



Pre-departure TEFL Grammar and Methodology Manual

Dear Prospective Peace Corps Volunteers,

Welcome to the TEFL Home Prep Program. This program has been designed to provide you with a solid foundation for your TEFL in-country pre-service training. Using this home program, you will be introduced to teaching fundamentals such as the role of the teacher, English teaching methods and an overview of English grammar. After completing this program, you will be better prepared for your pre-service training where you will get more hands-on training about the English language and how to teach it.

If you have any suggestions for improvement or if you encounter any difficulties with the reading or the computer application, please don't hesitate to contact us. We'd be happy to hear from you.

Thank you for accepting the invitation to serve in the Peace Corps. We look forward to your arrival.

Welcome!



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I. Introduction

1. What is TEFL/TESL/TESOL?

These three terms can be confusing and are sometimes interchanged, but there are differences that have an impact on teaching.

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

TEFL classes are offered in countries where English is not the dominant language. English does not surround the students in school, at work, or “on the streets”. Students in TEFL classes in public schools usually share a language and an academic course of study. Their skills may differ, but there is a certain degree of predictability. *TEFL teachers and textbooks provide the input.* In many countries, host TEFL English teachers are skilled at teaching the language as a subject, and some teachers may still rely on rote learning. Countries invite Peace Corps teachers to create opportunities for students to use language for authentic communication.

TESL: Teaching English as a Second Language

TESL classes are offered in countries where English is the predominant language. Students in TESL classes often come from different language and cultural backgrounds. In TEFL, students are learning English to communicate in English. *In ESL contexts, students not only have to learn English to communicate, they also have to learn English to learn other subjects in school.* This requires a much higher English proficiency and knowledge of more complex vocabulary and language structures. On the other hand, TESL students have an advantage in that they have *ongoing English input in the community, at school, and on the job.* ESL teachers can draw upon the real language that students are hearing, reading, seeing, and using. ESL teachers help students make sense of the language input, so that they can participate with fluency and accuracy in their jobs, at school, and in the community. On the other hand, since ESL students are living in an English world, especially at school, they have to have learned school content through English, so generally they need much higher levels of English proficiency than most EFL students.

TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

TESOL includes *both* TEFL and TESL and is sometimes preferred because students may be learning English as a third, fourth, or fifth language. TESOL is frequently the title for academic programs in English language teaching and degrees are often granted in “TESOL” (almost never in TEFL or TESL). “TESOL” also refers to the TESOL International Association, the largest professional association of English teachers in the world.



2. The Role of the Teacher

Triangle of Teaching Competence

One model identifies three essential components of being a good teacher:



In this model—

- **Practice** represents the knowledge and skills needed to be a good teacher
- **Commitment** is commitment to (a) your students, (b) your school, (c) teaching, and (d) communication (with students, colleagues, and the larger community)
- **Relationship** is about getting along with students, colleagues, supervisors, and with one's self. 😊

To be a reasonably good teacher, these three components should ideally be in balance. Typically Peace Corps Volunteers bring a strong sense of **Commitment** to their activities. However if Volunteers have little or no background in teaching, they will be weak in **Practice**. Therefore, they should focus on explicit **Relationship** building efforts with peers and students and make a **Commitment** to continue learning as much as possible about English teaching (**Practice**).



Examples of Each Component: *the teacher--*

Practice		Relationship		Commitment	
Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
is a Model Teacher at school	attends ISTS but doesn't put new ideas into practice	Is loved by students is friendly	does not attend faculty social events	dedicated, comes on time, stays late	does not attend optional events
has an M.A. in TESOL	no previous teaching exp. talks too much in class, students get little practice, feedback is minimal	strong rapport with students; colleagues admire her	more students try to transfer out of her class than others	reliable and dedicated stays late to help struggling students	calls in sick more than most teachers resists teaching new courses

How Native English Speakers Can Be Better English Teachers

Native speaking English language teachers are often much appreciated at their sites. Native speakers of English as teachers usually demonstrate fluent, comprehensible English, provide access to idiomatic language and slang, and can make good judgments about correction grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Volunteers can be English practice partners for both fellow teachers and students. Volunteers can also be “cultural informants,” introducing other teachers and students to authentic behaviors (gestures, exclamations, explaining everyday behavior, such as how to wait in line "in the American way"), so that learners can line up language, behaviors, and cultural norms. Another benefit that native English language speaking teachers can bring is introducing innovative, student-centered teaching techniques

Native speaking teachers of English often demonstrate teaching techniques, which seem interesting and are received enthusiastically. However, the chief reason for this enthusiasm may be the novelty of these practices as well as the teachers’ and learners’ expectations for miraculous results. So behind a generally warm welcome, there may be a level of disappointment and criticism, which to save face and to avoid public conflict, may not be made explicit. These kinds of differences in cultural understandings and classroom expectations may prevent native English speaking teachers from being as effective as they could be.



Typical Elements of an English Lesson

English lessons typically have more or less 7 possible phases:

1. Review of the previous lesson
2. Activating student background knowledge and motivating the current lesson
3. Presenting an example (perhaps a dialogue) of the feature the lesson covers
4. Explanations or models of correct/appropriate language forms or us
5. Practice, usually going from very controlled and structured, to less controlled and more focused on actual communication
6. A debriefing at the end of class to summarize what was learned
7. Assigning homework (possibly) which can be reviewed in the next class

Other classroom expectations often include:

- The teacher, who signals when a particular learner is invited to speak and regulates learners' participation in lessons.
 - Learners usually work individually and may lack the language skills for communicating with each other during lessons without teacher support.
 - Integrated Skills Approaches may not always be encouraged. A good lesson may focus on developing multiple language competencies--the teacher may be expected to organize balanced activities in covering vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening and reading. Writing may not be a class activity and may be relegated to home assignments.
 - If working in pairs and small groups, learners need a very detailed description of what they are supposed to do, otherwise they tend to work.
-
- Lessons may be called "communicative" but learners may spend much time memorizing grammar rules, doing drills, translating texts and doing detailed analyses of texts.
 - A lesson is primarily focused on a product or outcome (for example success on a paper and pencil tests), so engaging lesson activities are often not encouraged even though they may be very motivating for the learners.
 - Although the first reactions to a Volunteer's innovative lesson activities may be very positive and enthusiastic, over the long term, failure to follow commonly held ideas and expectations of how a lesson should be organized may cause to question the credibility of the Volunteer and the benefit of her/his approach to teaching..

Expectations of Teachers

- Be strict towards the class, but be kind towards individuals
- Help students overcome learning problems even if it requires sacrificing one's own time after classes
- Be lavish in giving higher scores thus crediting learners
- Empathize with the learner
- Be always available, even on the home telephone for consultations
- Translate the material into a digested form



Schools and teachers are held responsible for the academic performance and behavior of learners although there are attempts to find a more balanced approach to share responsibility among the school, learners, and parents.

Counterpart Teacher Professional Beliefs

The following beliefs are commonly held by the teachers of English and are shared by the professionals teaching different subjects.

- A lesson should be mostly teacher-centered or else there will be little control and effect.
- Class should be well-disciplined; otherwise the learners themselves will suffer and learn little in the disrupted lesson.
- Teaching languages should involve recitation; if not, the learners will not remember much of the material
- The general attitude should be error-intolerant or the learners will never get rid of the mistakes in their speech.
- Learners' freedom for self-expression in the classroom should be restricted or the class may get completely out of control.
- Learners should be assessed day-by-day; otherwise they will lack motivation to work during the lesson and at home.
- Lesson should be home-task based or there will be no consolidation of knowledge.
- Teacher should evaluate learners to inform them of their progress on a regular basis
- Learners' should be accountable to teachers. If not, how can teachers be responsible for the learners' proficiency?

In the universities, a greater emphasis is put on learners' independence but this refers largely to student-teacher encounters during the lectures. Seminars and workshops, in many cases, have the features of school lessons even though the faculty may deny this.

Helping Counterpart Teachers

One of the tasks of TEFL Volunteers is to help the local teaching community develop professionally. The following practices may help prevent disappointment in this area:

- Instead of trying to introduce teachers to much innovation all at once, try to bring about changes to traditional teaching in small steps.
- Instead of completely rejecting traditional approaches, find ways to blend new practices with existing traditions.
- Instead of viewing the local teachers as recipients of change, make them agents of change. Especially if you do not come to Peace Corps with much teaching experience, you can probably learn as much (or more!) from your counterparts as they can from you.
- Offer active learning through one's own exploratory teaching experience
- Instead of emphasizing weaknesses of local teachers, proceed from their field of excellence
- Develop in your teacher-trainees the role of a critical friend, rather than just a knowledgeable expert

Experience shows that these principles usually make it easier to introduce innovative techniques for English language teaching.



General Interests

While developing sessions meant to introduce new ways of thinking about or engaging in teacher, consider the following categories.

- Humanistic teaching
- Communicative teaching (Teaching communicative skills and language competencies)
- Student-centered teaching
- Interactive teaching
- Games that develop specific English skills being studied
- Role-play and problem-solving activities

Professional development with teachers may include the following activities:

- Talking shop about teaching informally
- Demonstrating a technique (to teachers)
- Trying a technique in the classroom (in class with peer observers)
- Possible video-taping episodes with teaching or micro-teaching
- Self evaluations after lessons, possibly with peer support
- Adapting the technique for a particular course-book and classroom situation (teachers)
- Writing a series of techniques for using a particular course-book

3. Self-Assessment Test

This questionnaire will allow you to reflect once more on your decision to serve as a TEFL Peace Corps Volunteer.

1. Do you have a background relevant to teaching?

- YES
- NO

2. Are you a good listener?

- YES
- NO

3. Do you feel comfortable presenting in front of a group?

- YES
- NO

4. Are you a “never give up” kind of person?

- YES
- NO

5. Do you enjoy getting the best out of others?

- YES



NO

6. Are you patient when you need to explain simple things again and again?

YES

NO

7. Are you ready to work with the lack of resources?

YES

NO

8. Do you have a reasonable knowledge of English grammar?

YES

NO

9. Are you a person who gets along well with others and is respectful to those in authority?

YES

NO

10. Do you feel comfortable sharing information about American culture?

YES

NO



II. General TEFL Methodology (Part I)

1. Teaching Methods

There is a wide variety of current methodologies and approaches to Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). If you want to be an effective teacher of English as a foreign language (EFL), part of your work will be to choose a combination of methods which will most benefit your students.

The following sections provide a summary of several language teaching methods that have been used, adapted, and sometimes abandoned.

Grammar Translation Method

In a typical Grammar Translation class the main focus is on reading and writing, with little attention being given to speaking or listening. The central text for each lesson is usually literary. Passages may be selected from authors such as Mark Twain, George Orwell, Charles Dickens, or modern writers. These passages are read and then comprehension questions are asked and answered, first orally, then in writing. Grammar is taught deductively through presentation and study of the rules followed by practice in translations exercises. Vocabulary selection is based on the reading text used. Words are taught through bilingual lists and memorization. Students are often asked to write the new words in a sentence.

