

PREVIEW



# Essential TEFL

Grammar,  
Lesson Plans  
and 300 Activities  
to Make You a  
Confident Teacher

by James Jenkin and Emma Foers

This PDF is a short selection of some of the pages included in the Essential TEFL book.  
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Introduction

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# Introduction

Here at i-to-i we believe that teaching English overseas can be extremely challenging (especially if it's your first time in the classroom), but with the right guidance and information your lessons can be fun and effective for both you and your students.

One of our missions as an organisation is to try to make TEFL as accessible as possible. We often hear stories of new teachers taking a suitcase full of grammar, methodology and activity books with them to their first job, only for them to still struggle to know what to do! So, we thought we'd do the sensible thing and put everything you really need into one simple format, and here it is: Essential TEFL.

We hope this book will be an ongoing support and inspiration to you. It aims to bring together everything a teacher needs to plan and deliver effective and engaging lessons: teaching techniques, lesson plans, activities, and instant grammar help.

Think of this book as your new best friend... it'll always be on hand with the information you need to survive the stickiest of teaching situations and ensure you walk into any classroom with total confidence.

Good luck with your teaching adventure ahead!



# How to Use this Book

We want this book to empower you - you're the one in the classroom! While we can show you what works from our experience, you should use this to supplement your own individual teaching style.

We recommend you select and tweak the activities and lesson ideas in here as you see fit – every classroom is different and you should try to adapt activities to suit the needs, dynamics and abilities of your classes. Try the activities, then shape and refine them each time you use them (make notes in this book so you can remember them for next time!).

For sheer teaching inspiration, you'll want to head to '**Activities**' (section 2) and '**Lesson Plans**' (section 3) – you'll find hundreds of ideas to bring your English lessons to life. Alternatively, if you want a reminder of the teaching basics, then take a look through '**How to Teach**' (section 1), particularly if you need to adapt your materials for a specific type of class.

Finally, if you're unsure about a specific grammar point, or need to remind yourself of the meaning of a specific TEFL term, then head to '**Grammar**' (section 4) or the **Appendix** for instant and easy-to-digest explanations.

Remember that there are no hard and fast rules in teaching. As teachers we're dealing with people - what's really important is to put the rule book aside, be receptive to what our students need and adjust our lessons accordingly!



## About the Authors

### James Jenkin – i-to-i Academic Director

James Jenkin has been teaching English as a foreign language since 1994, and has managed English language programmes in Vietnam, China and Australia. His classroom career has included teaching Sudanese refugees, Vietnamese government ministers and Chinese airline pilots.

James' particular love is teacher training, having been an accredited Cambridge CELTA tutor since 1998 and an i-to-i classroom TEFL tutor since 2006. He understands the needs, worries and dreams of people entering the TEFL world.

James has a Cambridge CELTA, a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Russian and Latvian, and a Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics.

### What James has to say



*New teachers can often feel overwhelmed. There seems to be so much to get on top of: grammar, planning, designing activities, knowing how to teach, and that's before you've even entered the classroom! Essential TEFL is designed to make English teaching manageable. We want everything you need to be easily accessible, so you can put planning to one side, and focus on your students.*

### Emma Foers – i-to-i TEFL Tutor

Emma Foers obtained her CELTA qualification straight after University, before jetting off on a round-the-world teaching adventure taking in Japan, Italy, Portugal and Egypt. She now works as a TEFL tutor for i-to-i and is the author of *Kick Start Your TEFL Career: 20 Classroom Activities for Elementary Learners*.

Emma loves being in the classroom and creating relevant, fun materials to keep her students engaged and entertained.

### What Emma has to say



*I've been teaching for a long time now, but I can still remember how challenging my first experience in the classroom was. Planning was tough, especially working out how to make my lessons as clear and fun as possible. There are so many TEFL books out there, each specialising in different areas, that I didn't know which ones to choose: that's why we decided to put everything you need into one book. I certainly wish this book had been out there to help me when I first started teaching!*

# → How to Teach

## Introduction

This is a section we hope you'll return to again and again for inspiration. We wanted it to be refreshing (and slightly provocative). We know teachers love to take time – when they have the chance – to reflect on what good teaching is all about.

