



ENGLISH PRACTICE MATERIAL

TEACHER'S MANUAL: WRITING

A2·B1



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The Teacher's Manual

This teacher's manual has been produced to support you in your planning of lessons using English Practice Material A2·B1. It includes suggestions on how to present the material, ideas for additional activities and further information on particular topics. You should use it as much or as little as you feel is necessary. Below are some general tips on using the four books.

American English vs. British English

English Practice Material A2·B1 has been written by experienced, native speakers of English from a variety of backgrounds. You will find both American English (AE) and British English (BE) expressions, phrases, vocabulary and spelling throughout the books. telc considers it essential to learning, that students are exposed to these differences. Both versions are correct and, as a teacher, you should feel comfortable teaching whichever version suits you.

Warm ups

Each unit in each of the books begins with a warm up exercise. This activity is always communicative (usually spoken) and usually conducted in pairs. The units have been constructed in such a way that the skill activities (i.e. listening in the Listening book) are interspersed with spoken communication activities. This varies the pace of the lesson and keeps students engaged. During the warm up phase you may need to give your own example to prompt students' thinking.

Talking about personal experiences

Much of the work at the A2·B1 level focuses on talking about personal experience. If students are uncomfortable sharing personal information or anecdotes, it is perfectly acceptable for them to talk about another person (e.g. a family member or friend).

Supplementing material

Each unit in English Practice Material A2·B1 includes a grammar point, however the focus of the material is skill practice. If you wish to practise a grammar point more thoroughly, it will be necessary to include complementary activities and exercises, either sourced from other publications or the Internet, or written by you.

Learner styles

Different learners respond to different types of activities. Learners can sometimes be categorised as visual, auditory, reading-writing or kinaesthetic (VARK) or a combination of all four aspects. When supplementing material (or when planning activities from the book), it may be useful to consider whether it is possible to present the material in a way that benefits a particular learner type. For more on learner styles, see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learning_styles#Neil_Fleming.27s_VAK.2FVARK_model

Authentic material

Where possible, bring authentic material into the class. Students respond better to 'real' material, such as menus, magazines, photos or realia. You can use this authentic material to substitute or supplement the book content, as appropriate.

Links and video clips

Where links have been suggested in the teacher's manual, please check them to ensure that they work and that their content is suitable for your class. For links to video clips, it is essential that you watch the clips before showing them in class to ensure that their content and language is appropriate for your class. telc is not responsible for any external material suggested in this manual.

Pair checking

Checking work in pairs is an important stage in feeding back answers and ideas to the whole class. Students are more likely to be forthcoming if they have built their confidence by discussing their answers with a partner. For listening and reading activities, in particular, where students have worked alone on a task, try to include a quick pair check.

Writing in pairs

Students, especially at the lower levels, may lack confidence in writing. It is therefore sometimes useful for students to write a single text in pairs, combining their ideas and language to produce work that is of a higher quality. Where students are writing alone, it is important to give them time to brainstorm their ideas (ideally in pairs or small groups), especially at A2 level. You should also help them with vocabulary and suitable language.

Listening to audio recordings

The Listening, Speaking and Reading books include an audio CD. For lower levels, you may need to play a recording more than once and to pause the recording between questions. Moreover, you can always refer the students to the audioscript in the back of each book for them to read and listen simultaneously. Note: the CD for the Reading book contains the written texts in the book in audio form.

Photographs and pictures

Where students are required to describe a picture from the book (as practice for part 2 of the Speaking subtest of the A2-B1 exam), it may be helpful to copy and blow up the picture so that students can see the detail more clearly.

Internet access in the classroom

If you have access to the Internet in classroom, make use of this resource by showing video clips, looking at texts online or allowing students to use their smartphones to look for ideas on a particular topic.

Answer key

For many activities, answers can be found in the Answer Key at the back of the student book. For others, there may be multiple answers or no 'correct' answer. You should decide which answers are correct in the context of the activity.

telc A2-B1 online

An online platform to practise the skills and grammar presented in the books will be available on the telc website from September 2015. For more information: <https://campus.telc.net/>

Topic	Weekend plans / interesting things to do at the weekend	CEFR	Notes, messages and forms
Grammar	Infinitive, infinitive without "to" or -ing form	Aim	Practise writing informal messages to make/ respond to suggestions*

Note: This is the first unit in the book to address writing emails, a skill that comes up throughout the book and which is part of the A2:B1 and B1 Writing subtests. This might be a good opportunity to teach or revise appropriate salutations and closings in emails (Dear Mrs... / Hi; best wishes / love from, etc.).

Warm Up

Getting the students to write their ideas up on the board is a good way to help them feel engaged with the lesson and ease them into the material. If there are any particularly unusual or interesting suggestions, discuss them with the class.

