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# TEFL Lesson Plans

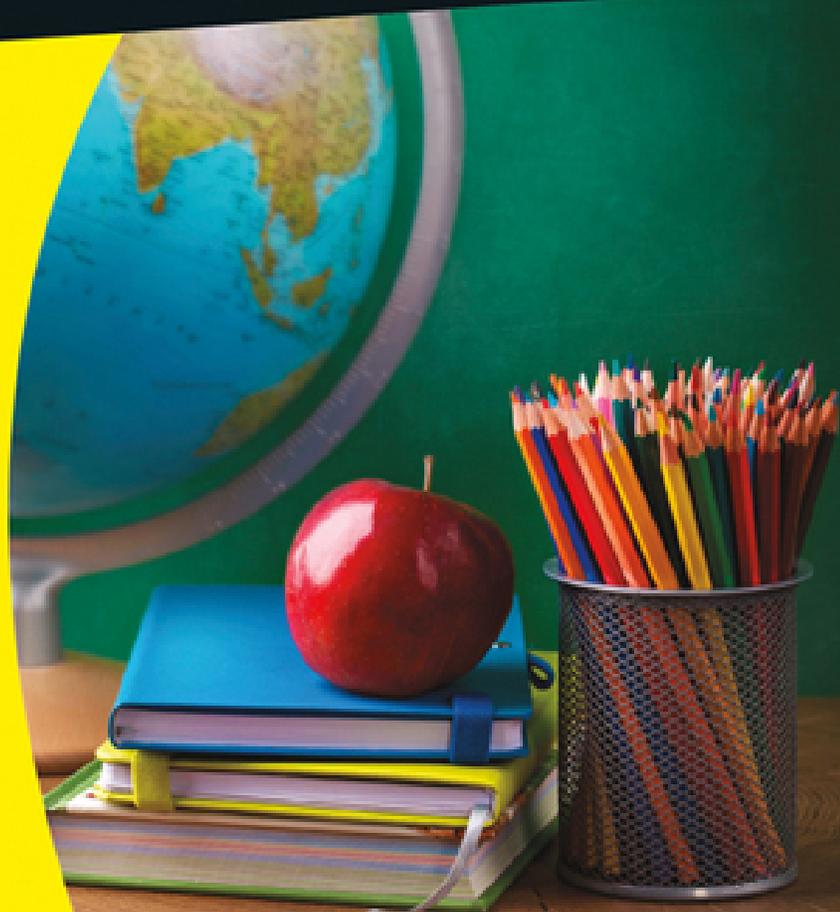
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- Take control of the planning process
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**Michelle Maxom**

*Author of Teaching English as a Foreign Language For Dummies®*



# ***TEFL Lesson Plans***

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**by Michelle Maxom**

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## **TEFL Lesson Plans For Dummies®**

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## Table of Contents

### Introduction

[About This Book](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[Beyond the Book](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

### Part I: Methodology in the Madness

#### Chapter 1: Grasping The Basics Of TEFL Teaching

[Understanding TEFL Language Terminology.](#)

[Verbs and tenses](#)

[Nouns and pronouns](#)

[Subjects and objects](#)

[Prepositions](#)

[Adjectives](#)

[Adverbs](#)

[Qualifiers](#)

[Articles](#)

[Conjunctions](#)

[Recognising the Different Types of English Course](#)

[Determining the Common European Framework Levels](#)

[Getting to Grips with Lesson Planning Terms](#)

[Organising a lesson](#)

[Look who's talking](#)

[Noting aspects of pronunciation](#)