Although many Ministries of Education may have intended to introduce the Communicative approach as the main model for foreign language teaching some years ago, many of your students will be used to and expect Grammar Translation activities. Memorization particularly may be considered a valued teaching tool, as oral traditions are often strong. However memorization does not exclude understanding. If the syllabus followed in your school includes literary texts and you present a poem, explore its ideas, and are satisfied that your students understand them, then asking your students to learn and memorize a poem is one acceptable way to learn, and one that is familiar to students.

Your students may also be used to the style of teacher-student interaction generated by the Grammar Translation Method. In this method the teacher initiates interaction and there are seldom any student-to-student exchanges. The role of the teacher is traditionally authoritarian and the role of the student is to follow teacher's instructions. Observing other teachers will give you an idea of the sort of student-teacher relationships which exist in your school and local expectations. See the earlier sections on beliefs and carefully respect traditions while blending in new methods.

Direct Method

The Direct Method developed when educators attempted to build a language learning methodology around their observations of child language learning. These educators argued that a foreign language could be taught without translation or use of the learner's native tongue. The Direct Method, therefore, insists on thinking and communicating directly in the target language and does not allow translation. The Berlitz School of Languages is the best known proponent of this method. The four language skills are taught from the beginning, but a special



emphasis is placed on speaking. Classes often start with reading aloud a specially graded text which introduces the lesson's vocabulary and grammatical structure. Practice follows with exercises such as guided conversation, where the teacher asks questions on the text and the students answer using full sentences. Students will then ask each other similar questions. Other practice exercises include fill-in-the-blanks, dictation, controlled composition or listening comprehension exercises. Grammar is taught inductively, that is to say, language patterns are presented and practiced, but the rules are not explicitly given. The Direct Method teacher uses mime, demonstration, realia, and visual aids to help students understand grammar and vocabulary.

If you use some aspects of the Direct Method and are monitoring the amount of students' native language being used in class, you should use common sense related to translation. If you judge that your students are not getting the point or the meaning of a particular word, and the lesson is straying from its objectives, allow a translation and get on with your lesson.

Audio-lingual Method (ALM)

During the Second World War, army programs were set up to teach American military personnel languages. Strong emphasis was placed on aural-oral training. The Audio-Lingual Method developed from these programs. This method was influenced by behavioral psychologists who believed that foreign language learning was basically a process of mechanical habit formation. In the Audio-Lingual Method, skills are taught in the natural order of acquisition: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Audio-lingual classes begin with a dialogue which introduces the lesson's sentence patterns. The students memorize a dialogue and then practice grammar patterns in drills such as listen and repeat, substitution, chain, and transformation. Accuracy in pronunciation is emphasized and fostered through minimal pair drills when students learn to differentiate between sounds such as the vowels in "ship" and "sheep," "hit" and "heat," and "bit" and "beat." Lessons are sequenced according to grammatical complexity. Translation, considered to cause interference from the mother tongue, is not allowed. Learning is tightly controlled by the teacher, who follows the text closely.

Many of your students will be familiar with the type of activities described above. For most Americans variety and change is an essential part of their learning experience. Therefore, you may sometimes find yourself amazed by your students' stamina and capacity to repeat drills in mantra-like fashion seemingly for hours at a time. To ensure that mindless chanting does not take over, you may wish to introduce an element of competition while engaging students in drills promoted by the Audio-Lingual Method.

Total Physical Response (TPR) and the Natural Approach

TPR is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action. It attempts to teach language through physical activity. TPR tends to emphasize learners hearing and understanding the language before speaking it. TPR focuses on the importance of listening comprehension as the basis for language acquisition. TPR holds that language is acquired, not learned. In other words, learners acquire a language through an unconscious process which involves using the language for meaningful communication. Learning a language, on the other hand, involves a conscious process which results in knowledge about the rules of a language, but not necessarily in an ability to use the language. The



learner's mother tongue is seldom used in TPR. Meaning is made clear through gestures, drawing, or other non verbal support. Great attention is paid to reducing learner anxiety. In general, TPR, along with many approaches holds that self-confident learners with high motivation are successful learners and teachers are responsible for creating learning environments which promote self-confidence.

In TPR, one role of the teacher is to generate comprehensible input. This means that when presenting new materials teachers have to speak, mime, draw, or use real objects (called *realia*) to get their meaning across. Only when teachers are satisfied that students understand and are ready to speak will they ask them to do so. TPR action sequences in response to a series of commands are graded/leveled and vary from the simple to the complex. After the first stage of listening to the teacher, some students might be ready to speak. During the second stage, individual students may begin to take over as facilitators, directing the teacher and the other students in parts of or in the whole action sequence.

Communicative Language Teaching

The late 1960s saw a shift in focus from the Audio-Lingual Method and its prototypes to communicative language teaching. Studies carried out by the Council of Europe helped to identify the language needed in a variety of social situations by someone immigrating to Common Market countries. The studies sought to evaluate how language itself was used—how native speakers of a language expressed themselves in various situations. The studies had a major impact on the teaching of English as a foreign language. Teachers and curriculum designers began to look at the content and at the kind of language needed when greeting or shopping. The emphasis on explicitly learning grammar rules or practicing grammatical patterns was downplayed in favour of an approach designed to meet learners' needs when using the language in daily interaction. It is referred to as an approach that aims to make communication the goal of language teaching. Several models have evolved around this principle -- the Communicative Approach, Total Physical Response, Natural Approach, and Competency-Based Approach.

Communicative Approach

The communicative approach expects students become competent (i.e., able to use the language appropriate for a given social context, and to manage the process of negotiating meaning with interlocutors). The teacher facilitates students' learning by managing classroom activities and setting up communicative situations. Students are communicators actively engaged in negotiating meaning. Activities are communicative when they have a purpose such as an information gap that needs to be filled, and when speakers have a choice of what to say and how to say it. They receive feedback from the listener that will verify that their communicative purpose has been achieved. The teacher initiates interactions between students and participates sometimes. Authentic materials are often used, and students usually work in small groups. Students interact a great deal with each other in many different configurations. The emphasis is on developing motivation to learn by establishing meaningful and purposeful things to do in the target language. Individuality is encouraged, as well as cooperation with peers, both of which contribute to a sense of emotional security in the target language. Language is for communication.

Linguistic competence must be coupled with an ability to convey intended meaning appropriately in different social contexts. Nonverbal behavior and culture are part of the everyday life and language of native speakers.



Language functions (e.g., greeting, leave-taking, seeking help, complimenting, criticizing, apologizing, etc.) are emphasized over grammatical forms in communicative classrooms. Students work at a discourse level, and they work on speaking, listening, reading, and writing from the beginning. Consistent focus is placed on negotiated meaning. Errors of form are considered natural - students can have incomplete linguistic knowledge and still be successful communicators. The emphasis is placed on using the target language to accomplish a function such as complaining, advising, or asking for information. Attention is also paid to the social context in which this function takes place. For instance, different language will be used when complaining to a teacher than when complaining to a close friend. Informal evaluation is ongoing as the teacher advises or communicates; formal evaluation is usually by means of an integrative test with a real communicative task such as completing an application.

All four language skills are taught from the beginning. In speaking, the aim is to be understood, not to speak like a native. In sequencing lessons, priority is given to learner interests and needs. This is in sharp contrast to a grammar driven method which may start with verb tenses and work from the simple present to the conditionals. In the Communicative Approach, if learners need to know how to give advice, they are taught the function at their proficiency level. Beginners might learn to give advice using "*You should*" and High Intermediate students might learn how to give advice using the conditional, "*If I were you, I would . . .*"

Interaction between speakers and listeners or readers and writers is at the root of all communicative activities. Learners usually work in pairs or groups for role play, information sharing, or problem solving. The Communicative Approach will challenge your creativity to set up situations in which your students can demonstrate their competence in the four language skills. Group work is basic and you may face difficulties in the logistics of organizing your groups. Lack of space, or complaints from other teachers about the noisy moving of desks, might occur in your first few weeks when asking your class to divide into groups. You will have to consider all of your options. Can you work outside? Is it possible to use the library for your lessons? Can you set up a reward system to encourage your students to move quickly and quietly into their groups? You may also encounter resistance to group work from your students. Some of the better students may resent having to "share" their skills and grades. Some of the less motivated students may take the opportunity to do even less work. Your grading policy for group work will have to be spelled out and you will need to monitor the groups to assure that everyone is contributing to the group effort. You should also provide time and opportunities to earn grades for individual work.

**Comparison on Language Teaching Methods**

	Grammar Translation Method	Audio-Lingual Method	Communicative Language Teaching
Grammar Rules	Central feature	Not explained	Explained and necessary, but not an end in themselves
Meaningful Communication	Deemphasized	Important but seen as coming exclusive from mastery of models	Primary Focus
Pronunciation	Deemphasized—primarily a method for teaching “dead language” after all	Target = native-like pronunciation according to models	Target = comprehensible pronunciation
Translation	Central feature	Discouraged	Used, when necessary. It is one tool among many.
Sequencing of Lessons	Based linguistic complexity	Based on linguistic complexity	Follows learners' needs but also recognized linguistic complexity
Teacher-Student Roles	Teacher-centered	Teacher-centered	Teacher facilitates student-to-student interaction and focuses on student needs, ways of learning & interests.
Attitude to Errors	Accuracy emphasized	Accuracy emphasized	Making mistakes is part of the learning process and can be used to gauge learner development
Balance of Language Skills	Reading and writing emphasized	Listening and speaking emphasized	Skills taught according to learners' needs

Remember:

- No one method is sufficient on its own. Take into account that students have different learning styles and expectations.
- Consider how learners feel about themselves as language learners. Negative feelings about the learning process can block learning. Enhancing a learner's self-confidence leads to successful learning.
- Working together as a group is a vital part of language learning. Group members support each other, and the interaction between them provides a real need for communication and an opportunity to practice the target language.





2. Suggestions for Using Selected Language Teaching Techniques

Grammar Translation Method and Audio-lingual Method

If your students feel that they must know the rule for a certain feature of grammar, try this adaptation of the Grammar Translation and Audio-lingual Methods. Tell your students that they are going to discover the rules themselves. Then have them work through a set of audio-lingual pattern drills which illustrate the feature. After they have done the drills, ask for volunteers to try to state the rule. If they have trouble expressing the rule, ask leading questions to guide them.

Direct Method and Audio-lingual Method

Conversations, dialogues, or short narratives can be used to exercise the students' ability to guess meaning from context. Use visuals and titles to predict what the conversation or article will be about. Ask your students to listen for one or two specific words, play a tape recording of a short passage (two to three minutes at most), and ask them to guess the meaning of the words. Have your students justify their guesses by telling what clues they used. Conversations and dialogues are also an excellent way to practice conversational formulas such as greetings and leave-taking, simple requests, invitations, apologies, compliments, etc. Such materials are particularly useful in one-on-one tutoring situations.

Total Physical Response

You can introduce new vocabulary to students using this method. It is especially effective with young learners but also useful in action sequences with adults. For example, any time you teach directions, have your students act them out, both with and without repetition of the directions. This will improve both comprehension and retention. TPR activities are also a good way to break up a session in which students have been sitting a long time.