Activity 1

As an extension, or for more advanced students, you could combine the ideas from the Warm up activity and get the students to use the fixed structures to make their own suggestions.

Activity 2

You might want to draw the students' attention to the phrase 'Let me know if you're interested', as this is a fixed expression that they could use when writing their notes in Activity 3.

Activity 3

The instructions in this activity ask the student to write a note to a classmate. To avoid a situation in which some students get no invitations, either put the students into pairs or ask them to draw names of other students from a hat. This last suggestion is nice as it gets students who don't normally work together to interact.

It's also nice if students can write their notes on 'real' notepaper rather than in their exercise books so that they can share them with their classmates in Activity 5 later. Try to find some A5 paper or tear some A4 sheets in half for the students.

Activity 4

4a If students suggest something that would be impolite, (e.g. 'No I don't want to') explain why it's impolite and propose a more suitable alternative.

Activity 5

You could collect the notes from Activity 3 and put them at the front of the class or stick them on the board and ask the students to collect the note addressed to them. Or have one student act as 'postman'.

Remind the students to use the expressions from the lesson the next time they go out with an English-speaking friend.

* Unit 12 (Speaking) also addresses making suggestions.

Topic Daily schedule / chores

CEFR Grammatical accuracy

Grammar Simple present and frequency adverbs / adverbial phrases

Aim Practise writing about daily schedules

Warm Up

The topic for this unit is daily schedules and routines. You could show a clip of the film, *Groundhog Day*, in which the main character relives the same day over and over again. The character becomes depressed by his existence in a time loop, repeating the same activities. Discuss with the group why routine and repetition can be tedious.

'Chores' is likely to be a new word for the students so they may need you to give some examples. Collect ideas on the board as they will be useful for Activity 1b.

You may have practised comparative and superlative adjectives during the activities in the *Speaking* book on this emotion. You could revise this language using chore vocabulary, e.g. 'hoovering is more boring than cooking', 'ironing is the most boring chore'.

Activity 1

You may need to pre-teach 'laundry', 'groceries' and 'grocery shopping'. Note: 'rubbish' = BE; 'garbage' and 'trash' = AE. If much of the vocab is new, you could get the students to mime and guess chores.

1b and c If you want to get the students up and moving and chatting to one another, you could change this activity so that they survey their classmates. They could either interview a small group of students and ask about all the chores or each student could be responsible for one chore and interview all of their classmates. They could then report back to the group/class (e.g. "Pascale cleans the windows more often than Ellen, but Raj cleans the windows the most often. He does it every month.").

You could also get the students to work out how long they spend doing chores every week/month. Ask them if they think they do too many chores or spend too much time doing chores? Are they happy with the chores they do?

Activity 2

2b To illustrate the frequency of these adverbs, you could draw a line on the board with 'always' at one end and 'never' at the other. Note that they are already printed in the correct order in the student's book. Alternatively you could ask the students to write Roy's activities on the board in order of frequency or next to each adverb.

2c This is a good activity to practise writing correct third person singular endings. It's worth getting the students to read out their text to make sure that they are also pronouncing the 's' endings.

Activity 4

4a Partners could check each other's work for errors in adverb or time expression placement.

4b The emphasis here is, again, on the 's' third person singular endings. Again, ask the students to read their sentences out loud and listen for pronunciation.

Topic Family celebrations

Grammar Prepositions: in, at, on

CEFR Overall written interaction

Aim Practise writing semi-formal invitations

Warm Up

Pre-teach 'graduation' and explain that in the US, schools have graduation ceremonies, while in the UK, graduation tends to be the ceremony for degree completion (though more and more British schools are holding school graduations too). 'Bachelor' and 'bachelorette' parties = AE; 'stag party' (groom) and 'hen party' (bride) = BE.

When did the students last have a big family celebration? What's enjoyable about celebrating with many people and what are the potential problems?

Activity 1

Get the students to work in pairs initially and then feed back to the group. If students are reluctant to talk in front of the whole class, they could swap partners a few times instead.

Activity 2

You could also bring in some authentic materials here. Wedding invitations are particularly interesting to students!

Point out the differences in formality and style in the invitations: number 1 is very informal (the appearance, the wording, the method of responding), while number 2 is more formal. Students may also notice that the invitations use the American date format: Day, Month Date. British invitations may use Day Date Month. This is also reflected in spoken language: "Thursday, February 10th" vs. "Thursday [the] 10th [of] February".

Activity 3

Note that in Activity 3a, the grammar point is prepositions with dates and times and in b, it is prepositions with places. You can supplement material and worksheets for prepositions of time and place here.

Activity 4

Students can use the ideas in the Warm up and the examples in Activity 2 as a template for their invitations.

Optional Activity

This is a nice activity if you have the resources. If not, you could set the task as homework and ask the students to bring in their examples for the next class.