## Fathoming the Business of Language Schools

Equipment

Student exams

Teacher qualifications

TEFL organisations

## **Chapter 2: Adapting Recent Approaches and Methodologies to Your Work**

### Knowing How People Learn, and How to Help Them Learn

Comparing the learning of a first language and a second one

Helping successful language learning

### Looking at Approaches and Methodologies for Course Planning

Killing two birds with one stone: Content and language integrated learning

Focusing on frequently used expressions: The Lexical Approach

Being a counsellor for your students: Community language learning

Deciding between global English and other varieties

Exploring a notional functional approach

Face to face meets online tuition with blended learning

### Assessing Approaches and Methodologies for Classroom Delivery

Using principles from the Silent Way

Allowing students to acquire, not learn, with the natural approach

Teaching playfully with Suggestopaedia

Making movement part of your plan: Total physical response

Helping students bond with NLP

Keeping everyone interested using multiple intelligences theory

Choosing a deductive or inductive approach to lesson plans

Taking a task-based approach to language learning

## **Chapter 3: Getting Down to Planning**

### Establishing and Sticking to the Syllabus

### Designing Weekly Plans

### Making Effective Lesson Plans

Setting out aims and objectives

Listing the procedures

Balancing the interaction patterns

Timing the activities

Factoring in student information and possible pitfalls

Doing warmer and cooler Activities

### Reviewing the Hardware

Practising board work

Writing and copying worksheets

### Looking at Different Ways to Plan Your Lessons

The Presentation-Practice-Production Model

The Engage-Study-Activate model

The ARC model

The Observe-Hypothesise-Experiment model

The Test-Teach-Test model

## **Part II: Beginner and Elementary Classes**

## **Chapter 4: Getting to Know Each Other on the First Day**

[Looking at Activities for All Levels](#)

[Beginner Lesson Plan](#)

## **Chapter 5: Back to Basics: Using Your Own Realia**

[Using Realia as Lesson Context](#)

[Looking at Realia Language with All Levels](#)

[Elementary Lesson Plan](#)

[Highlighting lexical chunks](#)

## **Chapter 6: Getting Flash with Flashcards**

[Using Flashcards as Lesson Context](#)

[Incorporating Flashcards at All Levels](#)

[Elementary Lesson Plan](#)

## **Chapter 7: Making Use of Mobile Phones**

[Using Mobile Phones as a Lesson Resource](#)

[Incorporating Mobile Phones at All Levels](#)

[Lesson Plan Title Elementary Lesson Plan](#)

## **Chapter 8: Covering Clothes and Fashion**

[Using Clothing and Fashion as Lesson Content](#)

[Incorporating Clothing and Fashion at All Levels](#)

[Elementary Lesson Plan](#)

## **Chapter 9: Acting It Out: Using Role-Plays**

[Using Role-Playing as a Lesson Resource](#)

[Incorporating Role Plays at All Levels](#)

[Elementary to Pre-intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

## **Part III: Pre-Intermediate and Intermediate Classes**

### **Chapter 10: Cultivating Classroom Language from Day One**

[Looking at Classroom Language at All Levels](#)

[Intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 11: Back to Basics: Developing Discussions**

[Using Discussions in Lessons](#)

[Incorporating Discussion Skills at All Levels](#)

[Intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 12: Thinking Outside the Book**

[Building on Course Books as a Lesson Resource](#)

[Adapting Course Books at All Levels](#)

[Pre-intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 13: Watching TV Online**

[Using Online TV Content at All Levels](#)

[Pre-intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 14: Culture: Extracting Language from Art**

[Using Art as Lesson Context](#)

[Looking at Art Language at All Levels](#)

[Intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 15: Communicating through Story-telling**

[Using Stories as Lesson Content](#)

[Incorporating Stories at All Levels](#)

[Intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

## **Part IV: Upper Intermediate and Advanced Classes**

### **Chapter 16: First Day: Improving Intonation**

[Developing Intonation at All Levels](#)

[Upper-intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 17: Back to Basics: Teaching Varieties of English**

[Using Varieties of English at All Levels](#)

[Looking at US and UK English Differences](#)

[Higher Level Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 18: Traditional Resources: Delving Into Dictionaries**

[Using Dictionaries as Lesson Content](#)

[Incorporating Dictionary Use at All Levels](#)

[Advanced Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 19: Technology: Interactive Websites**

[Using Interactive Websites as a Lesson Resource](#)

[Incorporating Interactive Websites at All Levels](#)

[Upper-intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 20: Read All About It! Focusing on the News**

[Using the News as Lesson Content](#)

[Integrating the News at All Levels](#)