Communicative Approaches

One of the distinguishing features of the various types of communicative language teaching is that they emphasize the use of language in realistic ways. As you go about your daily routines, be on the alert for ways in which you use English to carry out simple tasks: for example, taking a phone message for a friend, or interpreting for someone who speaks English but doesn't know the local language. Adapt these tasks for classroom activities which will motivate your students and allow them to demonstrate their use of English in real life tasks. Getting other people to understand what you mean, when you speak, and understanding what they mean, when they speak, is known as "negotiating meaning" and is considered the major component of successful communication.

The most important part of learning a foreign language, according to the Communicative Method, is developing the skill to comfortably and creatively express your ideas and understand what others are saying (*fluency*), even without understanding every word. Less importance is given to perfect mastery of grammar (*accuracy*). What you say is more important than how you say it. When teaching, speaking is emphasized as the main student



activity and most class time should be spent on it, then listening (as a part of conversation), next reading, and finally writing.

All skills are used from the beginning and lessons focus on successful communication; saying what you mean and understanding what others mean. Translation is *not* an essential skill, under the Communicative Method, and any class time or homework assignments requiring translation are not used. Speaking only in English is considered best during the lesson.

The main job for a teacher using the Communicative Method is to be a facilitator. This means that the teacher acts as a *helper*, encouraging students to communicate with each other and creating situations where they can do so. The teacher should work to balance the different personalities in the class so all students may participate and learn. Shy students must be encouraged to speak and confident students must be gently restrained from speaking too often and dominating the entire lesson. Students are the center of the action, speaking, listening, and talking with each other. The teacher starts the interaction between students and may participate sometimes, but usually, the teacher's role is to move around the classroom giving advice and helping the students stay on track and communicate better (this includes answering their questions and checking on their performance, correcting grammar). Students usually work in small groups. There should be much more student-student interaction than teacher-student interaction. Long lectures where the students only listen to the teacher speak, with no interaction, are discouraged. The teacher should work to create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere in the classroom. Because students will be speaking often, and because they will be discussing their own feelings and opinions, creating a *safe* and *comfortable* atmosphere is very important. Rude comments by other students should not be tolerated.

Table 2.

Principles	Traditional Methods	Communicative Approaches
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read literature written in the target language • Learn grammar rules and vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become communicatively competent. • Use language appropriate to a given social context • Learn linguistic forms, meanings, and functions
Roles of the Teacher and Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles are prescribed. • Teachers are authorities in the classroom. • Students do as the teacher says to learn what the teacher knows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher is often a facilitator of students' learning. Teacher has many roles: manager, advisor, co-communicator, evaluator, and model. • Students seek to communicate. They are actively engaged in trying to make themselves understood and to understand others, even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete. They are responsible for their own learning.



Principles	Traditional Methods	Communicative Approaches
Characteristics of the Teaching-Learning Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are taught to translate from one language to another. They might translate readings about the target culture, or memorize dialogues. Students study and practice grammar rules. They learn grammatical paradigms such as verb conjugations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is the primary focus. Students practice language through communicative activities such as games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks. These activities engage students in filling information gaps, making communicative choices, and improving communication based on feedback. Authentic materials and group work are emphasized
The nature of Student-Teacher and Student-Student Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the interaction is from teacher to students. There is little student initiation and little student-to-student interaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are the initiators of the activities, but they don't continually interact with the students. Students interact a great deal with one another. They do this in pairs, triads, small groups, and whole group.
Feeling of Students (Affect)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are perceived as vessels to be filled with knowledge. Consequently, students receive positive reinforcement for pleasing the teacher and negative reinforcement for displeasing the teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers give students an opportunity to express their ideas and opinions on a regular basis. Student security is enhanced through cooperative interactions with other students and the teacher.
View of Language and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literary language prioritized over spoken language. Students typically study literary models and the approach to language is highly prescriptive Culture is "culture with a capital 'C'" that is, it consists of philosophy, intellectual history, literature and the fine arts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language is for communication. Linguistic competence is one aspect of it. Knowledge of the functions language is another competence in addition to knowledge about form and meaning language is used in different social contexts. Culture is seen as everyday life and beliefs of the people who use the language (usually as native speaker users). Nonverbal behavior is part of communication
Emphasized Language Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary and grammar are emphasized. Reading and writing are often the primary skills. Audio-lingual approaches also attend to speaking, pronunciation and listening, but with more of a focus on mastery than communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language function is prioritized over form (although form is not neglected). An integrated skills approach to teaching (which puts language learning in context) is valued over a focus on individual language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking).



Principles	Traditional Methods	Communicative Approaches
Roles of Students' Native Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meaning of the target language is made clear through translation. In Grammar translation, the students' native language is used in the classroom more than the target language. However, use of the L1 (native language) is discouraged in audio-lingual classrooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The students' native language has no particular role, although contrastive explanations of errors are common. The target language should be used during class activities, and to explain activities and assign homework. By using the target language as a procedural language students see that the target language is a vehicle for communication, not just a school subject.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar Translation often relies on written tests in which students are asked to translate from their native language to the target language or vice versa. Dictations are common. Test items often concern the target culture or grammar rules. The audio-method adds dialogues, drills, and controlled exercises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluates both accuracy and fluency (with accuracy being more valued in controlled activities and fluency more in communicative activities. Evaluation is done both informally and formally. Tests often have real communicative functions (example: writing a letter to a friend).
View of Errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mistakes must be suppressed before they are learned. Accuracy is paramount. If students make errors or can't answer, the teacher supplies the correct answer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors are tolerated and are seen as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills. Students can have limited linguistic knowledge and still be successful communicators.

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3. Overview of Language Skills: Listening and Reading

- Listening** with understanding
- Speaking** and being understood
- Reading** with understanding
- Writing** and being understood by the reader

Listening and Reading are often been perceived as “receptive skills” because the listener/reader is not required to produce anything. Accordingly, speaking and writing are referred to as “productive skills.” This distinction is important for assessment. We can assess speaking and writing competence through the students speaking or writing; however we can’t see if someone has comprehended a lecture or a text without their doing something. And if they do something wrong, we cannot state with absolute if the error is due to listening/reading ineffectively or ineffective production. Finally, readers/listeners can’t comprehend without the new information that they receive interacting with their previous knowledge and opinions.

Listening

Listening means paying attention to and understanding what you hear. It’s essential for communication. Listening tasks should be to prepare students for interaction in the real world.

A. Select appropriate material. It’s important to understand the difference between authentic versus prepared listening materials. Authentic listening materials can more challenging than materials specifically prepared for language learners (because authentic materials assume context, because speakers may hesitate, misspeak or restart). TEFL/TESL listening materials are often graded by level, may include audiotapes and corresponding textbooks, and are usually easier to students to cope with because they contain planned language. If listening tasks are not too challenging, students are more likely to be successful, which builds confidence.

B. Be aware of different listening strategies and purposes. We do not listen to airport announcements in the same way as we do to radio news, a lecture, or a friend’s conversation. Keep these differences in mind when choosing listening tasks for your students. **Establish the purpose for listening** so that you can prepare the appropriate activities. Always give students specific reasons for listening and specific information to listen for. Purpose includes listening ...

1. for the gist (or global understanding)
2. for specific information (an announcement at an airport)
3. to establish a context (where is it happening? What is happening? Who is speaking to whom?)
4. to learn to do something; have a later discussion, complete a form, take notes

C. Prepare appropriate listening tasks The main functions of a listening task should be to help learners gain confidence in their listening ability and to build strategies that help learners make sense of what they hear. Be positive towards the learners’ attempts to carry out the tasks. Make sure your tasks are clear, focused and not too difficult.

Answer these questions as you develop listening tasks:



- What is the purpose of the task?
- What listening skills will be practiced?
- Is the task suitable for the learners' level?
- What language do the students need in order to do the task (key vocabulary)?
- How can I create an interest in the listening text?

Tips and advice to help teachers develop listening activities and tasks:

- introduce listening material with simple global general questions to reduce anxiety
- Tell students that they will hear the tape more than once so they can relax and listen openly with less stress
- put learners in pairs or groups so they can share difficulties with finding the answers
- check and reconfirm students' answers and ideas to help them feel secure.

D. Planning a Listening Lesson: Staging the activities and clarifying the purpose of the stages are two important points when creating a listening skills lesson. Ten stages for a listening lesson include:

Pre-listening

1. Warm up (set the scene; activate schema or prior knowledge).
2. If desired, teach key vocabulary to equip the students with essential vocabulary for managing the task successfully.
3. Provide questions/tasks for general comprehension (get the gist) to motivate students to listen and to create interest in the topic or theme of the recording.

Listening

4. Play the recording for the first time
5. Pair up students and ask them to discuss the general or gist questions to help students feel secure and confident before the second listening and task.
6. Play the recording a second time with a more specific reason/task for listening. The teacher should circulate around the classroom, checking the students' participation, facial expressions, and body language to get an idea of their individual abilities to cope with the task.

Post Listening

7. Provide time for students (individually, in pairs or teams) to answer specific questions or complete comprehension tasks. While students are actively engaged, the teacher should circulate around the classroom to monitor and assess students' participation.
8. Have students report answers to the whole class. Check and confirm their responses.
9. Give follow up activities (such as written work) to focus students on specific aspects of the listening text.
10. Assess students work (and the effectiveness of the listening activities).



Types of listening activities

Note first that we tend to listening in two different ways: (a) conversational listening and (b) listening to talks, lectures, or radio. In conversational listening we can use context, visual cues, gestures, and facial expressions to support listening comprehension AND we can show we understand (shaking the head and saying “uh-huhhh...”), ask questions if we don’t understand (“what was that again?”), and ask for more information. (“You said.....does that mean....?”).

Note that in many cases, especially if the listening activity is high stakes or asks for specific information it may be fairer to allow the students to listen two or even three times. Also note that the first two activity types are a more direct assessment of listening (only) because students have to produce nothing, they merely indicate a choice.

Putting events/items in the right order: Give students the list of items or events, or pictures related to the development of a story that the students hear. Ask students to mark the order of the items or arrange the pictures in the correct sequence.

True/false statements or Multiple-choice questions: Ask the students to listen and circle True or False or fill in the correct bubble.

Predicting through vocabulary: Give students a list of key vocabulary items and ask them to predict or guess what the dialogue or story will be about. This task allows the teacher to pre-teach the vocabulary used in the listening material while preparing learners for the semantic field.

Student-generated questions as a first listening task: In pairs, have students write questions they would like to ask after listening to the text. Then have them listen to the recording and check how many of their questions have been answered.

Listening for specific information: Give the students a list of items and ask them to check off items that are mentioned while they are listening.

Open-ended questions: Select details from the written text or tape and form questions about them.

Note-taking: Focus students listening by introducing several topics. Give the tasks to take notes on different topics mentioned in the text. Note that note taking probably requires the teacher to suggest a system for taking notes (and an authentic reason for taking notes!) as well as being able to listen and comprehend a talk or lecture.

Authentic listening is based on a situation in which students might find themselves (announcements at the airports, etc.). After listening to the recorded text, students may fill in the details on the grid or/and answer questions.