Topic Importance of belonging to a group

Grammar There is / there are

Warm Up

It's quite possible that the students won't belong to any groups, especially if they are new to the country. If so, ask them to think about groups they belonged to as children (equivalents of the Scouts, Guides or Brownies (www.girlguiding.org.uk), etc.). Those who do belong to groups should be encouraged to talk about them. If newly arrived students seem keen to know more about joining groups in their new country, you could refer them to appropriate websites or advise them on how to find contact information. Many people now use Meetup to meet likeminded people (www.meetup.com). There are now Meetup groups all over the world.

Activity 1

Point out the 'any' in negative plural sentences, and that it comes immediately before the noun.

The first word printed in each sentence is the starting word. You could do the first sentence as a class example, especially as it is a question and students may forget to invert the subject and verb.

Activity 2

You may need to pre-teach 'bridge' and explain its rules (see: www.wikihow.com/Play-Bridge or www.acolbridgeclub.com/about-bridge/why-learn-bridge).

2b Remind students that 'there's' is a contraction of 'there is'.

CEFR Thematic development

Aim Practise describing a group/ club you belong to

Activity 3

The students can write short answers but should be able to expand on these with full sentences if asked.

Activity 4

4a When choosing two people to be 'new' to town, choose two who are likely to be able to give a lot of information about their interests.

Alternative Activity 4b (or homework)

Ask students, either individually (for homework) or in groups (in class) to make a flyer or poster with information about a group they belong to. Ask them to include detail from the questions from the table in Activity 3. Give the students coloured pens to make their flyers/posters attractive. If working in groups, ask each group to present their poster to the rest of the class and to invite the other students to join their group.

Topic Facing your fears

Grammar Adverbs of degree: quite, extremely, a little, completely

Warm up

Have any of the students ever jumped off a high diving board? How was it?

Activity 1

Although the purpose of this unit is to describe feelings (i.e. using adjectives), if you want to quickly boost your students' vocabulary and are confident that they know when and how to use different parts of speech, you could ask them to think about the nouns and verbs related to each of the adjectives. You could draw a table on the board and ask them to complete it. However, don't let this exercise distract from the overall aim of the unit – to talk about feelings.

Activity 2

You could adapt this activity and instead use photographs for each of the scenarios. You could get the students to describe the photos first to practise the second part of the A2-B1 Speaking subtest. Then ask them to choose their adjectives.

Monitor the students closely while they're working on this activity to ensure that they have fully comprehended the meaning and intensity of the adjectives (e.g. 'adventurous' is unlikely (but not impossible!) to be a suitable adjective to describe the fourth situation.) If students have 'odd' answers, ask them to justify their choice.

CEFR Vocabulary control

Aim Practise writing about experiences

Activity 3

3a Note that some of the adverbs of intensity don't work with all of the adjectives (e.g. 'perfectly excited' doesn't work). Ask the students to choose a different adverb if their original choice is incorrect.

Activity 5

It's important to collect ideas before writing so that the students have some concrete examples to think about and to avoid frustration. It may also be useful to give your own example upfront to promote sharing. Emphasise that it's perfectly acceptable for the students to write about other people's experiences if they find writing about themselves too personal. Ask them to look at the example in Activity 4: although the content is different, they can use the structure (introduction, problem, solution, conclusion) as a model for their own writing.

Topic I'm so glad it's over!
Grammar Definite and indefinite articles

CEFR Correspondence

Aim Practise writing a personal email

Warm up

Ask the students how they feel when an unpleasant event ends. What kinds of feelings do they have and how do they feel physically? Do they relax immediately or does it take a little while? Do they celebrate afterwards?

Activity 1

Can the students add any other words to the list?

Activity 2

If you wanted to make this activity more kinaesthetic, you could cut the emails out and give a set of four cards to the students.

2c See if the students can find the expressions to convey relief in the emails without looking at the list.

Activity 3

Take note of the sticky note on pronunciation. Many students, especially if they look at a word instead of hearing it, want to use 'an' for words like 'university'. Explain that the sound is what is important. Note: MBA = Master in Business Administration (a common post-graduate degree).

There are, obviously, exceptions to the rules described in the grammar box, however, at this level, it's best to stick to the examples given. An example that may come up, given the topic of this unit, is 'university' vs. 'the university'. We use the zero article to talk about universities in general (or the institution of university) and 'the' when we talk about a particular university (e.g. the University of Bath).

Activity 4

You can get the students to write the email in pairs if you think that would be useful and would generate higher quality content and language. This activity is similar to the Writing subtest of the A2:B1 and B1 exams where students need to write an email based on guiding points. You could ask the students to swap emails to correct mistakes or suggest improvements.

Topic Common spelling errors

Grammar Plural nouns;
irregular plural forms

CEFR Orthographic control

Aim Improve spelling

Warm up

To, too, two is an example of a homophone. Other examples are road/rowed/rode, bye/by/buy or whether/weather. Can the students think of another example?