[Advanced Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 21: Dissecting Dictogloss**

[Using Dictogloss as Lesson Content](#)

[Incorporating Dictogloss at All Levels](#)

[Advanced Lesson Plan](#)

## **Part V: Mixed Classes**

### **Chapter 22: Chatting to Children**

[Tailoring Your Lessons to How Children Learn](#)

[Working with Young Children at All Levels](#)

[Elementary Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 23: Training Teens**

[Understanding Why Teen Classes Need Special Consideration](#)

[Teaching Teens at All Levels](#)

[Lesson Plan for a Mixed Ability Class of Teenagers](#)

### **Chapter 24: Making Use of Readers**

[Using Readers as a Lesson Resource](#)

[Incorporating Readers at All Levels](#)

[Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 25: Developing Presentation Skills**

[Using Presentation Skills as Language Context](#)

[Incorporating Presentation Skills at All Levels](#)

[Intermediate \(and Above\) Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 26: Focusing on Manners and Etiquette**

[Using Manners and Etiquette as Lesson Content](#)

[Incorporating Manners and Etiquette at All Levels](#)

[Intermediate Lesson Plan](#)

### **Chapter 27: Team Work: Going on Field Trips**

[Using Field Trips for EFL Lessons](#)

[Running Field Trips at All Levels](#)

[Pre-intermediate Lesson Plan \(for Three Sessions\)](#)

## **Part VI: The Part of Tens**

### **Chapter 28: Ten Ways to Improve Your Teaching Skills**

[Get the Right Job](#)

[Be a Reflective Teacher](#)

[Learn from Your Boss](#)

[Getting Input from Peers](#)

[Gathering Student Feedback](#)

[Check Out Teachers' Clubs](#)

[Attend Conferences and Seminars](#)

[Set New Challenges](#)

[Make the Most of What You've Got](#)

[Keep an Eye on Useful Websites](#)

### **Chapter 29: Ten Ways to Make Your Students Happy**

[Put Your Students at the Heart of Planning](#)

[Prepare Solidly](#)

[Give One-to-One Tutorials](#)

[Use Educational Games](#)

[Help with Revision and Testing](#)

[Encourage and Praise](#)

[Give Constructive Criticism](#)

[Correct Effectively](#)

[Stick to the Syllabus](#)

[Keep a Sense of Humour](#)

**[About the Author](#)**

**[Cheat Sheet](#)**

# Introduction

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Many people have undertaken some training in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Perhaps you did a distance learning course, or maybe you did a CELTA a while back and you're now ready to pack that suitcase and head abroad for your first teaching job. Or maybe you have teaching experience but need a bit of inspiration to try something different in the classroom. This book is for anyone wondering, 'How do I put a great TEFL lesson together?'

The book offers a choice: You can turn to one of my lessons and teach it yourself, straight off the page; or you can read through my ideas and then put your own spin on them, creating some sparkling lessons of your own. Either way, your students will benefit from a great deal of variety and fun, fast-paced activities, which will certainly motivate them to greater success.

## *About This Book*

This book is for teachers who want an injection of new ideas. By reading the whole book through, you'll increase your repertoire of activities for all kinds of classes. Then again, you might keep it in your library for help with emergency cover lessons or spicing up a course you teach regularly. I've organised the book to make it easy for you to identify and prepare for many tricky teaching scenarios.

This book is also for teachers who are interested in moving with the times. After taking on many roles in my TEFL career, I decided to return to the classroom on a daily basis two years ago. To my delight, I found that

advances in technology are continuing to enrich this field and provide teachers with fantastic educational tools. But, at the same time, English is taught the world over, sometimes in very basic conditions. So whether you have vast resources at your fingertips or barely any, in this book I show you ways to engage your students' minds.

Who is this book not for? Anyone who needs a single resource to teach an entire course. Course books are far better for that purpose. Also, although I have included scores of complete lesson plans, this doesn't mean that you can teach from this book without preparing. You need to understand the entire lesson plan before you start teaching it, and have your materials and classroom layout ready. This is vital in order for you to feel relaxed and comfortable enough to pass on your enjoyment of the lesson to your students. Of course, you may need to adapt some parts of the lesson too.

