

# Using more English in your classroom



Teacher Education  
through School-based  
Support in India  
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*TESS-India (Teacher Education through School-based Support) aims to improve the classroom practices of elementary and secondary teachers in India through the provision of Open Educational Resources (OERs) to support teachers in developing student-centred, participatory approaches. The TESS-India OERs provide teachers with a companion to the school textbook. They offer activities for teachers to try out in their classrooms with their students, together with case studies showing how other teachers have taught the topic and linked resources to support teachers in developing their lesson plans and subject knowledge.*

*TESS-India OERs have been collaboratively written by Indian and international authors to address Indian curriculum and contexts and are available for online and print use (<http://www.tess-india.edu.in/>). The OERs are available in several versions, appropriate for each participating Indian state and users are invited to adapt and localise the OERs further to meet local needs and contexts.*

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### **Video resources**

*Some of the activities in this unit are accompanied by the following icon: . This indicates that you will find it helpful to view the TESS-India video resources for the specified pedagogic theme.*

*The TESS-India video resources illustrate key pedagogic techniques in a range of classroom contexts in India. We hope they will inspire you to experiment with similar practices. They are intended to complement and enhance your experience of working through the text-based units, but are not integral to them should you be unable to access them.*

*TESS-India video resources may be viewed online or downloaded from the TESS-India website, <http://www.tess-india.edu.in/>). Alternatively, you may have access to these videos on a CD or memory card.*

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## What this unit is about



My students don't live and study in an English-speaking environment, and they don't speak English at home. Some of them can read and write in English, as many of our lessons practise these skills. But they can't understand it or speak it very well. How can I get them used to listening to and speaking more English?

There are two important factors that can lead to your students becoming more confident in listening to and speaking English:

- regular exposure to spoken English and hearing the language as it is used for communication
- regular practise in speaking English so that they develop confidence in using the language, becoming familiar with its rhythms and comfortable with pronouncing it.

It is important for your students to have many opportunities to engage in real and meaningful communications in English. One good way of learning a language is by immersion, where it is used in daily life. This is how your students learned their home languages. Since English plays an important role in India, many of them may be learning English this way as well. But even if your students do not have much exposure to English outside of the classroom, they can still make significant progress in learning the language if they get lots of practice listening to and speaking it inside the classroom (Lindsay and Knight, 2006, p. 8).

This unit explores how you can increase the number of interactions in English in your classroom. This way, speaking English will not be something that students are scared of or worried about; instead, it will become an easy and natural way for you to communicate with your students, and for them to communicate with each other. The unit also shows you some ways to help your students practise speaking so that they become more familiar with the rhythm and pronunciation of the language, so that it becomes more natural to them.

## What you can learn in this unit

- How to use English in everyday classroom activities.
- How to help your students use more English in their everyday classroom activities.
- How to plan and use the textbook to help your students develop confidence in speaking English.

### 1 English for everyday classroom activities

Everyday classroom activities can provide meaningful authentic opportunities for your students to regularly listen to and speak English. Such small activities can include things like greeting your students, taking attendance, introducing a new topic or giving instructions. Using English like this in the classroom is beneficial for your students because they get to hear more English and they hear how the language is used in real-life communication. It also gives them a purpose for speaking English.



### Pause for thought

Think about the last English class that you taught:

- How much English did you speak?
- For what kind of activities did you use spoken English?

In order to be able to communicate using English, students need to be able to hear and speak the language regularly in lots of different settings and with lots of different tasks, not just in textbook exercises.

## Activity 1: Increasing your use of English

### Part 1: Thinking about your practice

Think about the classroom situations listed below. What do you usually say to your students in these situations? Which language do you usually use? Are there some activities for which you always use students' home language and others for which you use English? Could you increase your use of English? Discuss these questions with a colleague if you can.

- greeting students
- taking attendance
- giving instructions
- checking previous knowledge
- managing behaviour
- encouraging students to speak
- praising your students
- giving homework
- saying goodbye
- talking to your students about their lives .

Table 1 lists some everyday classroom routines. There are some English phrases that you can use for each situation. Write some more phrases in each box.

