

Teaching Business English and ESP Part Two- First Lessons

Lesson Plan

Students play a Getting to Know You game and interview each other about their needs for English. The class then cover some language problems that have come up during the lesson.

A first class, like all ESP classes, depends almost entirely on the students you have. Even so, the four-part format used below (GTKY and Diagnostic Testing/ Needs Analysis/ Feedback/ Language Work) should be flexible enough to fit in with almost every group and one-to-one ESP class. The materials and instructions below are for a group class of approx Upper Intermediate level, but the lesson plan is easily adaptable to other class sizes and levels.

Language/ Skill Practised: Depends on materials used.

Materials: 1 OHP of your 'Answers on the Board' or one photocopy per student.

1 copy of Feedback Sheet.

1 copy of Interview Form per student. Photocopies for Part Four. Unless you have a very good idea of the levels, strengths and weaknesses and needs of the students before the class, it is worth taking in several possibilities for Part Four fully prepared (see below).

Time: 40 to 60 minutes, plus language work (Part Four)

Preparation: You will need to change the 'Answers on the board' answers to match your personal details and the level of the class.

Procedure:

Part One: GTKY and Diagnostic testing- 'Answers on the Board'

- Write your name on the board. Write a question mark in front of the name and elicit the question- What's your name?
- Write 'An English teacher' up and elicit the question. Allow students to ask the same 2 questions around the class.
- Show the students your 'Answers on the board' statements, either by projecting them on the board or giving them out as photocopies (one per pair).
- Explain the rules briefly (see worksheet).
- Let the first team ask you their first question. Tick the answer off if it is the correct one, give a cross if there was a grammar mistake, or give whatever your genuine answer is to what their question was. You may want to score points to add a competitive element.

- Continue until all the statements are crossed off. If the game gets slow, help students out by brainstorming all the question words and question forms for the various tenses onto the board. Alternatively, abandon the turn taking and let them shout out the questions as they think of them.
- When they have finished, brainstorm all the successful questions onto the board, allowing students to ask why their 'crossed' sentences were wrong (assuming they still remember them).
- Change the groups and get students to ask each other similar questions in pairs. They may need some help adapting the questions. Monitor for language use and note down problems on the Feedback Sheet for Part Three below.
- **Variation:** For more intensive diagnostic testing, ask each group to write down their answers and pass them back and forth to you for checking / answering, rather than shouting them out. This can be organised as a race to make it more fun.

Part Two: Needs analysis

- Tell students that you now want to ask them some questions about themselves and the English language, but unfortunately you are only one person and they are many. Therefore, they are actually going to ask each other those questions.
- Change the groups again. Give each student an Interview Form and get them to ask each other their (full) names and write them at the top. Monitor for use of the English alphabet.
- Brainstorm two or three possible questions for each of the sections on the sheet (e.g. Why do you want to learn English?), writing only the question words on the board.
- Tell students to write the answers (notes only) on the sheet you have given them.
- Let them start. Monitor for the information that is given (to get a rough idea of the needs of your class) and for language- writing it down on the Feedback Sheet.
- When one or two groups have finished, collect in all the completed Interview Forms.

Part Three: Feedback

- Go through the language you have collected on the Feedback sheet, eliciting corrections as much as possible. Make sure you cover as many examples as you can of the language you are going to cover in Part Four below.

Part Four: Language Work

- Point out which of the areas of language which came up in Part Three you have decided to cover and why, making reference to student needs and the errors made. Common language areas to cover are: tense review, numbers (both included here), present perfect and simple past, the alphabet, language for describing company structure.
- When you have finished the language work, feedback on how useful it has been to them.

Variation: The four stages above can actually be done in any order at all.