

## VI DAGAR GUIDELINES

The **watchword** for your English VI-dagar is quite simply ”**Teach in English through Thick and Thin**”. This means that we would like you to take as many opportunities as possible to **teach**, and to teach in **English**. These opportunities can be small ones, from a task that takes a few minutes to a whole lesson, and from working with a whole class to working with a single student. You can use English in all kinds of lessons, not just those that are designated as ‘English’ ones. For example, you could surprise your students by getting them do a related task in English in the middle of a Swedish or maths lesson, give instructions in English in a PE lesson, have a conversation in English with a student(s) in the playground or at lunch, or teach them a playground game in English. Of course, you could also get them to do a kind of “English is all around us” task. If possible, try and observe a number of English classes too (it can be at levels other than Åk4-6).

Of course, each of your VI-dagar experience and teaching opportunities will be different depending on the context of the school in which you are placed. We are very well aware that for some of you, **no** English may be taught in your class on the days that you are there, while others have oodles of opportunities. So, please do not worry or stress if your opportunities are minimal, you will **NOT** be penalized for it. In general, the teachers are behind you and keen for you to take risks, challenge yourselves, be pro-active, try out ideas and maximize the  **tiniest** opportunities for teaching English. However, do keep in mind that the school and teachers must also go about their day to day business with specific goals that have to be achieved and tasks carried out, so be respectful and mindful at all times, and do not be disappointed if you do not get to try out all that you had hoped within English!

After **each** of your VI days, your task is to feedback to the rest of the class by exchanging stories of experiences, and also to write a reflection on your experience. These reflections will **eventually** form part of the work you will be doing for your **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT**; which you will receive **further instructions** for. As part of the reflections, you need to tell me a little bit about the school itself, what you did during your time there, the situation regarding the teaching of English, and the classes you are involved with. You also need to reflect on

what you did (or didn't do) with regards to teaching (planning, execution, resources, student reaction, joys, frustrations etc.) or observation of English. Give as much detail as you can.

If you do **not** have an opportunity to observe or have a go at teaching English during the VI days, then don't worry and just write in more detail about what you did do/teach instead. You could also tell me about other experiences you might have had to observe or teach English.

If any of you need extra inspiration for things to write about, you could also find the answers to some of the questions below (and feel free to come up with other ones). The answers can be found out either through observation in the classroom or within the general school environment (which means you need to become an active watcher, listener and observer), or you can ask the teachers, other members of staff and the students the questions directly. Thus, during your VI dagar period, your aim is to become both a participatory observer who takes notes in oral or written form, and a researcher who uses interview techniques to gather data. If you don't get a chance to observe or teach any English lessons over the VI dagar period, then, as said earlier, don't stress, just find time to ask some questions!

#### **General Question**

- a. When & how much English is taught in years 4-6? Who decides when it should be introduced? What is the reasoning behind when it is introduced & how much time is given to it per week?

#### **Questions on the teacher's own development as a teacher of English**

- a. Who gets to teach English? All teachers in 4-6? Why, why not? If all teachers are expected to teach it, how do they feel about doing so? If there are specialist teachers of English, why did those teachers decide to teach that subject, in particular? What was their own experience of learning English?
- b. What kind of opportunities do the teachers get for their own development as teachers of English?
- c. With regards to having students on VI dagar at the school in English the past few years, what kind of effect have they had on the English lessons, if any?

#### **Questions on communication in the classroom**

- a. What kind of atmosphere is created in the classroom, how is it achieved, what do the teachers do?
- b. What is the layout of the classroom like? How do the students use the space?
- c. Who gets to speak in class? Who participates? How? When? Where? How long?
- d. How do the teachers work with differentiation and individualisation? Have you seen any good examples?
- e. Is there a difference between the way the teacher approaches the subject depending on the orientation of the class or level (for example: F-6)?
- f. What language is used by the teacher in the Classroom (Swedish/English?) Are they used in equal amounts? When/how/why are they used?

#### **Questions on the Policy Documents**

- a. How does the teacher use the national curriculum for English? Does it hinder or help? Why? Why not? How?

### Questions on the content

- a. What kind of materials does the teacher use & how often – textbooks, their own material, media? Why? If they use (a) specific textbooks, jot down the details.
- b. Do the learners get to read any English literature? If yes, what, why, when & how? If not, why not?
- c. What kind of content is focused on – Language? Topics? Literature? Culture? Skills? Why? How much of a lesson is devoted to each of the **four skills** and to **grammar/vocabulary/pronunciation** and other language systems? Etc.
- d. How many, how often and what kind of English writing tasks do the learners get to work on?
- e. Do the learners get to explicitly work on **strategies**? If yes, what kind of things are they made aware of, or work on?
- f. Are any other 'subject' lessons (maths, history etc.) taught in English at all? If yes, why? If not, why not?
- g. Is there a shape to each lesson? Does it consist of a number of unconnected tasks or are there a number of cohesive steps that build on each other? Does one lesson connect to the next?
- h. How does the teacher get the students interested in the topics worked on?
- i. How effectively does the teaching of /resources for English in the school fit with the curriculum?

### Questions on Assessment

- a. When and how do the teachers assess their pupils in English?
- b. What kind of assessments are undertaken during the terms?
- c. What does a National test in English consist of? How are the pupils prepared for them? How do they feel about them?
- d. How easy/difficult/problematic is it to assess the pupils and why?

### Question to the Students

- a. What are their feelings about learning English? What do they do in English outside the classroom? For example, what literature do they personally read in English? Find out specific titles. Do the students choose it themselves or do they only read what the teacher suggests /demands? Do they listen to music, watch television in English, have pen pals, play computer games etc.? How, what and why do they do it?
- b. To what extent is each individual really challenged to use their English? How is this achieved?

### Questions to yourself

- a. How does the teaching of English in åk4-6 in the VI school compare to your own experience?
- b. What do you think your English classroom/lessons will look like? What do you think is best practice for the teaching of English?

As noted earlier, you will eventually need to use your reflections from the Vi days, and reflections on/references from the reading to create the second part of your Reflective essay, which will not be handed in until the end of term. So make sure you save time by writing up the reflections & doing the read as you go along! Do not leave to the last minute.

*Good Luck*

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