Activity 1

Once the students have chosen the correct options, you could ask them for the meanings of the incorrect words. Get them to make sentences with the other words to show understanding.

Activity 2

The students will always find exceptions to the rules ('roofs' not 'rooves'). Explain that it's better to adhere to the rules than seek out the exceptions!

2b 'Persons' has not been included as a possible plural for 'person' because the exercise is about irregular plural forms and 'persons' is now restricted more to formal or legal English.

2c See the answer key in the student's book for suggestions.

Activity 3

Unlike some languages, English is not spoken as it is written. This causes problems for students who want to write words as they are pronounced. Ask the students to make the list of difficult-to-spell words on the board. There is a list of the 100 most commonly misspelt words here: <http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/spelling-and-word-lists/misspelled.html> Note, however that many are not A2-B1 words.

3b Mnemonics are especially useful if the content of the sentence is related to the word itself (e.g. rhythm – rhythm helps your two hips move).

3c Share any additional advice you have for spelling tricky words. Visual learners may be able to remember spellings if they add pictures or images (e.g. words with double-'o' could have eyes).

Before Activity 4

Refer back to the list made as a class. Can the students come up with ways of remembering any of the words that you have not already used?

Remember to get the students to quiz each other on the spellings in the next class. What can they remember?

Topic Job application**Grammar** Collocations**CEFR** Grammatical accuracy**Aim** Write a CV and short application letter**Warm Up**

Can the students guess the topic of the class from the three word pairs? When did they last apply for a job? What was their experience?

Activity 1 and Activity 2

CV layouts vary by country. The template in the student's book includes most of the possible information that could be included in a CV.

Note: British and American CVs these days do not include a photograph, marital status, sex, nationality or age. Employment history should appear before education for people who have already held a job. Recent graduates may put education before employment history.

Some people like to include their referee details (name, address, phone number, email). Others prefer to write 'References available on request', which is perfectly acceptable. In the UK, candidates are interviewed before their referees are contacted. References should only be used to confirm that a recruiter has chosen the correct candidate but not to make their decision.

When the students write their CVs, encourage them to keep them simple and concise.

Activity 2

2a Get the students to work in pairs to complete the cover letter with prepositions. Monitor the pairs carefully. Rather than telling them which prepositions they've got wrong, you could tell them how many mistakes they have made and ask them to try again.

2b Make sure they write the verb-preposition collocations down in their vocabulary or exercise books and test them in the next class to see what they can recall.

2c Melanie is well qualified for the Family Tours job. While she doesn't have accounting skills (or she doesn't say that she does), she has a degree in tourism, meets the criteria for previous experience in travel agency work and is fluent in French. Sarah is also well qualified for the job, having studied tourism and worked in tourism since 2002. She speaks French and Spanish at a B2 level. Sarah is better qualified than Melanie and has accounting skills, however, she might be overqualified.

Further information

The Europass website (www.europass.cedefop.europa.eu) (from which the CV template in the student's book is adapted) is a very useful resource for students who don't already have a CV. Recommend it to them.

Additional activity

You could get the students to choose one idea from the Open Day and make a poster advertising the room. Provide them with a large piece of paper and coloured pens and let them be creative!

Topic Old age and loneliness

CEFR Overall written interaction

Grammar Passive

Aim Improve written communication

Note on language: there is an ongoing debate on the most suitable way to describe older people. Words used in this unit such as 'senior'/'senior citizen' and 'elderly' are in common usage, as is 'pensioner', which is someone who is old enough to receive a state pension. 'OAP' for 'old aged pensioner' is also sometimes used. The best advice for the students is to understand the variety of terms used, but also understand that some can be problematic. The British charity, Age UK, prefers 'older people'.

Warm up

Ask the students to discuss the questions in pairs and then ask them to share their discussion with the rest of the class.

Activity 2

It would be useful to point out the collocation 'take steps to'. You may also need to teach 'appreciation'.

Activity 3

3a To practise gist reading, give the students just one minute (or two minutes for A2s) to answer this question. Ensure that they know the difference between the 'host' and the 'guests'.

3b Put the class into small groups to come up with ideas and then elicit these ideas to the board.

Activity 4

Mention to the students that it is not always necessary to include the agent in the sentence if the agent is not particularly relevant, (i.e. 'the guests are picked up' would be perfectly acceptable and 'by the driver' merely adds information).

4a Make sure that the students understand that they are looking for the past participle and not the past simple.

If you feel that the students need to revise their past participles, you could do some past participle bingo. There are websites that allow you to input words (in this case past participle verbs) and generate bingo cards for the whole class.

You may need to teach 'leftovers'.

Activity 5

Explain that the students can use Martha's letter as a template and encourage them to use passive constructions. A2 students will likely need support to convey their ideas fully.