I don't believe that a set prescription exists for teaching English effectively. No doubt, I've left out some fantastic methodologies, approaches and activities. This doesn't mean that I've vetoed them in any way. I simply draw on my own experiences in this book and, like all good teachers, I'm still learning myself.

Here are some suggestions for how to use the plans in the book:

- ✓ I suggest the timing for each activity and try to give you enough variety within each lesson to keep it lively and diverse. However, do give the students more time for the activities they really seem to enjoy. On the other hand, you can shorten slightly an informative activity that doesn't seem to suit your class. Be adaptable.

- ✓ Most teachers are employed by a school or similar educational establishment. In this case, be sure to get the agreement of your course leader or academic manager before trying something previously unheard of there, or likely to cause controversy.
- ✓ Remember that cultures and teaching situations vary considerably. So, you must ensure that your lesson plan is suitable for your particular learners.

Finally, a note on photocopying. *TEFL Lesson Plans For Dummies* isn't a photocopiable resource, but you'll find online resources you can print on the books' own website (<http://www.dummies.com/extras/tefllessonplansuk>)

## ***Conventions Used in This Book***

I use various conventions in the book to make the text user friendly:

- ✓ I use the words *student* and *learner* interchangeably.
- ✓ I refer to the teacher as *T* and student(s) as *St(s)* in the lesson plans.
- ✓ For brevity, I refer to lesson *aims* and not objectives. However, in some teaching situations you may include both.
- ✓ *English* refers to whatever is normal in most English-speaking countries, though I draw on UK examples most of the time.
- ✓ Chapters alternate between using male and female pronouns in the interest of balance.

Although beginner teachers are taught to divide their lessons into quite specific stages – such as presentation, practice and production or engage, study, activate – I don't label the lessons in this way because each lesson follows a slightly different sequence, while covering all the stages. Though a lesson must have a variety of logical stages, what you call them and how you order them is by no means written in stone.

Finally, within this book, you may notice that some Web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these Web pages, simply key in the Web address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist. If you're reading this as an e-book, you've got it easy – just click the Web address to be taken directly to the Web page.

## ***Foolish Assumptions***

This book helps people who have a basic knowledge of what TEFL involves but who lack experience, confidence or ideas when it comes to real live teaching. In writing, I have assumed that you, the reader

- ✓ Are a native speaker or proficient in speaking English
- ✓ Have an initial TEFL qualification or are undertaking one
- ✓ Understand references to English grammar and pronunciation (enough to be able to source further information rather than pull your hair out in surrender)
- ✓ Are concerned with your students' engagement in and enjoyment of your lessons
- ✓ Are open to using a wider range of methodology and resources in your lesson plans than those you've learnt

and tried so far

- ✓ Are agreeable to teaching a range of classes in different situations

## *Icons Used in This Book*

Throughout the book you'll see little pictures in the margins. Each kind of icon is designed to draw your attention to a different way.



When you see this icon you get detail that illustrates how you apply the point previously mentioned in a lesson.



This icon highlights helpful ideas for everything from websites to check out to ways to make your lessons run more smoothly.



Beware! This icon alerts you to common mistakes that newer teachers make and pointers that help you avoid problems.



The text beside this icon is well worth remembering.



This icon introduces an activity that I recommend you put into practise in class.

**St >> St**

These icons indicate the participants in the activity and the nature of their participation. T stands for teacher, St for Student and Sts for Students, plural. So T-St indicates an activity led by the teacher with a single student, St-St an activity between two students, and so on.

## ***Beyond the Book***

In addition to the material in the print or e-book you're reading right now, this product also comes with some access-anywhere goodies on the Web. Check out the free Cheat Sheet at [www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/tefllessonplansuk](http://www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/tefllessonplansuk) for helpful tips and pointers for putting together great lessons.

You can also find ideas and outlines for more than twenty additional lesson plans online at [www.dummies.com/extras/tefllessonplansuk](http://www.dummies.com/extras/tefllessonplansuk).