Samples of Other Listening Activities that do not require a pre-recorded passage:

- **Bingo** - Students make their own boards and the teacher reads the numbers. In addition to practicing numbers, students can also use this game to practice various vocabulary lists. For example, you can play "Sports bingo". Here the students would fill in all the squares (usually 16) with different sports, and then the teacher would show pictures of these sports or pantomime them. Not a very authentic listening activity. We don't often listen for individual words.
- **Blindfold Directions** - A student is put in a blindfold and other students verbally guide him/her around obstacles in the room.
- **Correct Me** - The teacher speaks with grammar mistakes and students correct the teacher. Note: also a grammar activity, and one that won't work with younger learners who don't have the cognitive development to focus on form.
- **Draw This Picture** - The teacher (or another student) describes a picture nobody can see, and students draw it based on the description.
- **Fill-in-the-Blank Story** - The teacher reads a short story or a paragraph 3 or 4 times, then reads it again, but leaving out certain words, which students fill in.
- **Mystery Object** - The teacher describes an object in the room (or outside the room) and students guess what it is.
- **Pulling My Leg** - The teacher explains the English idiom "pulling my leg" to indicate disbelief. Pupils learn it and practice saying it. Then the teacher begins telling a story, eventually adding a fantastic element. Then an attentive pupil will exclaim, "You're pulling my leg!" Example: "I met a friend of mine the other day. We began talking, and he told me he had just been on a vacation. He had just returned from the moon." "You're pulling my leg!!"
- **Simon Says** - Great for oral commands and teaching parts of the body and livening things up (See TPR).
- **Which One Am I Describing?** - There are a number of different pictures, sketches, people, whatever on the black board, and the teacher describes them one by one as the students guess which one is being described.



Reading

There are many **types of reading**, and therefore, many different reading skills and strategies that students need to master to become proficient readers in English. TEFL teachers need to remember that

- people have different reading styles,
- there is a variety of purposes for reading, and
- efficient readers employ different reading strategies depending on the purpose of the reading activity.

Teachers will need to anticipate possible reading difficulties, especially those unique to EFL learners, and be prepared with techniques to help learners overcome reading difficulties. Teachers will need to be able to evaluate reading tasks in order to adapt and structure them for students' success. Teachers also need to learn how to plan an effective reading lesson.

When considering the skills involved in school-based reading tasks, it is important to know the reading strategies and skills that are essential for academic growth. Reading a variety of texts is an important aspect of the study of English, and by identifying and providing instruction in the different skills needed for different texts, teachers can help students read more effectively.

Among strategies and skills that TEFL teachers will need to teach reading skills to students of all levels is (a) learning the writing system (if it is different from the first language), (b) learning sound/symbols correspondences, (c) learn the meaning of unfamiliar words (vocabulary development), (d) understand explicitly stated information (literal comprehension) and (e) infer implicit information from text (inference). Readers also need to learn to distinguish the relations between elements in a text, particularly distinguishing the main ideas from supporting details. Students need to learn the skill of skimming a text for a general impression of the ideas by focusing on content words and the topic sentences. They also need to learn how to scan a text for specific items, such as a particular phrase, number, name or fact within a text. Students need to learn how to distinguish facts from opinions, and at higher levels, to interpret a wide range of texts. Basic reading comprehension can be checked through true/false statements, or multiple choice questions, matching or, sequencing activities, open-ended questions, or preparing short reviews and summaries

Readers also need to learn how to use their experience and outside knowledge to interpret and deconstruct new material. Students need to learn how to categorize new learning as an aid to understanding and remembering information as well as determining how to use the new learning to accomplish a task. For example, a simple health or environmental text can provide useful personal information for students or for planning a special event in your school.

At higher levels, readers should be able to summarize the author's point of view and use their own experience and knowledge to agree or disagree with the author's position. Advanced readers should be able to compare information from multiple sources and demonstrate their understanding of texts by creating scripts, role plays, stories, debates, or writing reviews. Students need to be exposed to *intensive reading* – that is, reading for



details and specific information – and extensive reading of a long text for pleasure, entertainment, or personal interest in addition to classroom reading to complete an activity or assignment.

Within each class, there will probably be students with strong reading skills who can easily do **skimming** and **scanning** and complete basic reading tasks. However, there might be some students who lack the motivation or reading skills and strategies to approach a longer text. They may read with little comprehension and be unable to complete associated tasks or activities. Sometimes this distinction is described as the difference between “*learning to read*” versus “*reading to learn*.” Teachers need to become aware of deficiencies in reading skills, assess skill gaps, and prepare remedial lessons to help students gain sufficient reading skills, not only in English, but also for reading academic materials in other languages. Finally, teachers will need to evaluate materials and activities to ensure that most students can successfully read and use the materials to complete tasks and to continue reading for information and for pleasure, especially remember that what is the appropriate reading level for a native English reader may be too challenging for a nonnative English reader

Reading Skills by Level

Low beginners should be able to:

- recognize letters and transcription marks.
- associate words with their written presentations.
- use reading for everyday tasks.
- read a simple text. [Note: reading on this level can be referred to as “decoding.”]

High beginners and intermediate students should be able to:

- skim and scan the text.
- pick out main ideas.
- understand sequence of events.
- guess the meaning of words (use context or word analysis)
- interpret a text at an intermediate difficulty level.

High intermediate and advanced students should be able to:

- discover the author's purpose.
- understand logical relationship between parts in the text.
- evaluate the text.
- read advanced TEFL texts and authentic materials.

TIPS AND ADVICE for helping teachers develop reading activities and tasks:

A. Select and adapt texts. As with listening tasks, it is important to understand the difference between authentic and prepared reading materials, and to select materials that will be of interest to the students. Consider the following:



- Is the language of the text appropriate for your students? How will you deal with difficulties (vocabulary, organization, unfamiliar concepts)
- Decide what visual/textual support might be helpful. Can you provide a vocabulary key or illustrations to help students understand the text?
- If the text is too long, can you teach parts of it?
- If the text is too difficult, can you rewrite and adapt it to make the vocabulary or structure easier to understand? Can you chunk the information so pupils approach it a step at a time in small, cumulative units?
- Can you design ways to help students to focus on the most important parts of the text?

B. Decide which reading skills you will focus on for the lesson (skills are prioritized from basic to more advanced)

- Reading for explicitly stated information
- Skimming or Scanning (and probably you should teach both together as “fast reading”)
- Determining the meaning of words (using context, cognates and word analysis skills, or dictionaries)
- Differentiating the main ideas and identifying supporting information
- Evaluating correctness of statements within the text. Distinguish fact from opinion.
- Inferring and predicting
- Summarizing
- Paraphrasing
- Categorizing information in order to use it in another context (research)
- Discovering the author’s point of view – agreeing or disagreeing with it

C. Select appropriate reading activities. The main function of reading activities is to build confidence when reading for information or pleasure. Reading activities should help students understand what they read. Instructions should be clear, focused, and not too difficult.

D. Planning a reading lesson

Most lesson plans have several components: (1) Motivation/Warm-up, (2) Presentation, (3) Practice, and (4) Application or Evaluation. In reading, you will want to include a pre-reading activity to activate learners’ knowledge and interest. This followed by a guided reading activity and then reading alone. Afterwards, additional exercises follow that are related to the vocabulary, reading skills development, or the content of the passage. Many teachers will conclude by providing task for learners to do based on the reading

Before you begin a lesson, plan knowledge activation activities. Consider the following:

- What do students already know about this subject?
- What vocabulary do most of them already understand?
- What personal experiences with the topic may students have had?

Pre-reading activities (may include eliciting and knowledge activation activities above)

- Predicting what the text will be about by using headlines, titles, pictures, etc.
- Rehearsing what the students might expect to find in the text.
- Questions to focus students on particular aspects of the text.

**While-reading tasks**

The teacher may ask the students to stop at the end of every page (or every two pages) and asks students if what they read makes them ask any questions, or if there is vocabulary that they don't know.

Post-reading tasks

After the students have read the passage, the class can move to comprehension or expansion activities. Some teachers use familiar exercises such as true/false, multiple-choice, or questions requiring short answers.

Other sample post-reading activities follow:

Sample reading activities

- Complete a chart using information from the text (information transfer)
- Locate identified words or phrases in the text (scanning)
- Identify main ideas from the text (skimming)
- Locate and identify information from the text supporting author's point of view
- Develop vocabulary: Use context clues from the text, students guess at the meaning of designated words and the class shares their guesses and reasons for the guesses, while teacher provides feedback regarding the accuracy of the guesses.
- Use key words - sequence key words and use them to re-tell the text
- Complete a cloze reading task – every "nth" word (5th-6th-7th word) is replaced with a blank and students try to complete the text by filling in the missing word. This can also be a listening task.
- Jumbles (when done in groups, these activities require lots of communication)
 - Jumbled sentences (Students are given words from a sentence that have been cut apart and then reassemble the sentences in the correct order)
 - Jumbled paragraphs (students are given sentences from a paragraph and must re-order the sentences to show the main idea and the supporting sentences)
 - Jumbled text (students are given a text in which the paragraphs have been cut apart and must reassemble the paragraphs in the correct order. Paragraphs can also be given to students with the first sentence missing and pupils must select the appropriate first sentence from a list provided.
- Paraphrase: students re-phrase sentences or paragraphs from the text in different, more compact form.
- Jigsaw reading activities in groups. Each member of a group reads a different part of a text and then group members share their information with one another in order to complete a task.

Follow up or Expansion Activities: The class might extend learning through discussion or debate on issues raised by the text. Or they could dramatize information, create stories, role plays, or scripts based on text. Students might want to write summaries or reviews of articles, or even practice writing a response to the author. Students might conduct further research to build knowledge on a topic. Finally, teachers should provide an opportunity for students to reflect on and personalize their learning by relating what they have read with their own knowledge and experience.

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4. Overview of the Basic Language Skills: Speaking and Writing

Speaking and writing are often considered **productive skills**. When speaking and writing, students have to organize their thoughts and words orally or in writing. They produce language that can be heard and read.

Speaking

Speaking is a learner's ability to communicate orally and hold a conversation in the foreign language. Speaking involves three areas of knowledge:

- Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary).
- Functions (transaction and interaction).
- Social and cultural rules and norms; that is "pragmatics" or "how language is used" as well as conversation management; that is, turn-taking, backchanneling ("uh-huh...sure"), and eye contact, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants).

A learner with good speaking skills will demonstrate the following skills:

- Understanding and communicating information from simple needs to quite complex information (often determined by language proficiency level)
- Speaking clearly, audibly and using appropriate language
- Talking effectively about personal experience
- Responding to other people's opinions and to be able to recognize particular arguments, opinions, and requests for information



- Speaking in an appropriate tone in various contrasting speech situations
- Organizing and presenting opinions, ideas and facts in a coherent manner; using language to persuade and influence others.
- Using non-verbal behaviors to support/reinforce what the speaker is saying

Teaching speaking skills helps students develop communicative competence in a wide range of speech situations.

Speaking lessons can have four major stages: eliciting, controlled oral practice, free or guided practice, and communicative output.

Eliciting means getting information from people as opposed to giving it to them – asking questions and drawing them into conversation. The purpose of this stage is to present or review the language that the students will need in a controlled situation. Eliciting helps a teacher develop the teaching skill of not talking too much while learners are stimulated to speak.