## 1. Top 10 Dos and Don'ts

These are the principles that make a TEFL class great (or not so great). It's easy to forget them – and a good idea to come back to them now and again.

## 2. Using Coursebooks and Resources

Here we look at the types and range of materials available to you, and how you can get the most from them.

## 3. Teaching Specialised Classes

Here we examine how you can make different types of classes work – whether you're tutoring one-to-one or you're in charge of 50 students.

# 1.1 Top 10 Dos and Don'ts

These are the basic principles that make a TEFL class flop or fly. They're easy to forget, so refresh your memory (and your teaching!) by coming back to them now and again.

## Top 10 Dos

### ✓ 1. Go for it!

Throw yourself into teaching, give it your all, and have fun (your students are much more nervous than you are! Remember what it was like when you learned a language?). Encourage and motivate your learners. Make your classroom a positive and enjoyable experience.

### ✓ 2. Have an aim

The most important thing is that your lesson needs an aim. Your students should walk away from a lesson feeling 'Today, I learnt how to do X'. Otherwise, the lesson can seem like a waste of time. (Remember classes you've been to where you thought, 'What was the point of that?').

### ✓ 3. Be organised

Familiarise yourself with any new content you're going to teach. Make a running sheet. Have your materials ready to go, in plastic pockets in a file. Make sure the equipment works. Take a spare whiteboard marker. You'll feel confident, so you can relax and enjoy the time with your students.

### ✓ 4. Get students talking – to each other

This isn't just about making a lesson lively and fun (although that's a big plus). Learning English is a skill, like learning to swim or cook. Your students need to practise English, not just learn about English. And the best way to make sure students get lots of practice is if they talk to each other, in pairs and groups, or mingling as a whole class. (Don't make all the practice through you, or only one student gets to talk at a time).

### ✓ 5. Start a lesson with a warmer

A warmer is a simple activity, preferably something active and fun, where students talk to each other. As you know, it's easy to feel awkward and shy with a big group of people. A warmer removes that anxiety. It helps students feel relaxed and confident to speak for the rest of the lesson. In a warmer, students should be interacting in small groups or mingling – definitely not talking one at a time to the whole class. That's the opposite of a warmer!

### ✓ 6. Use variety

As you know, there's nothing worse than a boring class. But making a class interesting isn't about playing games all the time, and avoiding anything 'heavy'. Rather, it's about variety. Vary the skills your students are practising (listening, speaking, reading, writing) as well as the pace and physical activity (sitting, standing, mingling, running). Keep the expression 'light and shade' in mind – follow a quiet and serious activity with something fun and high-energy.

### ✓ 7. Instruct clearly

We've said it's important to have students practising in a variety of activities. The one risk that creates – unlike in a traditional class, where students just have to sit and listen – is that they won't know what to do. This is especially so since English is their second language. The result will be chaos! Instruct simply and clearly, and support your instructions with an example or demonstration.

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#### **X 4. Don't teach a non-standard variety of English**

This doesn't mean 'put on a British accent'. It means develop an awareness of what is accepted as standard, international English around the world. It applies equally whether you're British or American or Australian or a non-native speaker. Avoid teaching vocabulary or pronunciation that is distinctly local and might be unintelligible to most speakers (unless your students need to know how people speak in a certain place, and you make it clear how it differs from standard English).

#### **X 5. Don't underchallenge your students**

Teachers generally don't want to overburden their students. That's a good thing. But we often go too far down the 'gentle' path. Our students want their English to improve, so they need to be challenged. They want to feel they're getting their money's worth coming to class. Judge what they can realistically cope with and push them to achieve their goals. And, incidentally, give students plenty to do in practice activities so they're not twiddling their thumbs.

#### **X 6. Don't 'overurge' your students**

Teachers, with the best intentions, often stand over students and urge them to speak. 'What do you think Alex? Go on, tell us. What do you think? What's your opinion about the Olympics?' Sadly, it has the opposite effect – it makes students feel under pressure and stops them talking. When you ask a question, don't stare. Look away slightly, and give your student time to think and respond. Encourage students to ask each other questions. Then, while students are talking to each other, sit down discretely nearby so you can hear. In other words, give people space.