**Table 1** English phrases for various classroom situations.

Classroom situation	English phrases
Greeting students	Namaste. Good morning. How are you today?
Taking attendance	Who is missing today? Is anyone absent?
Giving instructions	Students, please open your book at page 15. Now we will do lesson 10.
Checking previous knowledge	The topic of the lesson is Nelson Mandela. Can anyone tell me who he is?
Managing behaviour	Students, could you all sit down please.
Encouraging your students to speak	Would you like to try to answer, Sandesh?
Praising your students	Very good!
Giving homework	Please finish this activity at home.
Saying goodbye	OK, that's all for today. Goodbye. See you all tomorrow.
Talking to your students socially	What did you do yesterday after school?

When you have added some phrases to the list, compare yours with those listed in Resource 1.

## Part 2: Preparing to teach

Now choose some English phrases from the phrases that you wrote in the table that you have not tried in your classroom before, or choose some from Resource 1. Practise these sentences aloud, at home or with a colleague.

Remember that your students may not understand the phrases at first. Gestures and actions will help them to follow. For example, you could use this gesture when you say:



Practise the gestures as you say the phrases.

### Part 3: In the classroom

When you feel confident with a new phrase, try it out in the classroom. Use gestures and encourage students to respond in English or in their home language.

Whenever you use new phrases in the classroom:

- Don't worry too much about making grammatical mistakes. Your students probably won't notice.
- Don't worry too much about your pronunciation. It is just important for students to listen to English being spoken. You can practise the pronunciation of certain words and sounds before your lessons if you are concerned. Or practise with a friend or colleague (see Resource 1).
- If your students don't understand something at first, don't translate it. Repeat the phrase a few times and give your students some time to work out what you are saying. Try using gesture and actions to show what you mean.
- Remember that your classes don't need to be entirely in English. It is good to use students' other languages to check their understanding. Just try to use more and more English over time.

You can start using English any time. Any amount of English is better than none. If you feel like it is difficult for you, or that your students don't respond, keep trying. Don't give up!

## Case Study 1: Mr Jhadav uses more English in his English class

*Mr Jhadav has been teaching English to secondary students for a number of years but his students are not confident enough to speak it themselves. He decides to speak more English in the classroom to help them learn the language. Although he finds it difficult at first, he notices that his students soon get used to hearing more English in class.*

I was thinking about my last class and how much English I use. I tend to mostly just read out the lesson. I'd like to use more spoken English in the classroom. I used to use quite a lot of English when I was studying to become a teacher, but now I am out of practice. So before starting to use more English with my students, I decided to practise on my own. I tried to think of the things that I usually say to students in students' home language, like 'Today we are doing Lesson 3', and 'Can you read the next line please?' I practised these phrases over and over to myself in English and out loud, so that they would sound natural when I used them with the students.

The next day I started my class by saying:

Good morning, students. Please open your books at page 32. Today we will be looking at Lesson 3 and reading the story 'The Little Girl'.  
Before we read, please look at the picture at the bottom of page 33. What do you see there? Why do you think the father is lying on the sofa?

They looked at me with some surprise. At first, no one responded. So I repeated the instruction to open their books two more times. Eventually, they all had their books open on the correct page. Then I got my own book and I showed them the picture on page 33. I repeated the question:

Why do you think the father is lying on the sofa?

It was quiet, but I waited a few moments for my students to reply. Eventually one student said 'tired'. So I replied: 'Good! Yes, I think he's tired.'

From this day, I started using more and more English with my students in class. I began to give classroom instructions like 'Can you read the next line please?' I was surprised at how quickly they got used to my speaking to them in English. Sometimes I had to repeat the instructions a number of times, but soon most of them understood.

I am slowly starting to use more and more English in the classroom, and I am getting more confident about it. I am sure I make some mistakes and my pronunciation isn't perfect, but my students don't seem to notice. Sometimes I have problems with vocabulary, and I can't think of a word or phrase I want to use in English. When that happens, I try to think of another way to say what I want in English. As a last resort, I use the Hindi word. I try to make a note of the words I don't know. After class, I ask a colleague or look the word up in the dictionary. This is helping me to improve my English too! And I notice that my students are beginning to become more confident with speaking a few words of English when they reply to me. I try not to correct them immediately but listen to the sense of what they are saying.