## ***Where to Go from Here***

If you aren't teaching at the moment, I recommend you begin with Part [I](#). This helps you get an overview of planning styles and choose one that suits you as a starting point. Teachers who are working on a steady course at the moment may read the whole section on low-level students (Part [I](#)), low intermediate (Part [II](#)) or higher levels (Part [III](#)) according to their students' current proficiency. In this way you're with some lesson plans and ideas you can slot into the course at the appropriate time. I offer lessons that can span more than one level in Part [IV](#).

You may also approach the chapters by topic area. Some teachers feel that they have a lack in one particular area, regardless of the level of course they're teaching. In this case, notice that in Parts [II](#)-[V](#) the same general themes appear in each part.

If you feel that you don't get students off to good start at the beginning of a course, read Chapters [4](#), [10](#), [16](#) and [22](#) on first day lessons. This should help to put a spring in your step so you begin the course with confidence and enthusiasm. The students themselves are often too timid to show their true language skills at first. The activities I present mix the classroom dynamics so that the students work in pairs, groups and as a class. In this way they get to know each other more quickly and are likely to find at least one learning situation they feel more relaxed in.

Go to Chapters [5](#), [11](#), [17](#) and [23](#) for back to basics lessons that feature lessons you do without much technology or many specialised teacher resources. I show you how to work with everyday items or a very basic classroom.

Turn to Chapters [6](#), [12](#), [18](#) and [24](#), the traditional resources lessons, to find out how to work with the kinds of resources most established language schools have on site. Even if they aren't all there now, suggesting that the school use them shouldn't cause much surprise or controversy.

Chapters [7](#), [13](#), [19](#) and [25](#) are for you if you're interested in technology. I include the use of classroom technologies such as a computer and Internet connection, as well as student technologies such as mobile phones. You learn to be more confident about using these as part of your lessons.

Culture is the theme of Chapters [8](#), [14](#), [20](#) and [26](#). I base lessons on topics that allow for inter-cultural comparisons and further knowledge of UK culture. Start with these chapters to give your classes an international perspective.

In Chapters [9](#), [15](#), [21](#) and [27](#) the teamwork lessons encourage close co-operation among students, which tends to improve the atmosphere and enjoyment in class. Begin your reading here if your students aren't quite gelling.

The bottom line is this: don't feel you have to start on the first page and read through to the last one. Skip about the content to best suit your needs, and dip in and out as you like.

Part I  
**Methodology in the  
Madness**



Visit [www.dummies.com/extras/tefllessonplans](http://www.dummies.com/extras/tefllessonplans) for free online lesson plan ideas and outlines.

## *In this part ...*

- ✓ Come to grips with the nitty-gritty of TEFL teaching, including an overview of what we've learned about English teaching down the years.
- ✓ Find out how to adapt recent advances and theories in TEFL to your work.
- ✓ Get the right fit between your lessons and the syllabus.
- ✓ Work out the anatomy of a great lesson plan.
- ✓ Put together a TEFL toolbox of worksheets, props and board activities.

# Chapter 1

## Grasping The Basics Of TEFL Teaching

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### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Demystifying language terms
  - ▶ Looking at the English courses on offer
  - ▶ Knowing the lingo for lesson planning
  - ▶ Understanding jargon in the staffroom
- 

The Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) industry has been in full flow for many years now. In this chapter, I give you an overview of workplace jargon, and various points that may be taken for granted in language schools but are still unclear for many new teachers. The chapter aims to help you understand the job of a modern-day teacher of English as a foreign language, which sets you up to dive into the lesson plans I provide in the later sections of the book.

## *Understanding TEFL Language Terminology*

Understanding how sentences are put together is essential. Words have different classifications, and defining how these work in English provides the rules and patterns that help students learn. You, as the teacher, must know the terminology for describing language appropriately.



For a more detailed description of TEFL grammar, please refer to *Teaching English as a Foreign Language For Dummies* (Wiley, 2009).

## Verbs and tenses

At primary school, pupils often learn that *verbs* are the 'doing words'. They tend to describe both actions and a state of being. For example, look at the following sentences in which the verbs are in italic:

I *went* to the shop *to buy* a newspaper. I *was* happy *to find* that the *price had been reduced*.