#### **X 7. Don't be unprofessional**

Being professional doesn't mean being boring – rather, it means taking your job and your students' needs seriously. Follow the obvious protocols wherever you're working. If you're not sure, ask. (The way a teacher dresses, for example, is incredibly important in some cultures).

#### **X 8. Don't criticise your students' country and culture**

It seems obvious. But out of frustration, or tiredness, or culture shock, teachers sometimes let their guard down. You might hear locals criticising the power blackouts or bad traffic, but stay out of it. It can seriously damage your relationship with your students. Tell students what you like about their country instead. Be careful with jokes – make sure they can't be misinterpreted as making fun of your students' culture.

#### **X 9. Don't preach**

We're teaching language, not politics or religion. Try to avoid using the opportunity of a captive audience to preach. Your proselytising might annoy students (who may not have the linguistic resources to argue back) or even get you into serious trouble. Besides, every minute you're telling your students about the world, it's one less minute when they can practise. Ask them to tell you what they think instead!

#### **X 10. Don't have favourite students**

It's very important to students how they get on with their teacher. Try to build an equally warm and positive relationship with all the students. Learn everyone's names (so you're not always asking the same three students whose names you remember!). Never compare students. You'll create a great learning environment!

# → Activities

## Introduction

We know language learners have to practise, so effective activities are central to their success. We do want to help you avoid relying on a handful of the same ones, so this section contains hundreds of activities, warmers and techniques to bring your lessons to life, and make preparation easy!

### 1. Twenty-Four Warmers You Must Know

A selection of fun, interactive speaking activities you can use for any class and any level. Almost all require no preparation.

### 2. Twelve Activities You Must Know

These are classic activities and techniques, organised by skill, which you can use in any lesson.

### 3. Activities A-Z

Here we've listed hundreds of our favourite activities alphabetically.

### 4. Activities A-Z: Photocopiable Materials

These are the photocopiable activities referred to and cross-referenced in Activities A-Z that you can photocopy and use in your classes!



- 2 Read out your words in random order. Students have to fill in every square in the table, and remove the three words that don't fit (of course students may fill out the table in a different order).

#### Variation:

- Students could do this in groups, with one student in each group reading out the words.

## 5. New combinations

Before class: Note down ten adjective + noun combinations students have recently learnt (e.g. *tall man, modern building*).

1. Write the adjective + noun combinations on the board (ask the students to guess what noun you're going to write next, in order to keep them engaged).
2. Divide students into groups. They need to write as many different combinations as they can in three minutes.
3. Discuss what combinations are and are not possible.

#### Extension:

- Students write a story using some of their new combinations.

## 6. Collocation snap

Before class: Photocopy & cut up sets of 10+ adjective + noun collocations (e.g. *heavy + rain*). Each word should be on a separate card. Create one set for each group of around 4-5 students.

1. Divide students into groups. Give one set of cards to each group.
2. Students match the adjectives and nouns face up on the table.
3. Ask groups to choose a group leader. The leader picks up the cards and shuffles them.
4. The leader places one card at a time face up in a stack on the table. All students say the word as its revealed.
5. When two consecutive cards make a collocation, the first student to bang their hand on top of the cards and say 'snap!' wins a point.
6. The winner is the first to five points.

#### Variation:

- You could use snap for any sort of vocab matching (e.g. synonyms, antonyms, picture + word).

## 7. Collocations from a text

Before class: Use a text students are going to read for understanding first. Make sure it has a number of relatively strong and useful collocations (e.g. *weak tea* rather than *expensive tea*).

1. First have students read the text for gist and detailed understanding.
2. Draw students' attention to an adjective + noun collocation in the text.
3. Ask them to underline any other adjective + noun collocations they can find.
4. Have students write a short text related to the topic using the collocations they found.

#### Variations:

- Students could find different types of collocation (e.g. noun + noun, adverb + adjective, verb + adverb etc).
- Students could use learner's dictionaries to do this – you could highlight the fact the dictionaries list common collocations.