## 2 Helping students speak more English for everyday classroom activities

When you use English for everyday classroom activities, this creates more opportunities for your students to respond to you using English. There is a real purpose for your students to use the language to communicate. You can help your students to speak more English, both with you and with each other, by suggesting some phrases that they can use and by having them practise these phrases. With practice, students will become more confident and more able to use the language independently.



### Pause for thought

Think about the last English class that you taught:

- How much English did your students speak?
- For what kinds of activities did they use English?

In many English classes, students don't speak much English. They may read aloud passages or poems from the textbook, or they may read out something that they have written. These are all useful activities and help students with their pronunciation. They also allow them to get used to saying things in English. However, students also need to practise using English to communicate for real-life purposes, both within the classroom and outside it.

The following activity gives you some ideas to help your students to practise some phrases that they can use for everyday classroom activities, both with you and with other students. This will build their confidence and ability to speak independently.

### Activity 2: Helping your students to use more English for everyday classroom activities

This activity helps you find some examples of classroom language that your students can use with you and each other. It then gives you some strategies for helping them to practise the language so that it can become more natural to them.

#### Part 1: Making a list of everyday English

1. Ask your students: 'What are the questions you ask me most often?' If your students don't ask many questions, you can help them to think about the type of questions that they could ask you. Do this in their home language. These might be questions like:

What does 'snoring' mean?

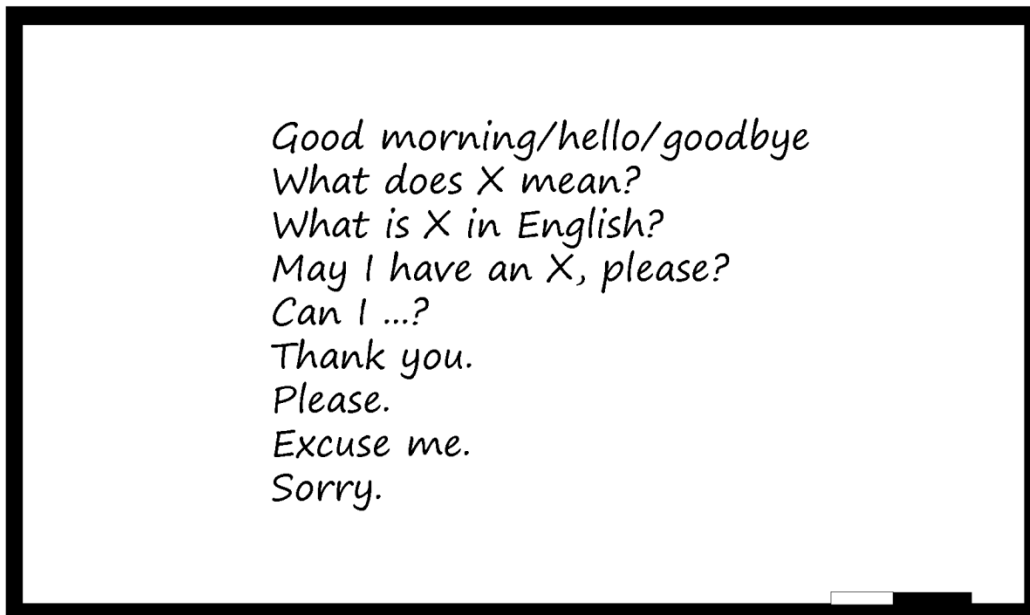
or

What is तीर्थस्थान in English?



You could also ask them to think about questions that they ask each other when they are doing activities in their English lessons, for example in pair work (see Resource 2 for examples). If your students aren't used to doing pair work, this will help you to introduce the idea of doing it. See Resource 3, 'Using pairwork', for more information.

2. Write these questions on the blackboard in the students' home language.
3. Together with your students, think about how you can say these phrases in English.
4. Write the English phrases on the blackboard.



5. To practise pronunciation, have your students listen and repeat each phrase after you. This helps them build their confidence in saying these expressions in a group.
6. Choose a few students from the class to repeat the phrase individually. This allows you to check whether they are becoming confident enough to use these phrases. If you find that your students are hesitant or unclear about the pronunciation, have them repeat the phrases again in a group.
7. To check their understanding, say the phrase in the students' home language and have them say the equivalent phrase in English.
8. Get a piece of chart paper. Call on individual students to write down one phrase each on the paper.
9. Hang the paper on the classroom walls. Remind your students of the phrases every day and encourage them to use them.
10. Once the students are comfortable using these phrases, make a new chart of phrases that you can use in the classroom so that you can increase the amount of English you use.