Notice the verbs in their most basic form: 'to buy' and 'to find'. This is called the *infinitive* and it means that the verb hasn't been changed in at all. Take off the word 'to' and you can find the infinitive form in a dictionary.

On the other hand, 'went', 'was' and 'had been reduced' have been transformed into particular tenses. Often, extra verbs are added to the main one to create a tense. These extra parts are called *auxiliary verbs* (for example, 'have seen'). When 'ing' is tacked on to the end of a verb it is called a *gerund* (for example 'listening').

Table [1-1](#) shows you the names of the various tenses. So, for example, 'I *have taught*' is called a present perfect sentence.

	Tenses in English			
	<i>Simple</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>Perfect</i>	<i>Perfect Continuous</i>
<b>Past</b>	taught	was/were teaching	had taught	had been teaching
<b>Present</b>	teach(es)	am/is/are teaching	have/has taught	have/has been teaching
<b>Future</b>	will teach	will be teaching	will have taught	will have been teaching

## ***Nouns and pronouns***

You use nouns and pronouns to indicate a place, person, an animal, or a thing. They can also represent more abstract ideas. In the following sentence the nouns are in bold:

I use a **diary** to write down my **thoughts**.

As you can see, nouns can be singular or plural. Nouns you can make plural are called *countable* nouns, but others are *uncountable* so they use words like 'some' or 'a little' instead of a specific number to define the quantity.

Use **a little** of my **money** to buy **some** **bread** at the supermarket.

*Pronouns* replace nouns so that sentences become less repetitive:

*Florence needs water and Florence gets the water from the kitchen.*

*Florence needs water and **she** gets **it** from the kitchen.*

## ***Subjects and objects***

The subject of a sentence is a noun, a pronoun or an entire phrase, and it tells you what the sentence is about. For example:

**Florence** needs water.

**I** went to the shop.

Reading books is fun.

After the subject of a sentence there is generally a verb. Then, sometimes there is another noun or pronoun that

receives the action and this is called the *object*. For example:

I love **it**.

She reads **a book**.

They waved to **the boys**.

## ***Prepositions***

*Prepositions* introduce the object of a sentence. They include words such as 'with', 'through', and 'among'. For example:

You should walk **through** the park.

Mike lives **with** Jenna.

## ***Adjectives***

Adjectives give more information about nouns or pronouns. They may indicate size, colour, or quality. For example:

The **enormous** book lay on the **fabulous** desk.

## ***Adverbs***

*Adverbs* give more information about a verb, often showing how it is carried out:

The girl smiled **sweetly** and **timidly** as she stepped behind her sister.

## ***Qualifiers***

*Qualifiers* appear before adjectives and adverbs and show degree. For instance:

That meal was **rather** nice.

Gold is **quite** expensive.

## *Articles*

Simply put, the articles in English are the *indefinite articles* 'a' or 'an', and the *definite article* 'the'. These words come before nouns and are types of adjective. However, the indefinite articles show that something is general, while the definite article indicates something more specific. For example:

**A** man arrived and **the** nurse greeted him.

## *Conjunctions*

*Conjunctions*, sometimes called linking words, join parts of a sentence together and they include 'because', 'but' and 'although'. Note how they connect the words in this example:

I like plays **and** films, **although** I don't enjoy operas much.

# *Recognising the Different Types of English Course*

It isn't enough to get a job a job teaching English. You really must know what kind of course it is and, in addition to its target age and level, how each course differs. Here's a breakdown of the main English courses available:

- ✓ **Academic English:** For students who want to undertake a course of higher education in the English language. On a course of this nature students learn how to express concepts, ideas, and theories using formal, impersonal language. Students also practise essay writing, giving formal presentations, listening, and note-taking for lectures.