## Adverbs in -ly : GRAMMAR

### 1. Adverb role play

No preparation

1. In groups, students write a script for a role play based on functional language they have been studying.
2. They need to give directions to the performers in brackets, e.g. 'Customer (angrily): I want my money back!'
3. Students practise and perform their role play.

### 2. Adverb mime

see page 191 - Describing actions: -ly

Before class: Photocopy and cut up the cards on page 98. Create one set for each group of around 4-5 students. Keep A (action) and B (adverb) separate.

1. Divide students into groups.
2. In turn, each student takes two cards, one from A and one from B. They mime the action in the way the adverb says. The other students have to guess the complete sentence, e.g. 'You're playing pool badly'.
3. The student who guesses correctly keeps both cards.
4. The student with the most cards is the winner.

# Lesson Plans

## Introduction

A major challenge for teachers is how to bring ideas and activities together quickly to plan a cohesive lesson. This section proposes two essential models of lesson plans which you can use as the basis for any sort of lesson. In addition, the section includes a range of complete lesson plans (Lesson Plans A-Z), together with photocopiable materials, ready to use.

## 1. Two Lesson Plans Structures You Must Know

These are two lesson types and stages you can use to teach just about anything.

## 2. Lesson Plans A-Z

Here we've put the theory into practice, with a range of complete lesson plans, including photocopiable materials.

## 3. Lesson Plans A-Z: Photocopiable Materials

These are the photocopiable materials referred to and cross-referenced in Lesson Plans A-Z.



## A Animation: using the Web

**Aim:** Students practise creative writing using a Web animation application

**Assumptions:** Students are familiar with basic navigation on the Web; students will enjoy the chance to be creative and to use text-to-speech

**Materials:** Computers connected to the Internet (one between two students, with a recent operating system)

**Level:** All

**Time:** One hour

**Anticipated problems:**

- Students do not understand how to use the application

**Solutions:**

- Ask IT-savvy students to monitor and help less confident students

Activities	Procedure
<p><b>State lesson aim</b>  <b>Aim:</b> students understand objective of using Internet in the lesson  <b>Time: 5 minutes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students work in pairs on one computer.</li> <li>• Tell students they're going to make a movie!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Familiarisation with application</b>  <b>Aim:</b> students become familiar with what the application can do.  <b>Time: 15 minutes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct students to a free Web animation application, that includes text-to-speech, such as <a href="http://www.xtranormal.com">www.xtranormal.com</a>.</li> <li>• Students look at some of the movies posted by other users.</li> <li>• Students experiment with a two-line dialogue (including text-to-speech) to become familiar with using the application.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Create animation</b>  <b>Aim:</b> students prepare and create their animation  <b>Time: 30 minutes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a very general topic (possibly related to what they've been doing in class). Pairs work on a script in Word. Monitor and correct errors.</li> <li>• Students create and upload their finalised movies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Follow-up</b>  <b>Aim:</b> students see result of their work; students receive feedback  <b>Time: 10 minutes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students watch (and vote on) each others' animations.</li> <li>• Give individual and whole-class feedback.</li> <li>• Students visit later to see feedback posted by other viewers.</li> </ul>

**Variations:** Students can produce new episodes of a story each week, like a TV series.

## B Blog: using the Web

**Aim:** Students practise reading for main idea and detail on the Web; students practise writing opinions.

**Assumptions:** Students are familiar with basic searches on the Internet; students enjoy expressing opinions.

**Materials:** Computers connected to the Internet (one between two students).

**Level:** Pre-intermediate and higher

**Time:** One hour

**Anticipated problems:**

- Students will not understand ungraded material (language could be above their level/ability).
- Students will access inappropriate material.
- Students will post inaccurate language.

**Solutions:**

- Suggest concrete topics appropriate to their level (e.g. language learning, food, pets rather than politics for an elementary class etc).
- Research and guide students to trusted sites with links to blogs.
- Help students with accuracy before posting.

# Grammar

## Introduction

Grammar can be a sore spot for even the most experienced of teachers. This section demystifies virtually all the grammar you'll be asked to teach up to upper-intermediate level (and includes much that advanced students will be hazy about).