## Part 2: Practising classroom language

In Part 1 you found and displayed some everyday language that students can use in the classroom. In order for your students to become confident in using these phrases regularly, they will need practice. This activity gives you some ideas about how to help your students to practise these phrases in a group, in pairs and individually so that the language becomes more natural for them to use.

1. Choose one of the everyday phrases or dialogues that you have displayed on chart paper, for example this dialogue that students could use in a pairwork activity:



Do you know what this word means?

No, I don't know it either. Let's ask Preeta. She probably knows. Preeta, do you know what 'humble' means?



Yes, it means XXX in English.

2. Say one of the phrases (for example 'Do you know what this word means?'). Tell the students: 'Repeat after me', and have them repeat after you as a group. Do this two or three times. This builds their confidence because it allows them to practise the new language in a group which often feels safer.
3. Choose a few students from the class to repeat the phrase individually. This allows you to check whether they are becoming confident to use these phrases. If you find that students are hesitant or unclear about the pronunciation, have your students repeat the phrases again in a group.
4. Then say the response to that phrase (for example 'No, I don't know it either.'). Again, tell the students to repeat the response after you as a group. Repeat this a few times and ask individual students to repeat it. Do this for the entire dialogue.
5. Ask a question and tell your students to repeat the response as a group. You ask:

Do you know what this word means?

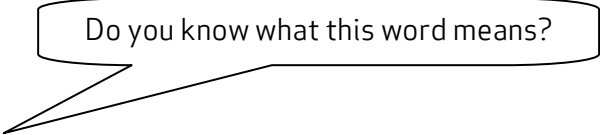
Students reply in chorus:



No, I don't know it either.

Continue this for the whole dialogue. This demonstrates how the phrases might be used in communication.

6. Divide the class into two halves. One side choruses the question:



Do you know what this word means?

The other side choruses the answer.



No, I don't know it either.

Continue this for the whole dialogue. Point to each group when it is their time to read. If the students don't repeat together, stop the activity and start again. You can use gestures to keep everybody in time. If you notice that students are having problems pronouncing any particular words (e.g. 'either'), have them repeat those words a few times.

7. By now the students should have built up their confidence to speak the phrases. Now they can practise them in pairs to make them more confident when speaking on their own. Ask the students to get into pairs. Ask one student to ask the question. The other student replies. Then they switch roles. While working in pairs, students practise the dialogue as if it were a conversation. They are not using language independently, but they are becoming familiar with useful phrases that they will soon be able to use in order to communicate.

As your students work in pairs, walk around the class to see how they are getting on. Praise your students for participating and encourage them to continue the good work. Note if students are having any problems with pronunciation so that you can practise difficult words in a follow-up activity.



## Video: Using pair work



## Pause for thought

After trying this activity with your students, think about these questions:

- Do your students use the phrases in their English classes?
- If not, how can you encourage your students to use them?
- If they do, how can you increase the amount of English phrases that they use?

Students may hesitate to use English at first. If they say something in their home language that is on the chart paper, you could say: 'Could you please try to say that in English?' and point to the chart paper to remind them of the phrase. Or you could ask the class, 'Students, can anyone help Vishnu say that in English?'

Once most students seem comfortable using the phrases that you have displayed, you could make another poster of phrases. For example, you could make posters of vocabulary for different lessons from textbook, or for different topics that you discuss. Keep reminding your students to use English as often as possible.

### 3 Using textbook lessons to help your students to develop confidence in speaking English

You can also use lessons from the textbook to help your students develop their English speaking skills and pronunciation. A simple way to do this is to read aloud from the textbook and ask your students to repeat after you all together. This helps students learn how to pronounce English and become familiar with its rhythms.

This kind of repetition activity works particularly well with short passages such as dialogues and poetry. It is a simple and short activity that can done in just a few minutes, perhaps at the beginning of a lesson when you are teaching a new text or new vocabulary.