Eliciting can be done in the following ways:

- With almost no oral language, teachers can prompt simple speech using
 - gestures and mime.
 - real objects (realia).
 - visual aids (drawings, flashcards, videos, etc.).
 - prompts, cues and questions in social situations.
- With limited oral language, teachers can elicit simple speech by
 - Giving verbal instructions
 - Asking yes/no or either/or questions (to answer with little oral language)
 - Asking wh-questions (who, what, where, when, why, and how).
 - Giving one word answers, simple definitions, use key vocabulary
 - Using synonyms and antonyms.
 - Allowing translation.

Controlled oral practice of a particular language item often focuses on accuracy. It allows students to get a better command of the language they will need moving from controlled practice to freer practice and then to communicative output. A teacher should provide students with the model sentence or listening exercise before asking students to respond. This stage should include a variety of exercises and games. Following are examples of controlled oral practice:

- Repetition
- Echo questions “Drop dead!” → “What do you mean, ‘drop dead?’”
- Questions and answers
- Substitution drills I go to school on Mondays....Fridays → I go to school on Fridays.
- Combining sentences He is a man. He has blond hair. → He is a blond man.
- Dialogues

The preceding activities do not promote authentic communication – they allow students to practice language in a controlled way (you can think of it as “wrapping their mouths around the sounds” or “repeating patterns until



they're automatic." True communication often involves negotiating meaning – each person has information that the other does not have. To communicate effectively and to share information, thoughts, and feelings, real communicators often have to clarify their meaning or ask for confirmation of their understanding.

Freer, Communicative Practice: activities begin to simulate real communication. In the classroom, teachers often use role plays or simulations so that students gain experience speaking without a script. Teachers also promote language learning through games (e.g., jeopardy, bingo, 20 questions, etc.) so that students are free to play with the language in a safe classroom environment. During games, students use a lot of language without worrying too much about form. Teachers also set up “information gap” or “jigsaw activities” where each student has some information that the other(s) do not have. These guided activities give students opportunities to practice language more freely and creatively. All these activities create a bridge between controlled oral practice and communicative output.

Communicative output: activities encourage students to produce spoken language with fluency and creativity in situations that closely resemble real settings. At this stage students use whatever language they have at their command. In these activities, students work together to develop a plan, resolve a problem, or complete a task. Common communicative output activities that start in the classroom include the following:

- Conducting interviews
- Writing or performing – drama, poetry, music activities
- Debating
- Presenting projects
- Participating in authentic discussions
- Making speeches
- Writing articles or corresponding with a pen pal
- Developing web pages and sending email in English

Writing

Writing is a skill that requires students to communicate their ideas on paper, computer, or other print media.

Writing instruction helps learners develop the following knowledge and skills:

- Mechanics (graphic system, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc.)
- Grammar (rules for parts of speech, agreement, articles, syntax, etc.)
- Organization (writing process, structure of paragraphs, essays/reports, etc.)
- Style (Rhetorical devices (parallelism, deductive or inductive arguments)
- Content Development (purpose, audience, word choice, style, etc)

As with the listening, speaking, and reading, writing teachers have to help students learn different forms for different purposes. Some writing tasks focus on creativity and others focus on clarity and accuracy. In general it helps to consider any writing task from three perspectives

G (Genre—are we writing a thank you letter, a complaint letter, or a job cover letter?)

A (Audience—who will be reading our text, What is our relationship to the audience)

P (Purpose—why are we writing? What do we hope to accomplish?)



In the TEFL classroom, there are often two types of writing: (1) controlled and guided practice and (2) communicative, authentic writing. Many teachers will use a process writing approach – brainstorming, drafting, editing, revising, and publishing.

Controlled and Guided Writing Practice

The main purpose of guided writing at the beginning English learning levels is to help students learn new words and structures and to focus their attention on what they are learning. In communicative classrooms, teachers encourage students to go beyond mechanical copying and give them exercises which require them to think and add something of their own. Therefore, guided writing activities at the beginning and high-beginning levels are based on the use of clues, information, or guidelines and serve as a helpful way for students to build confidence in their writing skills. At this level writing activities are usually controlled, so that students are not overwhelmed with a blank page or too many choices which lead to mistakes and frustration.

Sample writing activities for the beginning and high-beginning levels:

- Trace letters, words and sentences. Students trace letters and words written in an appropriate size and shape.
- “Copy and change”. Copy a passage; then change one aspect of the passage.
- “Unscramble sentence parts”. Students receive a list of words and form a sentence.
- Using model sentences. Students are given a sentence and asked to write a similar true sentence about themselves.
- Form sentences. Students are given items or clues to form sentences.
- Simple dictations. Students listen and then write out the complete sentences.
- Substitution tables. Students choose a word and write at least ten correct sentences.
- Questions and Answers. Given relevant questions, student write answers in their own words about themselves.

As soon as students’ writing skills have reached the intermediate level, they should be ready to progress to freer paragraph writing. Traditionally, this transition has been done by giving a short model text for students to use in writing about something familiar to them (e.g., description of family).

Often, teachers focus more on the writing process. For example, classes brainstorm or create “webs” of ideas related to a topic they have selected. Students then use those ideas to create a draft paragraph. Classmates often read their paragraphs to one another and get oral feedback on the ideas and clarity. They may edit each other’s papers. The third step is for students to use the feedback to edit and revise their written work. Finally, the students prepare another draft to submit to the teacher (or for publication—which can be as simple as posting the work on the wall). The teacher’s role is to provide chances for students to develop workable strategies for prewriting, drafting, revising and editing.

Sample writing activities at the intermediate level:

- Letter writing. Students respond to a letter or an advertisement.
- Instructions/Directions. Write instructions on how to get somewhere or do something.
- Writing a review. Students write reviews of stories, movies, TV programs or events.



- Picture writing. Students compare two pictures or photographs, noting the differences and similarities.

Written output

As students gain proficiency and confidence in writing, teachers often focus the students attention on developing and organizing ideas for different purposes and audiences, the clarity of thought and style, word choice, tone and consideration of the reader. The assignments of this stage go through several drafts and will probably be edited or proofread by the author and other classmates.

Sample writing activities at the written production level of advanced level:

- Fables, folktales and poems.
- Detective and mystery stories. The game ALIBI can be a great motivator for writing. After the suspects are questioned, students write their stories, adding their own creative descriptions.
- Newsletters. Students engage in publishing their own newsletter.
- Journals. Students write whatever they want to say. Correctness is not the purpose of journaling. Students gain skills in writing with more fluency and get into the habit of expressing personal thoughts.
- Projects. Students might write plays, compose songs, develop a web page, prepare a position paper, or write a proposal.
- Research papers and essays.
- Translate documents, articles or books.

Approaches to teaching writing

TEFL Peace Corps Volunteers tend to teach writing to students who have already gained some control over the convention of writing (e.g., making sentences) and can focus more on communicating their ideas through writing. This circumstance allows Volunteers to apply the process approaches to writing more often in the classroom and to make activities more authentic. TEFL teachers need provide good reasons to write (because writing is hard) and make the writing assignments relevant to students' lives.

The communicative approach stresses considering the Genre, Audience, and Purpose for a piece of writing. Therefore, teachers will want to expand the notion of audience to other students in the class or even better, specify readers outside the classroom. Students can read what classmates have written, respond, rewrite in another form, summarize, or make comments. The teachers can also provide students with a context that enables to select appropriate content, language and levels of formality. Writing often stimulates students to think critically about a topic or issue, and plan how they can best defend their argument in writing.

The process approach moves away from the concentration on the written product to an emphasis on the process of writing; that is, writing is a way of learning. Students explore a topic through writing, showing their drafts to the teacher and each other, and then move on to new ideas. An advantage of the process approach is that students have opportunities to try out ideas and get feedback from other students and the teacher. The writing becomes a process of discovery and collaborators provide a "second pair of eyes" so that ideas expressed are clearer.



5. Teaching Vocabulary

Teaching vocabulary involves teaching the meaning and form of new vocabulary and as well as its use in context.

Vocabulary is usually taught three ways in the language classroom:

1. as it emerges (discovery learning) while reading or listening, or
2. from explicit instruction on vocabulary

In general, we can distinguish two types of vocabulary: active and passive. *Active vocabulary* includes the words which students need to understand and use themselves. Words which students understand when they read or listen, but don't actually use are *passive vocabulary*.

Although learning lists of words is a traditional vocabulary learning activity, it is not particularly effective, vocabulary needs to be learned and practiced in context to be retained. For many teachers, vocabulary is often addressed in passing, with either a simple example or a translation. It is better, when an unknown word appears as part of a text or dialogue, for teacher to ask students to use context clues, cognates or roots and affixes to guess the meaning. On the other hand, it is important for students to learn that they don't have to know every word they read or hear to understand a text (or what is being said).



Presenting Active Vocabulary – Teacher’s Goals

Students need to

- Understand the word, know its translation, and its part of speech
- Perceive its roots and affixes as well as variant forms (apply, application, applied)
- Know its grammatical connections (“depend on” not “depend of”)
- Know its synonyms and antonyms
- Pronounce it correctly
- Use it appropriately and have an idea of the contexts where it appears

Presentation Staging

Choose 7-14 new words from a specific context such as a reading or listening passage.

Introduce the topic and text to activate students’ background knowledge. See what vocabulary they already know, then--

1. Elicit or provide the new word
2. Convey the meaning of the new word. Use context clues, cognates or word analysis skills. Simply translate if spending too much time on the word might disrupt the lesson
3. Check to see if students have understood the meaning of the word through questions
4. Model the pronunciation (including syllables and stress)
5. Repeat steps 1-5 with other key words (limit 7-14)
6. Students record new words (in a journal or notebook)
7. Students practice saying the new words and demonstrating that they understand the word in the context of the lesson.
8. Students try to use the words in sentences so that the teacher can verify for them in what contexts the word is appropriate and which it is not

Vocabulary presentation techniques

1. Present the meaning of new vocabulary by using:

- Realia (anything that is already in the classroom: furniture, clothes, body parts). Many objects can be brought from home.
- Pictures/flashcards/sketches (a picture on the board or materials prepared before class)
- Body language, mime, or demonstration
- Examples of the word in a context (mini story/anecdote)
- Definition/explanation
- Dictionaries (students use dictionaries to check meaning)
- Direct translation (minimize whenever possible--students who have to think through their first language to get to the second language will never speak or write the second language)

2. Present the form

- Model pronunciation of the new word (include syllable and stress)



- Have students listen and repeat a new word in chorus two-three times. Some learners benefit by doing finger spelling the new word in the air.
- Write new words clearly on the board to focus on spelling
- Note roots or affixes contained in the word, compare with other words

3. Check understanding of new words by asking concept questions. Concept questions help ensure that students really understand the word and also provide practice using real language. Some teachers review the new words in games, puzzles, songs, pictures, or with actions..

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III. Basic Grammar

1. Grammatical Terms

To be able to teach successfully, TEF teachers must have a grasp of basic English grammar. *Grammar* is not just fussiness. It is the structure of a language. Grammar rules explain how words change to show different meanings and how they are combined into sentences.

The following definitions may be helpful to you not only when you teach English, but also when you are studying other languages

Parts of Speech

Traditional grammar classifies words into eight parts of speech: verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections (Hey!).