It's designed to be easy for you to find a grammar point, understand it, and know how to teach it.

## 1. Nouns & Determiners

## 2. Pronouns

## 3. Adjectives

## 4. Adverbs

## 5. Questions

## 6. Building Sentences

## 7. Verbs



## Form

### positive

subject	<b>wish</b> (present)	subject	past simple	
I	wish	I	had	a better job.
My husband	wishes	I	was	happier.

### negative

		past simple (negative)				
subject	<b>wish</b> (present)	subject	aux <b>do</b> (past)	<b>not</b>	bare infinitive	
I	wish	I	did	n't	work	here.

1. The two subjects can be different (e.g. *My husband... I*) – the rule doesn't change.
2. After *I/he/she/it* use *was* in informal language and *were* in formal language.
3. For past simple forms see page 221 past simple.

## Meaning

Wanting now to be different.

Meaning	Checking meaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She wants something different.</li> <li>• She's thinking about now.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does she <i>want something different?</i> (Yes)</li> <li>• Is she thinking about <i>now</i> or the <i>past?</i> (Now)</li> </ul>

## Anticipated problems and solutions

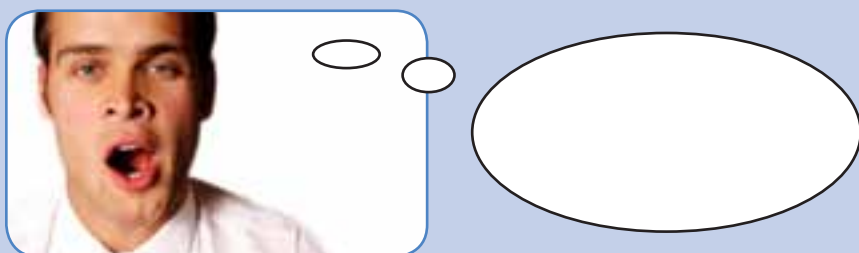
Problems	Solutions
The past tense verb makes students think we're talking about the past.	Contrast form and meaning explicitly: 'What's the tense <i>called?</i> ' (Past) 'Is she <i>thinking about the past?</i> ' (No) 'Is she <i>thinking about now?</i> ' (Yes)
Some students may have learnt they <b>must</b> use <i>were</i> not <i>was</i> . (See also page 259 <b>2nd conditional</b> .)	Clarify that <i>were</i> is <i>correct but formal</i> . Check the <i>level of formality</i> : 'Is this a formal or informal situation?'
Students try to use this structure to wish other people luck for the future, e.g. 'I wish your exam went well tomorrow'.	Ensure the <i>context is clear</i> so students are confident with the meaning of <i>wish</i> + past simple. (To wish people success, use <i>hope</i> + present simple, e.g. 'I hope your exam goes well tomorrow' – consider teaching this in a different lesson.)

## Teaching ideas

### From a situation

The situation should clearly show that someone is in a bad situation, and they're dreaming of a better life.

For example:  
Is he happy? Why/Why not?



He talks to a friend about life. What does he say?



I wish I had a sports car.



## H wish + past perfect

Wanting the past to be different.

Level:

Intermediate

Upper Intermediate

I wish I'd  
caught the  
train!



**Form**  
positive

subject	wish (present)	subject	aux <b>have</b> (past)	past participle	
I	wish	I	'd	caught	the train.
My wife	wishes	we	'd	bought	a newer car.

# Appendix

## Introduction

These appendices provide an ongoing useful source of instant information – come to this section to clarify anything you're unclear about!

### 1. TEFL A-Z

TEFL A-Z covers all the common terms associated with language teaching.

### 2. Grammar A-Z

Grammar A-Z is the place to go to clear up any grammar question.

### 3. Common Irregular Verbs

This is a list of common irregular verbs

### 4. Spelling Rules

This lists English spelling rules that students need to know (e.g. why you need a double t in getting). It also looks at key differences between UK and US spelling.

### 5. Useful Resources

Here you'll find recommendations for print and online resources to find information, teaching ideas and opportunities for work.

