Using Échos Pro with Combined-Grades Classes

Planning instruction for a combined-grades classroom can present a challenge for teachers. Échos Pro 1, 2, and 3 provide a common framework that allows for organizing combined-grade instruction in various ways.

Teachers typically teach a combined-grade class by focusing on outcomes that are common to both grades and adapting the performance expectations for each grade.

The revised language curriculum for Ontario provides opportunities for teaching language in classes of combined grades by emphasizing similarities between grades. The overall expectations remain constant from Grades 1 to 8. The specific expectations indicate increases from grade to grade in the breadth and depth of students’ knowledge and understanding, as well as in the level of sophistication in their use of skills in thinking, communication, and the application of knowledge. ...Within a class of combined grades, students work towards the achievement of their grade-specific curriculum expectations. When common "big ideas" or skills are involved, all students in the class often work together; but at other times, instruction may be specific to each grade. Assessment, evaluation, and reporting are grade-specific.

From Combined Grades Strategies to Reach a Range of Learners Kindergarten to Grade 6 Ontario Ministry of Education 2007

Teachers could build combined-grade instruction around unit organizer themes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Organizer</th>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>Module 4</th>
<th>Module 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Equity, diversity, inclusiveness</td>
<td>Healthy choices, active living</td>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>Environmental Education</td>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Êchos Pro 1</td>
<td><em>Ma classe et moi</em></td>
<td>Getting to know classmates: Introduce oneself and get to know classmates</td>
<td><em>Ça, c’est ma journée</em></td>
<td>Describing a typical day: Recount one’s day</td>
<td><em>Suivez-moi!</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Êchos Pro 2</td>
<td><em>La grande aventure de Samuel</em></td>
<td>Building tolerance for differences: Interview a classmate and look for similarities and differences.</td>
<td><em>Ah oui! J’aime ça</em></td>
<td>Exploring pastimes and activities: In a Group, prepare a rap of common activities.</td>
<td><em>Ma famille et moi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Êchos Pro 3</td>
<td><em>Mes amis, ma vie!</em></td>
<td>Talking about your best friend: Participate in conversations, read opinions and profiles, prepare a personal profile.</td>
<td><em>Prêts pour l’aventure</em></td>
<td>Exploring outdoor excursions: Make preparations, help someone in a first aid situation, read advertisements about excursions, and prepare an advertisement.</td>
<td><em>Destination Montréal</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adapting culminating performance tasks

The culminating performance task for each module can be modified to accommodate different language levels of students. Suggestions are provided under the heading - Performance Task Options found on p. 10 in the Teacher’s guides.

For example, in the performance task in Échos Pro level 1 (Grade 4) Module 1, students are required to prepare a visual text including their name, age, favourite colour and school subject, and greetings in the languages they speak. The texts are posted to create a gallery walk in which students circulate and record details about classmates in a graphic organizer. Then students meet in small groups and use the details they recorded to orally share observations about classmates and make simple comparisons to their own personal information.

Adapting the performance task for a combined-grade 4/5 class could include modifications such as:

Preparing a visual text - Grade 5 students could provide additional details such as their birth date, a favourite sport or pastime, a pet, etc.

Participate in a gallery walk - The graphic organizer used by Grade 5 students could be expanded to allow them to read the visual texts and record the information of more than 5 of their classmates. In addition, the graphic organizer could be less structured to accommodate for their advanced writing skills. The happy and sad face icons could be replaced with the expressions c’est pareil and c’est différent.

Meet in small groups and use the details they recorded to orally share observations about classmates and make simple comparisons to their own personal information - Flexible grouping allows for the option of same grade or combined grade groups. In a same grade group, the oral interaction could be tailored to the language levels of the students. In combined grade groups, Grade 5 students could act as group leaders to moderate the group activity as well as give encouragement and support to their classmates.

Differentiation – Challenging and supporting students

The enrichment texts found at the end of each module in Échos Pro levels 1 and 2 provide opportunities to challenge Grade students with higher language levels.

Additional supplementation and challenge can be achieved through the use of the Échos Literacy texts, available online through CLE. These texts follow the same themes, context, vocabulary and strategies and are accompanied by detailed teacher guides and corresponding activity masters.

Teachers may differentiate for all students by following the many tips for providing both extra support and challenge found in the margin notes throughout the teacher guides for each module. An excellent article on differentiation, written by Katy Arnett, can be found in the Program Overview pp. 42-44.

Teaching and assessment tools

All of the activity masters, assessment masters and strategy masters for each student module are available in word format, and are completely modifiable. Teachers can adapt and customize their teaching and assessment tools to meet the needs of students in each grade.

CEFR

Échos Pro. Levels 1, 2, and 3 have been created according to a consistent linguistic level (equivalent to the CEFR’s A1.1). This allows for some flexibility in planning. A school could conceivably spread the levels of Échos Pro over a few years of single and combined-grade classes, following a Year A/Year B plan (See charts of sample Year A/ Year B plans which follow).

