, you may be instructed as to which tense you should use, in others, you may have to work out which tense or part of speech (e.g. verbal noun, infinitive, imperative form) is needed.
- Remember your spelling can be impacted by the word which precedes the gap (e.g. i causes **urú** (eclipsis), **ní/níor/gur/a** etc. cause **séimhiú** (aspiration/lenition).
- Know your tenses, verbal nouns, infinitives and command forms of verbs. You will be marked against AO3 criteria, so your spelling must be extremely accurate.
- Before you begin reading the text, you should glance first at the words and phrases in the grid on the page opposite the beginning of the text- it may be that this extra vocabulary.
- Read the text carefully, for overall understanding.
- If you understand the text and the words in the grid, this is a simple exercise in copying the correct word from the grid into the appropriate gap.
- Once you have made your choice, make sure you copy the word across correctly - this is not always as simple as it sounds.
- Complete the gaps you are confident of knowing the answers to first - this narrows down the options for the questions you are less confident of.
- Now look at the words preceding the gap - do they give you any clues? Do they cause **séimhiú** (**ní/ar/ó/a** etc.) or **urú** (**i/go/an/nach** etc.) or add a **t-** (**an** before a masculine singular noun beginning with a vowel), or require a plural form (**na**) after them?
- Does the word preceding the gap tell you that the word you need is a noun (**an/na/mo/do/a/ár** etc.) or is it a noun which may need to be followed by an adjective (which often end **– (e)ach(a) or (i)ú(i)l(a))**, or is it a part of speech which is followed by a verb (**ní/an/go/nach/gur/nár/a(r)** etc.)?

- Using the words which precede the gap is not an easy way to determine which word you need, but it will make it feasible for you to find the correct answer even if you are not completely sure of the meaning of the vocabulary. Your grammar knowledge can help where there may be gaps in your own understanding.

- Remember that your grammar knowledge can also rule out words in the grid- for example, when you know a **séimhiú** is needed and none has been applied to one of the words in the grid, you can rule it out.

- You should be able to recognise verbal endings (**-(e)ann, (a)íonn, -f(a)idh, t(e)**ar etc.) and match them to the passage.

- Know your plural forms and how to recognise them and be aware of your genitive forms and what causes the genitive (ownership/ verbal noun/ compound prepositions).

- Do not leave a gap. Make an intelligent guess if you are out of time and unsure.