A *verb* is a word that expresses an occurrence, act, or mode of being. (e.g., ask, play, be, can)

A *noun* is a word that refers to a thing, animal, place, quality, or idea. (e.g., table, cat, London, honesty, love)

A *pronoun* is a word that replaces a noun or noun phrase. (e.g., he, we, our, mine, which)

An *adjective* is a modifier or qualifier that modifies the meaning of a noun or phrase. (e.g., green, hungry, impossible)

An *adverb* is a word or group of words that serves to modify a verb, an adjective, another adverb, or a whole sentence. (e.g., tomorrow, badly, there, also)

A *preposition* relates or 'positions' a noun or pronoun to another element of the sentence. (e.g., at, by, in, to, from, under, with). **Note:** prepositions that occur with verbs (that is "phrasal verbs") and alter the word's meaning (figure out, run up (a bill), cross out (a word)) are called *particles*.

A *conjunction* is a word or group of words used to connect words, phrases, or clauses. (e.g., and, but, because, if)

An *interjection* is a word that expresses an emotion in a sentence. (e.g., Wow! Oh!)

Sentence

A *sentence* is a group of words that expresses a complete thought in the form of a statement, command, question or exclamation. A sentence consists of one or more clauses, and usually has at least one subject and a finite verb. In writing it begins with a capital letter and ends with a



period (or *full stop*), question mark or exclamation mark. (e.g., I'm cold. Mary said that she was tired. Where are you going? Don't do that!)

A *clause* is a part of a sentence, which contains a subject and a verb, usually joined to the rest of the sentence by a conjunction. (e.g., I telephoned Robin **because I didn't know what to do.**) However, it may be a structure containing participles or infinitives (with no subject or conjunction). (E.g., **Not knowing what to do**, I telephoned Robin).

Sentences containing one clause are called *simple*. Sentences containing more than one clause may be *compound* or *complex*. There are two main ways of linking clauses together: *coordination* (which produces compound sentences) and *subordination* (which produces complex sentences).

Two simple sentences, for example: *He heard an explosion. He phoned the police.*

May be joined into one sentence, either by coordinating the two clauses by *and* or by making one clause into a main clause and the other into a subordinate clause:

Coordination: He heard an explosion *and* (he) phoned the police.

Subordination: When he heard an explosion, he phoned the police.

A sentence that consists of two or more independent clauses and no subordinate clause is called *compound sentence*. A comma and a conjunction separate the independent clauses. (e.g., I finished my work for the day, and now I am ready to go out.)

A sentence consisting of one independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses is called a *complex sentence*. (e.g., the dog quickly discovered the cat, which had left the safety of its hiding place.)

A subordinate clause can act like a part of the main clause (e.g., like a subject, or an object, or an adverbial). For example in the sentence '**Where she is** doesn't matter', the subordinate clause '**Where she is**' is the subject of the main clause.

Parts of the Sentence

The *parts of the sentence* are a set of terms for describing how people construct sentences from smaller pieces. There is not a direct correspondence between the parts of the sentence and the parts of speech.

Every complete sentence contains two parts: a *subject* and a *predicate*. *The subject* is what (or whom) the sentence is about, while *the predicate* tells something about the subject. (e.g., In the sentence 'Judy runs', Judy is the *subject* and 'runs' is the *predicate*.)

An *object* is a noun or pronoun that normally comes after the verb, in an active sentence. The *direct object* refers to a person or thing affected by the action of the verb. (e.g., in the sentence "Take the dog for a walk", '**the dog**' is the direct object.) The *indirect object* usually refers to a person who receives the direct object. (e.g., In the sentence "Ann gave me a watch," the indirect object is '**me**', and the direct object is '**a watch**'.)



Other Grammatical Categories

Gender

English nouns, in general, are not marked for *gender*. In English *gender* is assigned to animate objects based on biological gender (where known), and to personified objects based on social conventions (e.g., ships are often regarded as feminine in English). *He* is used for *masculine* nouns; *she* is used for *feminine* nouns (or *s/he* for either); and *it* is used for nouns of indeterminate gender and inanimate objects. *Her* and *him* are used as personal objects. *Her* or *his* and *hers* and *his* are used for personal possessive adjectives and personal possessive nouns respectively.

Number

Number is the way in which differences between *singular* and *plural* are shown grammatically. The differences between *house* and *houses*, *mouse* and *mice*, *this* and *these* are differences in number.

Modern English has distinctive *plural* forms for personal pronouns (I-we, me-us, her-them) and demonstratives adjectives and pronouns (*this/that*; *these/those*).

The conventional plural affix for nouns to add *-s* or *-es*: *brick – bricks*; *dish – dishes*. There are a few vestiges of Old English declensions in irregular plurals: *man – men*; *child – children*; *foot – feet*, etc. Some words of Latin and Greek origin retain distinctive plurals: *criterion-criteria* *phenomenon – phenomena*. Some words have no distinct plural: *sheep*, usually *fish*; there are some uncountable nouns: *sugar*, *salt*, *butter*. Some uncountable nouns are not very logical: information, vocabulary, furniture). Some collective nouns are treated differently in different varieties of English. For example, in the U.S. the *government* or the *committee is/has* but in the U.K, they *are/is*.

In Modern English the verb ‘be’ distinguishes singular and plural: *am – are*; *is – are*; *was – were*. Otherwise, only the 3rd person present singular is distinctive: *he talks*.

Rules of concordance require a singular subject be followed by a singular verb: *he says/they say*.

Person

In Modern English *person* is signaled by the personal pronouns only. In grammar, it is the way in which we show the difference between the person speaking (*first person*: I – me – my – mine and we – us – our – ours), the direct addressee of the utterance (*second person*: you – your – yours) and someone or something other than the speaker or addressee (third person: he – him – his; she – her – hers; they – them – their – theirs). In many languages verbs are **conjugated** in terms of person and number. In English the only “conjugation” in the present tense is the third person singular form “he/she/it walks/spends/eats” and a few irregular forms (*am/is/are*; *was/were*).



2. Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives and Adverbs

Nouns

A *noun* is a word that identifies a person, place, thing, quality or abstract idea. Personal names (e.g., George), and place-names (e.g., New York) are called *proper nouns* and are capitalized. *Common noun* is a noun which is not a proper name (e.g., car, idea, dogs) and is not capitalized.

Concrete noun is the name of something which we can experience by direct physical contact or perception (e.g., table, raspberry). *Abstract noun* is the name of something which we experience as an idea, not by direct physical contact or perception (e.g., doubt, height).

Countable noun is a noun which can have a plural form and can be used with the indefinite article a/an (e.g., a dog – dogs; an idea – ideas). *Uncountable noun* (or **mass noun**) is a noun which has no plural form and cannot normally be used with the article a/an (e.g., mud, rudeness, furniture). Non-count nouns are often liquids or extremely small particles (*milk, rice, sugar*) or abstract (*love, honesty*)

Collective noun is a singular word used to refer to a group (e.g., family, team)

Pronouns

Pronouns stand for nouns. They may be modified according to part of speech, number or gender. They can be classified as follows:

Personal pronouns (e.g., I, you, he, she, we) are used instead of beings and objects. They denote person, number, and (sometimes) gender. They include subjects (e.g., I, you, he, she, it, we, they) and objects (e.g., me, you, him, her, us).

Possessive pronouns (e.g., my, your, her and mine, yours, hers) are used instead of genitives when it is unnecessary to name the 'possessor'. (e.g., This is **my** coat and that one is **yours**).

Reflexive pronouns (e.g., himself, themselves) refer back to the subject of the verb. (e.g., He can do it **himself**.)

Demonstrative adjectives and pronouns (e.g., this, that) point to something. They can be used with or without a following noun. (e.g., **This** (demonstrative adjective) book is very interesting. Look at **this!** (demonstrative pronoun)).

Relative pronouns (e.g., who, whom, whose, which, that) replace nouns and noun phrases as the subjects or objects of relative clauses. (e.g., There's the man **who** fell of his bicycle yesterday.)

Interrogative pronouns (e.g., who, whom, whose, what, which) take the place of unknown subjects and objects in questions. (e.g., **Who** said that? **What** happened?)



Indefinite pronouns (e.g., any, anyone, anybody, anything, some, someone, every, everything) refer to an unidentified person(s) or thing(s). (e.g., **Someone** must pay for this.)

Reciprocal pronouns (e.g., each other, one another).

Adjectives

An *adjective* describes or modifies a noun (e.g., **tall** man). It is termed a modifier, because it adds something to (modifies) a noun. Adjectives usually precede a noun (e.g., **black** cat) or follow a verb of state (to be/to become) and come after the noun (e.g., The meal was **delicious**.) An adjective is sometimes used to modify groups of words, such as noun phrases (e.g., the **astonishing** turn of events) or noun clauses.

We use **as + adjective + as** for comparisons of *equality*. Such comparisons can be positive or negative (e.g., He is **as strong as** a horse. He isn't **as/ so smart as** his sister.)

We form *comparatives of inequality* by

- adding **-er** to one-syllable adjectives and to two-syllable adjectives ending in -y (e.g., big – **bigger**, funny – **funnier**)
- using **more** with an adjective having two or more syllables + **than** (e.g., This armchair is **more comfortable than** that wooden seat.)

We form the *superlative* by

- adding **-est** to one-syllable adjectives and to two-syllable adjectives ending in -y (e.g., big – **biggest**, funny – **funniest**)
- using **most** + two and more than two-syllable adjectives (e.g., I have many books but this is **the most interesting**.)

Adverbs

Adverbs describe, or modify a *verb*. They state something about how or when the verb was done (e.g., happily, well, later, soon, perfectly). An adverb can also modify an adjective (e.g., the **perfectly** clear sky, **extremely** good food, terribly loud noise) or another adverb (e.g., She sings well, **very** well. He jumped far, **amazingly** far. They left soon, **too** soon.) In English adverbs are frequently formed with the suffix **-ly**.

We usually form *comparative* and *superlative adverbs* by adding **more**, **most**. (e.g., She drives **more carefully than** her husband.

This is the **most efficiently** run office in the area)

Adverbs with the same form as adjectives form their *comparative* and *superlative* with **-er**, **-est**. (e.g., We arrived **later than** you. He walks **the fastest** of all of them.)

Notice some exceptions to these two rules:



well – better – best; badly – worse – worst;
little – less – least; much – more – most.

Adverb or adjective?

After the verbs *to be*, *to become*, *seem*, *appear*, *look*, *sound*, *feel*, *smell* or *taste* we use an adjective not an adverb. (that smells **good**, but it tastes **awful**.) These are *predicate adjectives*.

3. Noun Determiners. Articles

A, *an* and *the* are *articles*. *A/an* constitute *indefinite articles*; *the* constitutes *definite articles*. *Articles* belong to a group called *determiners* that are used before nouns. Other determiners are possessives (*my*, *your*); and demonstratives (e.g., *this/that*, *these/those*, *some/any*).

Two determiners cannot usually be used together. Articles (and other determiners) usually come first in the noun group (the noun with other words, like adjectives, that come before it).

e.g., the last few days; a very nice surprise; my only true friend

However, some words can come before articles in the noun group: for instance, *all*, *both*, *rather*, *quite*, *exactly*, *just*, *such*, *what* and *much* in the *expression much the same*.

e.g., all the time; rather a good idea; such a funny expression; what a pity

Indefinite Article ‘a/an’

The indefinite article *a/an* is used with singular countable nouns and usually refer to new information.