Some supplementation may be necessary. This could include:

- an integration of locally developed resources based on mini-themes (e.g. holidays, special events, etc.).
- an integration of Échos literacy series 1,2,3
- other literacy resources if necessary.
Sample Two year Plan - Combined Grades 4/5

**Year A**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Module</strong></td>
<td>Échos Pro 1 Module 1 Ma classe et moi Getting to know classmates. Introduce oneself and get to know classmates</td>
<td>Échos Pro 2 Module 2 Ah oui! J’aime ça Exploring pastimes and activities.</td>
<td>Échos Pro 2 Module 3 Ma famille et moi Talking about families.</td>
<td>Échos Pro 1 Module 4 Les animaux et nous Learning about the relationship between animals and humans</td>
<td>Échos Pro 1 Module 5 Allons au festival Exploring Canadian festivals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Performance Task</strong></td>
<td>- Prepare a visual text.</td>
<td>- Prepare a weekly schedule of leisure activities.</td>
<td>- Create a description of a family member.</td>
<td>- Prepare a visual text to describe an animal’s physical characteristics and importance.</td>
<td>- Work in groups to choose a Canadian festival and create a webpage or poster, and a group chant to promote it.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Participate in a gallery walk and record details about classmates in a graphic organizer.</td>
<td>- Find others who share their preferences.</td>
<td>- Interview a partner to learn his/her family member and draw a sketch.</td>
<td>- Present their project to a group of classmates and record notes on the presentations. Share details of their project with a partner.</td>
<td>- Groups practise and present their festival promotion to the class.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Orally share observations about classmates and make simple comparisons to their own information.</td>
<td>- Form groups and create a rap which draws on individual and common interests in the group.</td>
<td>- Participate in a gallery walk to match a mystery sketch to a description.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suggestions for Modifications/Supplementation</strong></td>
<td>Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to challenge Grade 5 students. Expand the amount of detail written and recorded and shared by Grade 5 students. Grade 5 students only could complete enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 1 Literacy Text- Voici mon école.</td>
<td>Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support Grade 4 students. Modify the performance task for Grade 4 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks. Grade 5 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 2 Literacy Text- Des passe-temps extraordinaires!</td>
<td>Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support Grade 4 students. Modify the performance task for Grade 4 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks. Grade 5 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 2 Literacy Text- La famille, c’est spécial</td>
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<td>Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to challenge Grade 5 students. Expand the amount of detail written and recorded and shared by Grade 5 students. Grade 5 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 2 Literacy Text- Des passe-temps extraordinaires!</td>
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Sample Two Year Plan - Combined Grades 4/5

Year B

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<td>Problem-solving</td>
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<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
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</table>
| Suggested Module | Échos Pro 2 Module 1
La grande aventure de Samuel | Échos Pro 1 Module 2
Ça, c’est ma journée
Describing a typical day. Recount one’s day. | Échos Pro 1 Module 3
Suivez-moi!
Giving and receiving directions. Provide directions in a school setting. | Échos Pro 2 Module 4
Les animaux: Mythes et réalités
Exploring animal stereotypes: Defend an animal against negative perceptions. | Échos Pro 2 Module 5
Le Canada, c’est multiculturel
Discovering multicultural influences in everyday life. |

Performance Task
- Read about a Haitian boy who immigrates to Canada.
- Use a graphic organizer to compare themselves to Samuel.
- Interview a partner to learn about his/her family’s background and preferences
- Prepare a mind map and use it to present their partner
- Prepare a written description of their typical day.
- Create a visual to illustrate the description and add their sentences to it.
- Present their project orally to classmates.
- Identify similarities and differences between their typical day and that of their classmates.
- Create a map of a real or an ideal school and draw “mystery objects” in every room to serve as decoys.
- Use the map to direct a partner to find a location and the mystery object found in that location. Partners then reverse roles.
- Choose a stereotype about an animal from a list of animal stereotypes.
- Defend the animal by preparing arguments against the stereotype
- Present their arguments to classmates. During presentations, listeners take note of which animals they now perceive differently and why.
- Read about and note food, art, music, sports, and fashion that originate in other countries.
- Create a cultural passport of their discoveries or preferences.
- Participate in speed-interviews with classmates to share their cultural discoveries, and add a new discovery they learned from a classmate to their passport.

Suggestions for Modifications/Supplementation
Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support Grade 4 students.
Modify the performance task for Grade 4 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks.
Grade 5 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 1 Literacy text Pauvre Michel.
Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to challenge Grade 5 students.
Expand the amount of detail written and recorded and shared by Grade 5 students.
Grade 5 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 1 Literacy text Pauvre Michel.
Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support Grade 4 students.
Modify the performance task for Grade 4 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks.
Grade 5 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 2 Literacy text Vive le Renard.
Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support Grade 4 students.
Modify the performance task for Grade 4 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks.
Grade 5 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 2 Literacy text Vive le Renard.
## Sample Two-year Plan - Combined Grades 5/6