Topic Family history

Grammar Apostrophe

CEFR Orthographic control

Aim Practise writing a blog post

Warm Up

Be prepared to add new words to the lists and be able to explain their meanings. The best way to explain this is to use the family tree to show the connections (see Activity 3).

Activity 1

Introduce the topic by talking about your own family, its history and how we can go about finding out more about our ancestors – family trees, genealogy websites, DNA testing.

1a Get the students to talk about their own family history before reading Aiden's story.

1b You can supplement this activity with other exercises using more countries/nationalities.

Activity 2

2a If the students have already studied the use of the apostrophe for contractions, ensure that they understand that this activity practises the possessive apostrophe and aren't getting confused. Also make sure the students don't get carried away and start using apostrophes to make plurals!

2b Get the students to check each other's sentences.

Activity 3

3a You can adapt this activity to use another family tree instead, such as your own. You could make a large version with photos of your family members and their names stuck on the wall. If you're not comfortable using your own family, you could research the Queen's family tree and use that instead (<http://www.britroyals.com/royaltree.htm>). Search for a photographic version too.

3b As the students make their own family tree, they are likely to need additional vocabulary such as in-laws or step-relatives. You may also need to explain the differences between 'separated', 'divorced' and 'widowed'. A widow is a woman whose husband has died, a widower is a man whose wife has died. We also use the French words fiancé for the man who is engaged and fiancée for the woman who is engaged.

3c The students could write their blog post for homework. Ask them to look at Aiden's story again to get a structure for their writing. If the students write the blog in class, you could stick them up on the wall and see if they can guess which post belongs to whom. Who has the most interesting family?

Topic Grocery shopping

CEFR Vocabulary control

Grammar (Un)countable nouns:
How much? How many?*

Aim Practise writing shopping lists

Note on language: many words in this unit are the American English (AE) versions. Where a British alternative is possible, it has been included here. All are correct. You should teach the version that you are most comfortable with.

Warm Up

'Grocery shopping' is the AE expression (and increasingly a BE expression). Most people in Britain talk about 'going shopping', 'doing the shopping' or 'going to the supermarket/ market'.

b Elicit the students' five items and make a 'super-list' on the board.

Activity 1

1a 'Beverages' = AE; 'drinks' = BE.
'Shrimps' = AE and BE; 'prawns' = BE.
'Napkins', also 'serviettes' = BE.
'Crackers' = AE; 'biscuits' (both sweet and savoury) = BE.

1b Elicit any new words to the board. 'Canned goods' = AE; 'tinned goods' = BE.

Activity 2

Note that 'afternoon tea' is not just tea for drinking. It may include sandwiches, scones and other foods and drinks. Students may also see 'BBQ' for barbecue.

Activity 3

3a 'Tub' of ice cream, butter, margarine is also possible in BE.

3b Weights in the US are usually in pounds (lb) and ounces (oz), while liquid measures are in fluid ounces (fl oz), pints (pt) and gallons (gal) (the Imperial system). In the UK, people may often talk about pounds and ounces as well, however 'officially' the measurement system is Metric – grams (g), kilograms (kg), millilitres (ml) and litres (l). When using US recipes, you may also see 'cups' which is a standard measure of 8.45 fl oz or 240ml. See: <http://www.worldwidemetric.com/measurements.html> for a handy conversion chart.

Activity 4

You could use your 'super-list' from the Warm up and ask the students to put the items into countable and uncountable categories.

Ask the students what the difference is between 'chocolate' (in a bar) and 'chocolates' (individual chocolates in a box). Students may also ask about 'a coffee' (apparently countable) as opposed to 'coffee'. Ask them to think about the word that is not being said (cup) and explain that it's the cup, not the coffee, that is countable.

Encourage the students to write their shopping lists in English from now on.

* Unit 18 (Speaking) focuses on fewest/least.

* Unit 19 (Writing) focuses on few vs. a few and little vs. a little.

Topic George VI,
shocked to be king

Grammar Speech marks

CEFR Orthographic control

Aim Learn and practise correct
punctuation

Warm Up

There is plenty of information about the British monarchy on the Internet (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/>). See how many kings and queens the students can name and if they know when they reigned. There is also a mnemonic for remembering all the kings and queens of England (since William the Conqueror): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mnemonic_verse_of_monarchs_in_England

Activity 1

You could show a clip of the trailer from the film, *The King's Speech*: (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzI4D6dyp_o) to introduce the topic. You can also find some of George VI's speeches.

Ask the students to read the text quite quickly so that they get the general message of the text but don't become fixated on detail or words they don't know. After they have chosen their title, they can go back through the text to look for new vocabulary.

Activity 2

2a If you think this activity is going to be very difficult for your students, you could draw the punctuation marks on the board and get the students to match them to their names.