Getting your students to repeat something together is useful in English language teaching because it:

- gives all students a chance to speak – even in large classes, every student gets to practise
- is good for shy students, as it gives them the opportunity to speak along with more confident students before they speak on their own
- allows students to practise their pronunciation and become familiar with the rhythms of English.

#### Case Study 2: Mrs Balasubramaniam uses a poem from the textbook to help her students practise speaking English

*Mrs Balasubramaniam has recently moved to a government school in a rural area, and her Class IX students find it difficult to speak in English. She wants to help them to develop their confidence and pronunciation and uses lessons from the textbook to do this.*

I tried asking my students some simple questions about their lives, but they couldn't answer me. So I realised that I had to start at the beginning. The best way that I could think of to get them used to practise speaking English was by reading out loud. The easiest texts to use are from lessons from the text book, so I decided to make a start with the very next lesson – a poem from Chapter 8 of the NCERT Class IX textbook *Beehive*: 'Trees', by Joyce Kilmer:

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.  
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;  
A tree that looks at God all day  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;  
A tree that may in summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
 Who intimately lives with rain.  
 Poems are made by fools like me,  
 But only God can make a tree.

Before the class, I practised saying the poem out loud so that I felt confident reading it, and could read it out aloud and provide them with a good model. In the class, I read two lines of the poem aloud at a time, with rhythm, and asked the students to repeat them after me like this:



I think that I shall never see  
 a poem lovely as a tree.

And they repeated this. I just wanted them to hear the poem, to say it with rhythm, and to practise their pronunciation. At this point, I wasn't concerned about what they understood about the poem.

I then asked the whole class to read the next two lines together. So I read:



I think that I shall never see  
 a poem lovely as a tree.

And the students followed:

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest against  
 the earth's sweet flowing breast.

Then I divided my class into two halves. I told one half of the class to read the first two lines aloud; I told the other half of the class to read the second two lines aloud.

At first the students didn't say the lines together, so I stopped them and asked them to do it again. This time I used my hands to signal when students should start a new line. I felt like I was conducting an orchestra!

I also walked around the classroom to make sure that all of the students were joining in. I encouraged any students who were not participating by saying, 'Come on, let's all speak together. Just try it!'

Most of the students seemed to enjoy saying the poem and became quite competitive. Each group wanted to say their line better than the other group! I hope that this will give them confidence to start speaking in English. It might also help them to remember the poem better, and to use some of the language from it in their own speaking and writing.

At first I thought it wasn't appropriate to do this kind of activity with secondary students, as they really should be more confident and able to speak English. But it is only by practising like this that they can gain that confidence. While this activity did not require them to produce any of their own language, at least they were speaking out loud and practising their pronunciation. I'm now regularly starting our classes with a speaking activity. Once they get more confident with speaking out loud, I will try other speaking activities where they use English to communicate.

### Activity 3: Trying out chorusing with a lesson from the textbook

Follow the steps below to try using a repetition activity in your classroom.

1. Look through the next part of the textbook that you are going to teach.
2. Choose a short text, or part of a text, that you can use for a speaking activity. Any short text will do but poems and dialogues are ideal.
3. Practise saying the text on your own before the class. Say it until you feel confident. If you're not sure about the pronunciation of any words, check with a colleague or friend.
4. In class, read the text (or some of the text) aloud to your students. Read line by line (or two lines at a time) and ask your students to repeat after you. Make sure that you read out complete lines of text, or complete sections – not one word at a time. Your students need to practise speaking groups of meaningful words so that they get a sense of the rhythm of the language and begin to make connections between words.
5. When you have read the text, and the students have repeated it, divide the class into two or three large groups. Give each group a different part of the text to read.
6. Point to each group when it is their time to read.
7. If your students don't repeat together, stop the activity and start again. Use gestures to keep everybody in time.
8. Don't interrupt your students when they are repeating, even if they make a mistake. Let them finish the line or section. You can deal with pronunciation mistakes later.
9. Walk around the room and encourage everyone to participate.



#### Pause for thought

Here are some questions for you to think about after trying this activity. If possible, discuss these questions with a colleague.

- Did all your students join in? If not, how can you encourage them all to join in next time?
- How can you do this activity in different ways to keep it interesting for your class?
- How can you use this kind of activity to help your students speak English to communicate?