### Year A

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<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Module</strong></td>
<td><strong>Échos Pro 3 Module 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Mes amis ma vie</em>&lt;br&gt;Exploring the topic of inclusiveness by talking about friends, the activities that bring friends together, and the importance of supporting friends.</td>
<td><strong>Échos Pro 2 Module 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Ah oui! J’aime ça</em>&lt;br&gt;Exploring pastimes and activities.</td>
<td><strong>Échos Pro 2 Module 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Ma famille et moi</em>&lt;br&gt;Talking about families.</td>
<td><strong>Échos Pro 3 Module 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Es-tu écolo?</em>&lt;br&gt;Examining the ecological problems of plastic and water.</td>
<td><strong>Échos Pro 3 Module 5</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Le français chez nous</em>&lt;br&gt;Learning about Francophones in Eastern and Western Canada and bilingualism in Canada.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Performance Task
A- Create a personal profile for a class wiki or website. Read classmates' personal profiles. Describe a friend.

B- Telephone a friend to invite him/her to your house, to a birthday party, or to go with you on an outing. Read invitations.

C- Give advice to a friend.

- Prepare a weekly schedule of leisure activities. Find others who share their preferences.
- Form groups and create a rap which draws on individual and common interests in the group.
- Create a description of a family member.
- Interview a partner to learn his/her family member and draw a sketch.
- Participate in a gallery walk to match a mystery sketch to a description.
- Describe a photo linked to an ecological problem, state a relevant fact, and give some advice.
- Create a poster promoting an action in favour of the environment.
- Create an up-cycled item, present it and respond to questions.

### Suggestions for Modifications/Supplementation
Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support grade 5 students.

Modify the performance tasks for Grade 5 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks.

Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to challenge grade 6 students.

Expand the amount of detail written and recorded and shared by Grade 6 students.

Grade 6 students only could complete the Échos 2 Literacy Text - *Des passe-temps extraordinaires*.

Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to challenge grade 6 students.

Expand the amount of detail written and recorded and shared by Grade 6 students.

Grade 6 students only could complete the Échos 2 Literacy Text - *La famille, c’est spécial*.

Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support grade 5 students.

Modify the performance tasks for Grade 5 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks.

Grade 6 students only could complete the Échos 3 Literacy Text - *Des inventions incroyables*.
Sample Two year Plan - Combined Grades 5/6

Year B

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<td>Suggested Module</td>
<td>Échos Pro 2 Module 1</td>
<td>Échos Pro 3 Module 2</td>
<td>Échos Pro 3 Module 3</td>
<td>Échos Pro 2 Module 4</td>
<td>Échos Pro 2 Module 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La grande aventure de Samuel</td>
<td>Prêts pour l’aventure! Talking about excursions and activities that they can do in different parts of Canada.</td>
<td>Destination : Montréal Planning a trip to Montreal</td>
<td>Les animaux: Mythes et réalités Exploring animal stereotypes: Defending an animal against negative perceptions.</td>
<td>Le Canada, c’est multiculturel Discovering multicultural influences in everyday life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Task</td>
<td>- Read about a Haitian boy who immigates to Canada.</td>
<td>A- Create a poster advertising an excursion. Groups, choose a preferred excussion.</td>
<td>A- Write an email to a friend describing an upcoming trip and reasons for choices. Read and demonstrate understanding of an email about an upcoming trip.</td>
<td>- Choose a stereotype about an animal from a list of animal stereotypes.</td>
<td>- Read about and note food, art, music, sports, and fashion that originate in other countries.</td>
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<td>- Use a graphic organizer to compare themselves to Samuel.</td>
<td>B- Create a list of clothing and equipment for an excursion, adding two illogical items Read aloud the list to a partner. Listen and identify two illogical items.</td>
<td>B- Give directions to a classmate to navigate to a Montreal location.</td>
<td>- Defend the animal by preparing arguments against the stereotype</td>
<td>- Create a cultural passport of their discovereries or preferences.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Interview a partner to learn about his/her family’s background and preferences</td>
<td>C- Participate in a spontaneous role play where one person is hurt and one offers first aid.</td>
<td>C- Participate in a spontaneous role play at a souvenir shop, ticket counter, or restaurant.</td>
<td>- Present their arguments to classmates. During presentations, listeners take note of which animals they now perceive differently and why.</td>
<td>- Participate in speed-interviews with classmates to share their cultural discoveries, and add a new discovery they learned from a classmate to their passport.</td>
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<td>Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support Grade 5 students. Modify the performance task for Grade 5 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks. Grade 6 students could complete Échos 3 Literacy text Mes aventures en plein air.</td>
<td>Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to support Grade 5 students. Modify the performance task for Grade 5 students by decreasing detail and providing additional support for oral and written tasks. Grade 6 students could complete Échos 3 Literacy text Où est Théo?</td>
<td>Consider the differentiation tips given throughout the teaching notes, particularly those to challenge Grade 6 students. Expand the amount of detail written and recorded and shared by Grade 6 students. Grade 6 students could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus and Échos 2 Literacy text Vive le Renard.</td>
<td>Grade 6 students only could complete the enrichment texts Un peu plus</td>
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