Note: For ':' 'full stop' = BE; 'period' AE. A dash is also sometimes known as a hyphen. Increasingly, students also need to know '_' (underscore) for email addresses.

2c You can model the activity using any line from the text about George VI so the students understand what they're supposed to do. Make sure they don't show their partner the written sentence until it's finished. You could also turn this activity into a running dictation if you want to get the students up and moving about. Copy the sentences out onto another piece of paper and stick it to the far wall of the classroom and get the students to memorise a section before returning to their partner to dictate it.

Activity 3

If you have access to an electronic whiteboard or overhead projector, it would be very useful to put the text on the board for the whole class to see. Once they have edited the text in their books, call on them to come up to the board to add the punctuation so everyone can see.

Activity 4

You could get the students to make notes from the original text before asking them to close their books. This removes the requirement to memorise information and allows them to focus on the writing itself.

Topic Problems and solutions;
advice

Grammar Modal: should

Warm Up

Try to keep this as general and light as possible. It's not necessary for the students to share their deepest worries!

Activity 1

1c The students may not wish to share their answer for this question.

Additional activity (after activity 2)

A nice activity to practise 'should' is to give each student the name of an animal and then get them to write about a worry on behalf of that animal (e.g. 'gold fish' = I'm worried because I have a terrible memory/ 'pig' = I'm worried because my place is always such a mess) on a slip of paper. Collect all the slips of paper, then read them out one by one and get the students to propose solutions to the animal's problem using 'should' (I think you should) + infinitive.

CEFR Overall written interaction

Aim Improve written
communication

Activity 3

It may be useful to get the students to work in pairs to write their response. Encourage them to use the language practised in Activity 2. You could stick the replies up on the wall (keep the different problems separate) and then get the students to move around and read their classmates' ideas. They could choose the best advice for each problem.

Activity 4

Help the students with vocabulary or phrasing so that they can fully express themselves.

Have the students ever used an English learners' forum? What kinds of questions can they ask on this kind of forum? Can this kind of forum be as useful as a traditional dictionary? Why/ why not?

Topic Cultural differences
Grammar Zero conditional and conditional 1

CEFR Overall written production
Aim Practise writing an email or postcard

Warm Up

If students come from countries other than the one you are teaching them in, they can share their observations of the difference between their home country and new country.

Activity 1

There is a list of 50 cultural faux pas here: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2013/09/23/50-foreign-faux-pas-infographics_n_3975861.html According to the website, it's considered rude to add salt to a meal in Egypt and to give a thumbs-up sign in Iran. The website has a nice graphic that might be worth incorporating into the lesson in some way.

You can add some examples from the '50 faux pas' list or ones that you have heard about yourself to extend the activity.

Activity 2

There are plenty of activities on the zero and first conditionals that you can use to supplement the material in the book. You could use the other examples you came up with as a class (e.g. If we visit Egypt next year...). Draw the students' attention to the sticky note, as the difference between 'if' and 'when' can cause confusion in some languages.

Activity 4

The Writing subtest for the A2 exam requires candidates to write a postcard to a friend so this is useful practice. With lower level students, you may need a brainstorming step. Students can look at each other's work to find mistakes if they're willing to share.

Additional activity

A really lovely activity to get the students up and moving about is to invent some of your own cultural embarrassments. Split the group into two. Explain that, within their group, they're going to invent three 'hidden etiquette rules' (i.e. things that would be considered rude, such as shaking hands, talking to people with glasses or even saying 'yes' to a question). The rules can be as creative as the students like, but they must be things that would potentially come up during an introductory or small talk situation. Then send one of the two groups out so they can both agree on their rules in secret. After a couple of minutes, invite the outside group back in and get the students to walk around the class, introducing themselves and having a chat. After a few minutes of the students circulating and chatting, get them to say what they think the other group's hidden rules were.

Topic Thank you notes*

Grammar Contractions

CEFR Correspondence

Aim Practise writing personal letters and emails

Warm Up

Before the warm up, ask the students to think back to the last time they received a present. What was it? Were they expecting it? Did they like it? How did they thank the gift giver?

Activity 1

This activity provides a structure for the students' thank you letters. They should study the structure carefully in order to be able to write their own note in Activity 5.

Activity 2

To make this activity more accessible for kinaesthetic learners, you could cut up the different text blocks and get the students to work in pairs or groups to arrange them. Mix them up to make it more challenging and interesting – only a few parts are interchangeable.

Activity 4

You can supplement plenty of additional material to this activity on contractions. Ensure that the students know that contractions are only appropriate in spoken English and in informal texts. In formal and academic writing they need to use the full forms.

Activity 5

It's easiest to cut out some slips of paper and give them to the students to write their present idea. Encourage them to be creative and to think of amusing as well as thoughtful gifts. Collect the slips of paper and then distribute them to the students. Ask the students to say what present they have received (this is often amusing). Can they guess who chose the present?