- for more general meaning:
e.g., you will need **a** pen and **an** exercise book. (It doesn't matter which pen).
- for a noun mentioned for the first time. Notice we use *the* for the second mention:
e.g., There was **a** terrible storm last night. **The** storm swept across the whole country.
- with numbers (e.g., **a** hundred, **a** thousand, **a** million) and fractions (e.g., **a** half, **a** quarter):
E.g., **A** million people received our help last year. **A** few, however, were not so lucky.

Notice a few (people) = some; a little help = some
But few (people) = not many; little (help) = not much

- to mean ‘every’ with expressions of time (e.g., once **a** year):
e.g., We come to classes twice **a** week.
- to describe a person's job or situation:
e.g., She's **a** teacher. He's **an** old-age pensioner.

Notice that when plural nouns are indefinite the article is \emptyset : a tiger → tigers.



Definite Article 'the'

The definite article *the* is used with most nouns for more specific meaning and usually reference to "old" information (that is we've established who/what we are talking about):

- to refer back to something already mentioned:
e.g., Jane: A man phoned last night.
Peter: When, what did **the** man want?
- when we know which one we are talking about:
e.g., Last night I read **the** book you recommended.
- when we refer to only one of its kind:
e.g., **The** sun rises in **the** east and sets in **the** west.

Notice these other uses of **the**:

- with singular countable nouns when they stand for an invention or a species;
e.g., **The** computer has revolutionized office systems.
- with a superlative (**the** first, **the** most enjoyable):
e.g., You can buy **the** best pizzas in town at Paolo's.
- with adjectives as plural nouns:
e.g., **The** British and **the** French agreed to build a channel tunnel.
The strong should help **the** weak.
- with the names of countries or groups of islands which are plural:
e.g., I live in **the** United States/ **the** Netherlands/ **the** Falklands/ **the** West Indies/ **the** Philippines
Notice these exceptions: **the** United Kingdom; **the** Ukraine
- with the names of rivers, oceans and seas:
e.g., Paris is on **the** Seine.
The Atlantic separates Britain from America.
It's very hot in **the** Mediterranean at the moment.

No Article

As was noted before, we do not use an article with plural countable nouns:
e.g., Museums are interesting places.

We also do not use an article--



- with uncountable nouns when speaking about the noun in general (e.g., food, music, love): e.g., Sound travels very fast in water.

Notice a few uncountable nouns (e.g., advice, news, luggage, information, research) are sometimes preceded by a phrase like *a/ the bit of*; *a/the piece of* to refer to a particular example of that noun: *a bit of advice, the piece of news*

- with the names of most towns/ cities, streets, countries, single/ individual islands, lakes:
e.g., I live in Rome/ Percy Road/ China/ Jersey/ near Lake Windermere
- with the names of most stores or shops, named buildings and institutions:
e.g., I shop at Harrods; The Queen lives in Buckingham Palace.
- with the name of most magazines:
e.g., I read Punch/Newsweek
- for newspaper headlines:
e.g., MAN FOUND DEAD ON TUBE
- for text messages:
e.g., Send representative immediately
- for personal, informal messages:
e.g., Dinner's in the oven
- become a second noun in a linked pair of nouns:
e.g., You will need a knife and fork. Take a bucket and spade to the beach

4. Verbs: Regular and Irregular Verbs, Finite and Infinitive Verb Forms, Modal Auxiliary Verbs.

A *verb* is a word that expresses action (e.g., ask, play, speak), occurrence (e.g., is, exists, lives) or state of being/possession (e.g., feel, seem, is, be/own, have, belong). It tells what is happening. It is the key element in the predicate, one of the two main parts of a sentence.

A verb is called *intransitive* if it makes sense without an object (e.g., smile, fall, come, go) or *transitive*, if it requires one (e.g., **eat** a meal, **give** a present).

Regular verbs form a past tense and/ or past participles with the help of **-ed** (e.g., smile – smiled; cook – cooked, study – studied), while *irregular* verbs have a past tense and past participle formed in a different way. (e.g., break – broke – broken; blow – blew – blown; run – ran – run; understand – understood – understood)

Finite and Infinitive Verb Forms



A *finite* verb form is one that can be used with a subject to make a verb tense (e.g., breaks, broke, is singing, has been). Most sentences contain at least one *finite* verb form. A *non-finite* verb form is one that cannot be used with a subject to make a tense (e.g., to break, breaking, broken). The non-finite parts of a verb are the *infinitive* and *participles*.

The infinitive is a verb form that possesses characteristics of both verb and noun and is usually preceded by 'to' (e.g., to start, to leave, to sing). The infinitive form of the verb is typically used in constructions that are subordinate to another verb. (e.g., I **made** him **do** it.)

There are negative, progressive, perfect and passive infinitives.

e.g., I decided **not to become** an astronomer. (negative)
It's nice **to be sitting** here with you. (progressive)
It's good **to have finished** work for the day. (perfect)
I didn't expect **to be invited**. (passive)

A *participle* is a verb form used as an adjective (e.g., **rising** sun, **cooked** food, **broken** glass). There can be present participles, past participles or perfect participles.

The *present participle* ends in -ing (e.g., charming, singing). If the -ing form of a verb is used as a noun, it's called a *gerund*.

e.g., She was **crying** when I saw her. (present participle)
Cooking is her hobby. (gerund)

The past participle ends in -de (charmed, interested) and frequently is used as an adjective.

I have studied (past participle)
The worried mother checked her child (adjective)

Modal Auxiliary Verbs

An *auxiliary* verb (e.g., be, have, do) is used to accompany another verb in order to help it express particular grammatical functions or meanings (e.g., to make questions "Where **have** you been?", or to form tenses e.g., "She **was** writing.")

When the three (non-model) *auxiliary verbs* (be, have, do) are used to make tenses, passives and questions, they have important grammatical functions but no real 'dictionary meaning'. (If you want to understand expressions like **Do you smoke? Where have you been?** or **It was written by Mozart**, it's not very useful to look up **do, have** and **was** in the dictionary.) There is another group of auxiliary verbs which generally have more 'dictionary meaning'. They are **can, could, may, might, must, will, shall, would, should, ought to, and need to**. (**Need** can also be an ordinary non-auxiliary verb.) These verbs are often called *modal auxiliaries*. They have several points in common which make them different from other verbs.



- *Modal auxiliary verbs* are not used (except sometimes in the negative) to talk about things which are definitely happening, or have definitely happened. They are used when we say that we expect things to happen, or that events are possible, or necessary, or improbable, or impossible, or when we say that things did not happen, or that we are not sure whether they happened.

E.g., I **can't swim**.

She **could be** in London or Paris or Tokyo – nobody knows.

I **may come** tomorrow if I have time.

You **might have told** me Frances was ill.

What **would you do** if you had a year off?

I think they **should have seen** a doctor earlier.

- *Modal verbs* have no **–s** on the third person singular; questions and negatives are made without **do**; they are followed by the *infinitive* without **to** of other verbs (except for *ought*).

E.g., You **don't need to look** at me like that.

He **must be** here by nine o'clock, otherwise we'll miss the train.

Can your mother **drive**?

That **ought to be** enough.

- *Modal verbs* have no infinitives, and other expressions are used instead, when necessary.

E.g., I'd like **to be able to skate**. – instead of '**can**'.

You're going **to have to work** harder. – instead of '**must**'.

- *Modal verbs* have no past forms. **Could** and **would** are used with past meanings in some cases (but never to say that particular events actually happened on definite occasions). Otherwise, other expressions are used.

E.g., After climbing for six hours, we **managed to reach** the top. – instead of '**could**'.

I **had to go** to school yesterday. – instead of '**must**'.

- *Modal verbs* can be used with perfect infinitives to talk about things which did not happen, or which we are not sure about, in the past.

E.g., You **should have told** me at once.

Her car **may have broken** down.

- Modals can express degrees of politeness, capacity and probability:

E.g., Can you, Will you, Would you, Could you help me (more neutral to more polite)

I can't swim, I don't know how (capacity).

It might/could/may/ought to rain (less to more probable)

Other Verb Categories

Tense is a verb form which shows the time of an action or event. The basic tenses (present, past, future) and variations tell if an action is taking place, took place or will take place.



Verb aspect can be progressive or continuous (we are walking; we were walking), habitual (birds sing), perfective (I have eaten my lunch).¹

Voice is the form of the verb in which the grammatical subject of the sentence is represented as performing the action expressed by the verb (*active voice*: e.g., The stock market **slumped**) or it is the goal of the action expressed by the verb (*passive voice*: e.g., A great deal of money **was lost** in the stock market.)

English verbs have three *moods*. They are called the *indicative*, *the imperative* and *the subjunctive*.

The *indicative mood* is used for ordinary statements and questions. (E.g., I have only one examination remaining.) The *subjunctive mood* is used to express a wish or something that is contrary to fact. (E.g., If I *were* you, I wouldn't accept the offer.), and is only used in a few "frozen" forms. The imperative mood is used for a request or a command. (Call me please!)

5. Use of Tenses

Use of Present Tense Forms

Present Simple is used:

- for something which happens regularly or habitually (often with adverbs of time like *always* or *usually*):
e.g., We **go out** every Saturday night.
He never **gives** me presents.
- for something which remains true for a long time or for a scientific fact:
e.g., He **lives** in Greece.
The earth **travels** round the sun.
- To give instructions (more friendly and personal than the imperative):
e.g., First you **check** your answers, then hand in your paper.
- with verbs not normally used in any of the progressive forms (*believe*, *understand*, *imagine*, *suppose*, *hear*, *see*, *taste*, *love*, *hate*, *need*, *want*, *prefer*, *seem*, *appear*, *belong*, *deserve*):
e.g., Jane: I **don't like** big cities. They **smell** of cars.
Peter: I **know** what you **mean**.
- To express the future for scheduled events:
e.g., The plane leaves at nine.
My term of office starts on Monday.

¹ For more details see the section about the Use of Tenses.



Present Progressive or Continuous is used:

- for an event in progress at the present time:
e.g., Look, they're **coming** out of the cinema now.
The standard of living in this country **is** slowly **rising**.
- as the most common way to express future events (w/a future adverb of time):
e.g., I'm leaving for work at 9:00 tomorrow.
I'm visiting China next year.

Present Perfect is used:

- for an event which happened at the indefinite time in the past. It's often used with such adverbs as *already, just, yet, often, never, so far, still*:
e.g., I've **seen** that film. (Compare *I saw that film last week.*)
I've **just seen** him.
I **haven't finished** yet.
- for an event which began in the past and is still going on now:
e.g., She's **been** a widow *for about six months / since last year.*
(**Notice** we use *for* to talk about the length of time, and we use *since* with a specific time in the past. Note contrast, "I've known her for 25 years versus I've known her since 1980)
- for an event which is finished but still affects the present:
e.g., I can't write because I've **broken** my arm.
- for an event which has a result which can be seen in the present:
- after expressions like *it's the first/ best/ most interesting/ only....*:
e.g., *This is the third time he's **taken** his driving test.*
*This is the worst film I've ever **seen**.*

Present Perfect Progressive is used:

- for an activity which began in the past and is still going on (to emphasize the length of time taken by the activity). (**Notice** it sometimes shows anger, surprise, etc.):
e.g., We've **been living** here for six years/ since 2000.
We've **been standing** at this bus stop for half an hour in the pouring rain.
- to describe a temporary arrangement which may still be going on or which may just have finished:
e.g., I've **been staying** with my cousin for a week.