If all your students did not participate, perhaps they need more time to gain the confidence to speak. They will develop this if you do speaking activities regularly. Be sure to praise and encourage them. Don't call attention to mistakes. Give the shy students more opportunities and encouragement to speak. See Resource 4, 'Involving all', for examples of this.



## Video: Involving all

You can keep this kind of activity interesting by asking your students to repeat what they are saying in English in different ways: slowly, quickly, loudly, quietly, in a sad way and so on. Ask different students to read out their texts. You might first ask the whole class, then smaller groups and even individuals. Try to include all of your students. While this can be a fun activity, it could become dull if repeated too many times or applied to every text. Don't ask students to repeat the same thing too many times or they will get bored.

The purpose of repetition activities is to help students build up confidence to speak and practise their pronunciation. It is not to memorise a poem. By practising reading out a poem, students become familiar with the sounds and rhythms of the English language. However, in order to learn to communicate in English, they need to do more than repeat sentences from a textbook. Students also need to participate in communicative speaking activities that can be applied to real-life situations.

## 4 Summary

In this unit you have explored how you can use more English in your classes, so that your students get used to using English to communicate for everyday classroom activities. You also looked at activities where students practise English phrases by repeating after you in groups or individually, so that they become more confident speaking English in the classroom. For examples of classroom language that you may need to do these activities, see Resource 1.

If you are interested in developing your own pronunciation skills so that you can provide a better role model for your students, see Resource 5.

Other Secondary English teacher development units on this topic are:

- *Building your students' confidence to speak English*: Choral repetition and pair dictation help students to develop confidence in speaking. Learn more about how to help your students to feel more confident in this unit.
- *Supporting speaking in English: pair and groupwork*.

## Resources

### Resource 1: Classroom language

Here are some useful phrases for the classroom. You can add other phrases to this list.

#### Greeting students

Good morning students. How are you today?

Good afternoon everyone.

Are you ready to start?

Using more English in your classroom

Let's start the lesson.

What did you do yesterday?

How did you find the homework?

Can anyone remember what we did in the last class?

## **Taking attendance**

Let's take attendance.

Please respond to your roll number.

Who is missing today? Is anyone absent?

Does anyone know why Sneha is not here?

Listen while I call your names.

Raise your hand and say 'Here'/'Present' when I call out your name.

## **Giving instructions**

Open your books at page 38.

Look at the picture at the top of the page.

Please read the first paragraph of the text.

Tanvir, please read the questions.

Read the first stanza aloud.

Repeat after me.

Do it again, please.

Discuss the questions with your partner.

You have ten minutes.

OK – start!

Two more minutes.

OK! Time's up!

Listen. Now write down what I say.

## **Checking previous knowledge**

The topic of the lesson is Nelson Mandela. Can anyone tell me who he is?

Can you remember what we did in the last class?

Does anyone already know what this is called?

Does anyone have one of these at home?

Can anyone tell me how to say XXX in English?

## **Managing behaviour**

Students, could you all sit down, please.



Now the pair work activity is over. Please return to your desks.

Can you four work together, please?

Let Santosh say something too, please.

## **Encouraging your students to speak**

Could you speak up a bit, please?

Would you like to try to answer, Sandesh?

Yes, that's almost right.

Can anyone help Aisha with the answer?

Go on ...

I'm sure you can answer that.

Can you explain that to the rest of the class?

## **Praising your students**

Very good!

Very nice!

Excellent!

Well done!

Good work!

I'm impressed.

Keep it up.

That's correct.

You were very quick!

That was very good, say it again.

You are very good at guessing.

I like the way you're doing that.

## **Giving homework**

For your homework, please do Activity B.

We're out of time. Please finish this activity at home.

Don't forget about your homework!

At home, please do the exercises in the 'Thinking about language' section on page 40.

Before tomorrow's lesson, think about a time you have taken a risk.

For homework, imagine you are Anne Frank. Think about what it must have been like to be her.

## **Saying goodbye**

Okay then, that's all for today. Goodbye. See you all tomorrow.

Using more English in your classroom

The bell has rung. It's time to finish.

Put your books away.

How much time do we have left?

We still have five minutes left.

That's all for today.

We'll read the next part of the passage in the next lesson.