Then ask the students to write a thank you note for their present. Ideally they would write on a separate piece of paper that they can then give to the gift giver.

Additional activity

You can do an Internet search for 'famous thank you notes' and find copies of thank you letters from historical figures and celebrities, including Marilyn Monroe and Neil Armstrong. You could print one out and show it to the students (though you might have to help them with some of the vocabulary).

* Unit 15 (Speaking) addresses gifts and gift giving. It might, therefore, be worth working through that chapter before moving on to this one.

Topic What I hated as a child

Grammar “used to”

CEFR Grammatical accuracy

Aim Practise use of ‘used to’
to talk about the past

Warm Up

Give the students plenty of time for this activity as they will probably have lots to say. Monitor and ensure they are using the simple past when talking about completed actions.

Activity 1

1b Let the students discuss the question in pairs and then ask the whole class. Are there similarities?

Activity 2

Let students work in pairs to complete this gap fill exercise.

Students often confuse the main verb ‘to use’ with ‘used to’ and also with ‘to be/get used to’. Remind them that when they use ‘used to’, they need to use the infinitive, not the past simple (e.g. ‘I used to go’ not ‘I used to went’).

Note also that the positive form is ‘used to’ but the negative is ‘didn’t use_ to’ and the question form is ‘did you use_ to?’

Activity 4

Make up an example sentence with the whole class so that it’s clear to them that they need to build a sentence contrasting the past and present.

Draw the students’ attention to the sticky note. Students often want to use ‘used to’ to talk about something they did in the past but that they still do now. At this level, they should use the present perfect for actions that started in the past and continue today.

Activity 5

You can extend this activity if repetition is likely to be helpful. You could start the sentences for the students using information about yourself (e.g. I didn’t use to like talking in front of groups...).

Topic Bad news

Grammar “that” (to introduce a clause that is the subject or object of a verb)

Warm Up

Get the students to discuss the question in pairs and then take a show of hands. If most of the students prefer to hear the bad news first, why?

Activity 1

The aim of this unit is expressing concern or empathising. It therefore gives some standard phrases for this purpose and highlights the kind of expressions that are not appropriate.

As the sticky note explains, students have to make a judgement on the seriousness of the bad news in order to be able to respond appropriately. Emphasise that we can only use ‘cheer up’ in situations when the situation is not very serious or there is scope for their mood to change. When we say ‘cheer up’, we usually then add a positive sentiment, such as ‘I’m sure... (it’ll all seem better tomorrow)’.

‘That’s too bad’ = AE; ‘That’s a shame/pity’ or ‘What a shame/pity’ = BE

1c You can add some extra examples of bad news and get the students to propose a sentence with ‘I’m sure.../ I hope...’

CEFR Planning

Aim Practise language to express concern / empathy*

Activity 3

You can emphasise that including ‘that’ is more common in written language and leaving it out makes spoken English sound more natural and fluent.

Activity 4

Explain that the students are writing an email responding to the statement (not explaining the statement). Give them plenty of time to brainstorm their ideas before writing. Ensure that they are using a suitable greeting and closing and that their tone is appropriate (i.e. the email will need to be more sympathetic if the students choose the missing cat option).

A further example: I can't go skiing with you because I have terrible backache. I can hardly move.

* Unit 8 (Reading) addresses the use of ‘hope’ + present tense/ will (future)

Topic Films with envy as motive**CEFR** Flexibility**Grammar** "Going to" for the future***Aim** Write a film review

The CEFR descriptor in the unit has been simplified. The complete descriptor is as follows:

- B1** Can adapt his expression to deal with less routine, even difficult, situations. Can exploit a wide range of simple language flexibly to express much of what he/she wants.
- A2** Can adapt well-rehearsed memorised simple phrases to particular circumstances through limited lexical substitution. Can expand learned phrases through simple recombinations of their elements.



Warm up

You may need to help the students with some specific technical vocabulary for this activity. If you have a no-phones-in-the-classroom policy, remember to tell the students to put their phones away again after the discussion has finished!

Get the students to complete the activity in pairs and then go through the text carefully to ensure that everyone has the correct answers and understands why each tense has been used.

Activity 1

1a You will need to explain the concept of 'Keeping up with the Joneses'. It is defined by the Cambridge dictionary as: 'to always want to own the same expensive objects and do the same things as your friends or neighbours, because you are worried about seeming less important socially than they are'. Students may have heard of the reality TV show, Keeping up with the Kardashians, which is based on the 'Keeping up with the Joneses' idea.

1b After the students have completed the gap fill, you could show the trailer for the film, Keeping up with the Joneses: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aM7OzDrERfw>. Watch the trailer in full before class to ensure that the content is suitable for your students.