- for an activity which was going on, which has now finished and the result of which is still evident. (This, can be used to show anger, surprise, etc.)
e.g., Look at the mess you are in! What on earth **have** you **been doing**?
I can see that you've **been decorating**. The house looks lovely!

Use of Past Tense Forms

Past Simple is used:

- when a definite point in time is mentioned when talking about the past, especially when the time is occurred in is completed (i.e., last night, in 2005).
e.g., Last night I **went** to a concert.
The last time I **saw** Maria was three years ago.
- when the event took place at a time the speaker is aware of but does not mention:
e.g., Jane: **Did** you **have** a nice time in Paris?
Peter: Yes, we **did**.
- for a number of events which took place one after another in the past:
e.g., The thief **went** into the bank, **pulled out** a gun and **pointed** it at the cashier.
- To describe a past habit:
e.g., When I was at school, I **got up** every day at seven o'clock.

Used to only exists in the past form. It is used to express:

- a habit or state in the past:
e.g., I **used to** smoke cigars but now I chewing gum.
He **used to** be very fat but he's lost a lot of weight.
- Something which did not happen in the past but which has now become a habit or state.
e.g., I **didn't use to** go to the theatre but I try and go about once a month now.
I **never used to** like him but I do now.
- an inquiry about a habit or state in the past:
e.g., **Did** you **use to** do sports at school? (More common in British English)
Didn't you **use to** be much thinner?

Would is used to express:

- a habit or repeated event in the past which is now finished and which shows the speaker's attitude to the event (anger, irritation, etc.):



e.g., He **would** keep telling me what to do!

Past Progressive is used:

- for an event which was in progress when another event happened:
e.g., I **was driving** along the motorway when I had a flat.
- to set the scene and provide the background for a story:
e.g., It was six o'clock and darkness **was falling**.
- For two or more events which were in progress at the same time in the past:
e.g., I **was digging** the garden while John **was painting** the kitchen.
- for an event which had been arranged but which did not happen:
e.g., He **was coming** to dinner but he had to go away on business.

Past Perfect is used:

- for an event which happened before another in the past:
e.g., I went back home because I **'d forgotten** my keys.
I was sure I **hadn't seen** him.
By the time the murderer was caught, she had killed 5 people.
- With *scarcely/ hardly + when* or *no sooner + than*:
e.g., I **had scarcely/ hardly put** the phone down when the bell rang.
No sooner had I left the house than it started to rain.

Past Perfect Progressive is used:

- to emphasize the continuous nature of an action or activity which happened before another in the past:
E.g., They **'d been talking** for hours when they suddenly realized it was midnight.

Use of Future Tense Forms and Other Ways of Talking about the Future

Future Simple (will/ shall) is used:

- to talk about the future, especially for verbs that don't occur in the progressive:
e.g., Tomorrow **will be** fine and sunny.
We'll have everything ready/
- For promises, offers and in the negative, refusals
I'll help you.
I'll write the report.
I won't be able to come, I have to work that day.



Future Progressive is used:

- for an event which will be in the progress at a certain time in the future:
e.g., This time next week I'll **be swimming** in the Mediterranean.

Future Perfect is used:

- for an event which will be over not later than a certain time in the future:
e.g., They'll **have finished** their report by tomorrow.

Future Perfect Progressive is used:

- for something still in progress but which will be complete not later than a certain time in the future:
e.g., He'll **have been working** for the bank for 30 years next summer.

In addition to the future tense forms, the following forms and phrases are used to talk about the future.

Be going to is used for:

- an intention:
e.g., I'm **going to write** some letters.
- an indication that something is probable:
e.g., Look at those black clouds. I think it's **going to rain**.

Present Simple is used for:

- future events on a timetable or a fixed program:
e.g., The match **begins** at 3:30.
When he **comes**, I'll tell you.

Present Progressive is used for:

- a definite arrangement, plan or appointment:
e.g., We're **flying** to Spain next week.
I'm **taking** my driving test tomorrow.

Be about to or *be on the point of* is used for:

- an event which is or was just going to take place:
e.g., The plane **is on the point of taking off**.
Nick **was just about to put** the money in his pocket.

Passive Tense Forms

The passive is formed by using a form of *be* (is, has been, will be, was, etc.) + the past participle of the verb (made, seen, given, prepared). The tenses and rules for their use, are the same as for active verb forms. **Note**,



however, that we usually avoid saying *be being* and *been being*, so that future progressive and perfect progressive tenses are very uncommon.

Look at the following examples:

<i>Present Simple Passive:</i>	English is spoken here.
<i>Present Progressive Passive:</i>	Excuse the mess: the house is being painted .
<i>Present Perfect Passive:</i>	Has Mary been told ?
<i>Present Perfect Progressive Passive:</i>	How long has the research been being done ? (US: How long has the research been in progress)
<i>Past Simple Passive:</i>	I wasn't invited , but I've come anyway.
<i>Past Progressive Passive:</i>	I felt as if I was being watched ."
<i>Past Perfect Passive:</i>	I knew why I had been chosen .
<i>Past Perfect Progressive</i>	I wondered how long I'd been being followed . (US: I wondered how long someone had been following me.)
<i>Future Simple Passive:</i>	You'll be told in advance.
<i>Future Progressive Passive:</i>	You'll be being told in the near future.
<i>Future Perfect Progressive:</i>	By next Christmas, that bridge will have been being built (US: By next Christmas, that bridge will have been under construction for 5 years).
<i>Going to structure:</i>	Who's going to be invited ?
<i>Modal Structures</i>	He ought to be shot. You might have been hurt .

The passive is used:

- when the agent is unknown or not important:
e.g., Five policemen **have been killed** in Northern Ireland.
The water **was heated** and a solution of chemicals **was prepared**.
- to make the object of the active verb more important:
e.g., A description of the gunman **was issued** by the police.
- when the description of the agent is very long:
e.g., A charity record **has been made** by many famous names in the world of pop music.



6. Conditionals

Conditional is a kind of a sentence which uses *if* or *unless*. It talks about situations which are not real. There are three main types of conditional sentences:

The *Real Conditional* is used (UK = Conditional 1):

- for general facts that do not change:
e.g., ***If*** you ***take*** drugs regularly, you become addicted to them.
- for scientific facts:
If you ***mix*** the colors blue and red, you ***get*** purple.
- mainly for future possibilities:
e.g., ***If*** you ***work*** hard, you'll ***get*** a good job.
Unless you ***study***, you ***won't pass*** your examination.

The *Unreal Conditional* is used (UK= Conditional 2):

- for 'unreal' or improbable conditions in the present or future:
e.g., ***If*** I ***had*** a million pounds, I ***would buy*** a yacht.
If he ***knew*** the answer, he ***wouldn't tell*** me.
If Mary ***were*** here now, she ***would drive*** me home.
- for giving advice and suggestions:
e.g., ***If*** I ***were*** you, I ***wouldn't accept*** that offer.

The *Past Conditional* is used (UK= Conditional 3):

- for unreal or improbable conditions in the past:
e.g., We ***would have gone*** abroad for our holidays, ***if*** we ***hadn't bought*** a new car.
- to imply regret:
e.g., ***If*** we ***hadn't set out late***, we ***wouldn't have been caught*** in the traffic jam.
- to imply criticism:
e.g., ***If*** you ***had listened*** to your father, you ***wouldn't have made*** so many mistakes.

7. U.S. vs. British English

While there are many varieties of English, *American and British English* are the two varieties that are most commonly taught in most ESL/EFL programs. Generally, it is agreed that no one version is "correct" however, there are certainly preferences in use. The most important rule of thumb is to try to be consistent in your usage.



If you decide that you want to use American English spellings then be consistent in your spelling (i.e. The *color* of the orange is also its *flavor* – *color* is American spelling and *flavour* is British), this is of course not always easy – or possible. The following guide is meant to point out the principal differences between these two varieties of English.

Vocabulary

Sometimes different words are used for the same idea in American and British English:

US	GB
apartment	flat
baby-carriage	pram
cab	taxi
candy	sweets
cookie	biscuit
corn	Maize
dessert	sweet
elevator	lift
fall	autumn
first floor	ground floor
flashlight	torch
movie	film
one-way	single (ticket)
trash	rubbish
truck	van, lorry
vacation	holiday(s)

Spelling

- In American English, final *l* is not usually doubled in an unstressed syllable:
e.g., traveler (US) – traveller (GB).
- Some words end in **-ter** in American English and **-tre** in British:
e.g., theater, center (US) - theatre, centre (GB).
- Some words end in **-or** in American English and **-our** in British:
e.g., labor, honor, color (US) – labour, honour, colour (GB).
- Some words end in **-og** in American English and **-ogue** in British:
e.g., catalog, dialog, analog (US) – catalogue, dialogue, analogue (GB).
- Some words end in **-ize** in American English, but in **-ize** or **-ise** in British:
e.g., realize (US) – realize or realise (GB)

**Here is a list of most common spelling differences in individual words:**

US	GB
aluminum	aluminium
analyze	analyse
check	cheque (from a bank)
defense	defence
dialog	dialogue
jewelry	jewellery
offense	offence
practice (verb)	practice
program	programme

Differences in the Use of Tense Forms

In both American and British English the *Present Perfect* is used to express an action that has occurred in the recent past that has an effect on the present moment:

e.g., I **ve lost** my key. Can you help me look for it?

However in American English the simple past tense is also frequently used:

e.g., I **lost** my key. Can you help me look for it?

In British English the above would be considered incorrect. However, both forms are generally accepted in standard American English.

Other differences involving the use of the *Present Perfect* in British English and *Simple Past* in American English include *already, just* and *yet*. For example,

Possession

There are two forms to express possession in English: *have* or *have got*. While both forms are correct (and accepted in both British and American English), *have got* (have you got, he hasn't got, etc.) is generally the preferred form in British English while most speakers of American English employ the *have* (do you have, he doesn't have etc.)

GB	US
Have you got a car?	Do you have a car?
He hasn't got any friends.	He doesn't have any friends.
She's got a beautiful new home.	She has a beautiful new home.



Notice The past participle of the verb *get* is *gotten* in American English and *got* in British English. e.g., He's ***gotten*** much better at playing tennis. (US) – He's ***got*** much better at playing tennis. (GB)

Prepositions

There are also a few differences in preposition use including the following:

GB	US
<i>at</i> the weekend	<i>On</i> the weekend
<i>in</i> a team	<i>on</i> a team
– Monday <i>to</i> Friday Monday <i>to</i> Friday inclusive	Monday <i>through</i> Friday

Past Simple / Past Participles

The following verbs have two acceptable forms of the past simple / past participle in both American and British English, however, the irregular form is generally more common in British English (the first form of the two) and the regular form is more common to American English.

GB/US (literary)	US
burn – burnt	burned
dream – dreamt	dreamed
lean – leant	leaned
learn – learnt	learned
smell – smelt	smelled
spell – spelt	spelled

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