- ✓ **Business English:** Tends to cover the same grammatical structures as general English. However, the context for using the language is always a business meeting, a negotiation, a formal letter, or another function of day-to-day business life. These courses may be sponsored by a company for its employees.
- ✓ **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL):** For students who are now living in an English-speaking country where they want to settle. Practical skills such as speaking to employees at government offices and banks or visiting healthcare professionals are included in the course material.
- ✓ **English for Specific Purposes (ESP):** A branch of teaching whereby you analyse exactly what the student needs to do in English and gear the whole course towards that outcome. For example, you may teach English for nurses, or English for the banking industry.
- ✓ **Exam classes:** When students plan to take a particular exam, the preparatory course is entirely focused on this outcome. So you show students how to tackle the exam questions, breaking them down so that they understand what the examiners are looking for. Students analyse past papers and do practice tests.
- ✓ **General English:** Teaches students everyday language and usually comprises reading, writing, speaking, and listening, which are the four main skills of language learning.
- ✓ **One to one:** This might also be called a private lesson, although it could be arranged in the teacher's own time or as part of a job at a school. It basically means that there is one teacher and one student in

the class, so you get to focus on the learner's individual needs.

- ✓ **Preessional and Inessional:** These courses are for students who have received an offer of a place on a degree course. A *preessional* course is generally run by the university that's offering the placement and is designed to acclimatise students to cultural differences and academic expectations. Successful completion of the course may be a requirement before the student can take up his place on the degree course. Then, *inessional* lessons are for international students who are already doing their degree course but require extra support in using academic English in order to succeed.

## ***Determining the Common European Framework Levels***

Most courses divide students into varying levels of proficiency. These days the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) descriptors are frequently used to specify a student's level in a particular language. The framework is based on what the student should be able to do in that tongue when a particular level is reached. Table [1-2](#) breaks down the levels.

**Table 1-2 Classifications of proficiency levels in language teaching**

<i><b>CEFR Level</b></i>	<i><b>Everyday Level</b></i>	<i><b>Approximate Hours of Study</b></i>
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A1	Basic English / beginner	Less than 100
A2	Basic English / elementary	200
B1	Independent user / low intermediate	400
B2	Independent user / high intermediate	600
C1	Advanced	800
C2	Proficiency	1,000+



Refer to the Cambridge English website for a set of descriptors for each CEFR level:  
[www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org/what\\_is\\_this](http://www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org/what_is_this).

## *Getting to Grips with Lesson Planning Terms*

As a teacher you're perfectly entitled to set out your lesson plans in the way you please ... except, of course, if someone else needs to read them (such as another member of staff or an education inspector). In that case, you should follow certain conventions.

The traditional TEFL plan sets out the stages of the lesson and the different types of activities that you do with the students. It shows who is speaking to whom and may show what you intend to put on the board such as grammar and pronunciation features.

### *Organising a lesson*

You can label major shifts of focus in your lesson according to the planning model you adopt. There are three main models:

- ✓ Engage / Study / Activate (ESA)
- ✓ Authentic use / Restricted use / Clarification and focus (ARC)
- ✓ Presentation / Practice / Production (PPP)

Refer to Chapter [3](#) of this book for guidance on using different styles of planning.

## ***Look who's talking***

*TTT* stands for Teacher Talking Time, whereas as when students speak it's *STT*. *T* usually represents the teacher throughout the plan and students are represented by *Sts* or *Ss*. Use any obvious abbreviation for pair or group work.

## ***Noting aspects of pronunciation***

*Phonology* and *phonemics* are terms related to the sounds that make up a particular language. One *phoneme* is a single unit of sound that you recognise in a language as part of a word. For example, the word 'fish' has three phonemes: f+i+ʃ. You should write phonemes between forward slashes like this /fɪʃ/ (by the way /ʃ/ is the 'sh' sound).

If you compare /b/ and /p/ while touching your Adam's apple, you should feel the difference between *voiced* and *unvoiced* phonemes, because in the latter there isn't much vibration, just air forced from the mouth.

A *monothong* is a single vowel phoneme, but *diphthongs* are made by pushing two vowel sounds together as one; for example, /aɪ/ is the vowel sound in 'my'.

*Minimal pairs* refers to two words that are pronounced in almost the same way except for one different phoneme, such as 'pill' and 'pull'.