What do the students think of the film, as described in the review? Would they like to watch it? Why/why not? What do they think about the concept of the film as a critique of consumerism?

Activity 2

The film described in the second film review is Amadeus. A trailer for this film can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ao2kS2_hybK

Activity 3

This activity practises use of 'going to' + infinitive to talk about future plans. We use both 'going to' and present continuous to talk about future plans. Though there are nuanced differences in usage, at this level, it is appropriate to accept both as correct. Supplement material to make the most of this grammar point.

Activity 4

Other films that have envy as a key theme are the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, *Gladiator*, *Black Swan*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, and others...

* **Unit 17 (Reading)** focuses on use of the present continuous to talk about future plans

Topic Friendship

Grammar Few vs. a few and little vs. a little*

CEFR Overall written production

Aim Practise telling a story

Activity 1

If you want to expand this activity, you could put the students into small groups and give them a larger piece of paper. Get them to make a spider diagram with the different qualities of a friend. Then elicit the ideas and write them on the board.

Activity 2

Students often get confused between 'few' and 'a few' and 'little' and 'a little'. You could show the difference using small items (e.g. paperclips, water). Also convey that the choice of 'few' or 'a few' is also linked with the sentiment of the statement. 'Few friends' is meant as a rather negative situation, whereas 'a few friends' means a reasonably positive situation. On the other hand 'he makes few mistakes' is positive, whereas 'he makes a few mistakes' is comparatively negative.

Activity 3

3a After the students have completed the text, talk about the content to ensure that they have understood. What do they think of Alan? Do they have a friend that would do for them, what Alan did for Gary? How did Gary feel?

3b Remind the students that not all of the words fit into the text. They will therefore need to think about the grammar and sense of the words. Afterwards, go through the text to look at any new vocabulary (e.g. 'struggled', 'stormed in').

Activity 4

Students, especially at A2 level, may need prompting to produce quality writing. Suggest examples of your own that might jog the students' memories (e.g. a friend helping someone through a difficult break-up, a friend finding a really touching gift for someone, a friend supporting someone to do something they were afraid to do, etc.). Ask them to use the structure from Carla's or Gary's stories: scene setting, explaining the problem, describing how their friend helped. Ask them to say how the experience made them feel.

* Unit 18 (Speaking) focuses on fewest/least.

* Unit 11 (Writing) addresses countable and uncountable nouns.

Topic The stress of moving house **CEFR** Creative writing

Grammar Simple past or present perfect **Aim** Practise writing email

Warm Up

Give the students time to count up the number of times they have moved house. Then get all the students to stand up and arrange themselves in order with the person who has moved most on the right and the one who has moved least on the left. If you like, you could ask them to sit back down in that order, if you think it would be useful to mix up the usual seating arrangements.

Activity 1

Get the students to work on the word snake in pairs. Elicit the suggestions to the board. You may need to explain the meaning of 'renovating'.

Activity 2

Get students to work in pairs to complete the gap fill. Draw their attention to the grammar box and ensure that they understand the use of the present perfect (either an action that began in the past and continues now, or an action that has happened in the past but is still connected to now) and the past simple (a completed action). If this is new grammar, it may be worth doing activity 3a before completing the text (getting the students to underline the signal words in the text).

After the pairs have completed the text, change the pairs so that the students compare their answers with another person. Monitor in case of questions. When taking whole-class feedback, be prepared to draw timelines for any of the gaps in case disagreement arises.

Activity 3

3b Emphasise that the sentences in this activity are in the present perfect because it is not clear when the action happened and/or the action has a connection (relevance) with the present. When they add a specific time (last week, two years ago) the tense changes to past simple. To expand the activity, get the students to write some sentences of their own.

Note: number 6 is in the passive. You can ask the students to skip this question if you have not yet covered the passive.

Activity 4

This activity is practice for the Writing subtest of the B1 and A2:B1 exams. In these parts of the exam, candidates need to write an email based on four points. The candidates must cover all of these points fully and in a sensible order and begin and conclude their email appropriately. The second choice of email in this activity is more complex than the first so you may wish to ask the A2 candidates to work on the first option.

If the students are prepared to share their writing, you could ask them to pass their email to the person to their left for them to check for mistakes.

Creatively written by an international team of English language professionals and brought to life by telc, English Practice Material – vhs is a four-part series, using a fresh, flexible and practical approach. The parts are: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

Targeted at adult learners with upper A2 / lower B1 competence, each unit is based on a human emotion. A variety of aspects of each emotion are covered in a number of communicative situations. Learners are encouraged to compare and discuss their own experiences and emotional responses, thus covering all typical competencies of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) levels A2 and B1. This material is designed in a way that provides immediate access for both teachers and learners. All the activities are clear and self-explanatory and there are plenty of opportunities for individual or group work, role-plays, interviews, debates and discussions.

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