### 6. Phonemic Symbols and Abbreviations

These are the symbols you can use to represent sounds, so you can highlight particular sounds on the board, and students can record pronunciation of words. There's also a list of abbreviations we use as shorthand in this book.



## 5.1 TEFL A-Z

<b>accuracy</b>	Producing written or spoken language without <b>errors</b> . It's often contrasted with <b>fluency</b> ; when a learner focuses on being accurate, their speech can slow down.
<b>active vocabulary</b>	Vocabulary learners can produce when they speak and write. It's generally much smaller than their <b>passive vocabulary</b> , which is words they can understand when they read or listen.
<b>activity book</b>	A book containing activities for the classroom. These often include handouts that you can legally photocopy.
<b>advanced</b>	See <b>proficiency level</b> .
<b>affect</b>	Emotions. Affect plays probably the most important part in a language learner's success. Trust in the teacher, and a supportive classroom environment, have huge affective benefits. Anxiety and boredom of course have the opposite result.
<b>agent</b>	Also called a recruiter, a person or company that arranges teaching work. While there are unquestionably effective agents in the TEFL world, do consider carefully what value an agent will add when it's generally easy to contact schools directly.
<b>aim, lesson</b>	What students will take from a lesson. Consider phrasing an aim from the point of view of the students, for example 'to learn and practise 'used to' for past habits'. Students tend to like a clear aim as it makes the class seem organised and purposeful. You can write the lesson aim in the corner of the whiteboard before you start a class.
<b>anticipated problems and solutions</b>	What you think students will have trouble with in a lesson, and, if so, how you're going to help them. This could be problems they'll have doing an activity (a good solution is often to <b>demonstrate</b> rather than explain), or difficulties they'll have with the <b>form, meaning</b> or <b>pronunciation</b> of the <b>target language</b> .
<b>approach</b>	A fairly general set of principles describing a way of teaching. For example, the <b>communicative approach</b> suggests students need to practise speaking in class. The <b>lexical approach</b> believes vocabulary should be the primary focus in the classroom. Approach contrasts with the more dogmatic <b>method</b> .
<b>application letter</b>	A letter sent to an employer, together with a resume, to apply for a job.

<b>applied linguistics</b>	The study of how language is used in the real world. Applied linguistics includes <b>SLA</b> (Second Language Acquisition), which investigates how languages are taught and learned.
<b>aptitude</b>	How 'good' someone is at languages. It's a controversial term, because there are so many factors ( <b>affect</b> , <b>motivation</b> , input, opportunities for practice etc) that influence someone's success. Some people confuse aptitude with intelligence, but there's little to no correlation between intelligence and the ability to speak a language.
<b>ARC</b>	Authentic use, restricted use, clarification. These are proposed by the author Scrivener as an alternative to the <b>PPP</b> model. He suggests the times when explanation, accuracy practice and fluency practice happen in a lesson need to be fluid, and not occur in a set order.
<b>assessment</b>	Any measurement of a person's language ability. We tend to associate assessment with formal tests where students receive a mark (summative assessment). However, informal assessment - such as regular quizzes - can help students gauge their own progress. Also, it's very helpful if assessment can give students feedback to help them improve (formative assessment).
<b>assimilation</b>	When a sound changes because it's next to another sound. It makes sound combinations easier to say. English has backwards assimilation: an initial sound changes to 'get ready' for the second sound. For example, if you say 'ten girls' at natural speed, the /n/ sound becomes /ŋ/, which is more similar to the following sound /g/.
<b>attitude</b>	A learner's beliefs about English as well as their own learning. Believing English is the language of imperialism, for example, can create a negative attitude towards learning English.
<b>audiolingualism</b>	A teaching <b>method</b> popular for several decades after World War Two. It suggested that we learn language through performing habit-forming exercises. Drilling, a by-product of audiolingualism, is still frequently used today.
<b>audio-visual aids</b>	Teaching aids such as CD and DVD players, <b>OHPs</b> , <b>visualisers</b> , <b>flash cards</b> etc.
<b>aural</b>	Related to listening.
<b>aural learners</b>	See <b>learning style</b> .
<b>authentic task</b>	A task that replicates real use of language outside the classroom, for example making a phone call, writing an email or filling in a form.