Goodbye! See you tomorrow.

Have a nice weekend.

How much homework do you have from your other lessons?

Don't forget your homework!

Take care when you cross the road.

## **Talking to your students about their lives**

How are you today?

Where is Masuma?

Is she ill?

Have you been ill? Are you okay now?

What did you do yesterday after school?

Did you have a nice day on Sunday? What did you do?

Did you do anything nice during your holiday?

What are you doing this weekend?

Is it your birthday?

Did you watch the cricket match at the weekend?

Does anyone in your family speak English?

What languages do you use at home?

## **Resource 2: Language that students can use with you and with each other**

What does XXX mean?

How do I say XXX in English?

Is that correct?

I don't know how to say XXX.

Do you know what this word means?

No, I don't know either.

Let's ask Preeta. She probably knows.

Do you think that this is right?

It looks good to me.

I'm not sure if this is correct.

## Resource 3: Using pair work

In everyday situations people work alongside, speak and listen to others, and see what they do and how they do it. This is how people learn. As we talk to others, we discover new ideas and information. In classrooms, if everything is centred on the teacher, then most students do not get enough time to try out or demonstrate their learning or to ask questions. Some students may only give short answers and some may say nothing at all. In large classes, the situation is even worse, with only a small proportion of students saying anything at all.

### Why use pair work?

Pair work is a natural way for students to talk and learn more. It gives them the chance to think and try out ideas and new language. It can provide a comfortable way for students to work through new skills and concepts, and works well in large classes.

Pair work is suitable for all ages and subjects. It is especially useful in multilingual, multi-grade classes, because pairs can be arranged to help each other. It works best when you plan specific tasks and establish routines to manage pairs to make sure that all of your students are included, learning and progressing. Once these routines are established, you will find that students quickly get used to working in pairs and enjoy learning this way.

### Tasks for pair work

You can use a variety of pair work tasks depending on the intended outcome of the learning. The pair work task must be clear and appropriate so that working together helps learning more than working alone. By talking about their ideas, your students will automatically be thinking about and developing them further.

Pair work tasks could include:

- **'Think-pair-share':** Students think about a problem or issue themselves and then work in pairs to work out possible answers before sharing their answers with other students. This could be used for spelling, working through calculations, putting things in categories or in order, giving different viewpoints, pretending to be characters from a story, and so on.
- **Sharing information:** Half the class are given information on one aspect of a topic; the other half are given information on a different aspect of the topic. They then work in pairs to share their information in order to solve a problem or come to a decision.
- **Practising skills such as listening:** One student could read a story and the other ask questions; one student could read a passage in English, while the other tries to write it down; one student could describe a picture or diagram while the other student tries to draw it based on the description.
- **Following instructions:** One student could read instructions for the other student to complete a task.
- **Storytelling or role play:** Students could work in pairs to create a story or a piece of dialogue in a language that they are learning.

## Managing pairs to include all

Pair work is about involving all. Since students are different, pairs must be managed so that everyone knows what they have to do, what they are learning and what your expectations are. To establish pair work routines in your classroom, you should do the following:

- Manage the pairs that the students work in. Sometimes students will work in friendship pairs; sometimes they will not. Make sure they understand that you will decide the pairs to help them maximise their learning.
- To create more of a challenge, sometimes you could pair students of mixed ability and different languages together so that they can help each other; at other times you could pair students working at the same level.
- Keep records so that you know your students' abilities and can pair them together accordingly.
- At the start, explain the benefits of pair work to the students, using examples from family and community contexts where people collaborate.
- Keep initial tasks brief and clear.
- Monitor the student pairs to make sure that they are working as you want.
- Give students roles or responsibilities in their pair, such as two characters from a story, or simple labels such as '1' and '2', or 'As' and 'Bs'). Do this before they move to face each other so that they listen.
- Make sure that students can turn or move easily to sit to face each other.

During pair work, tell students how much time they have for each task and give regular time checks. Praise pairs who help each other and stay on task. Give pairs time to settle and find their own solutions – it can be tempting to get involved too quickly before students have had time to think and show what they can do. Most students enjoy the atmosphere of everyone talking and working. As you move around the class observing and listening, make notes of who is comfortable together, be alert to anyone who is not included, and note any common errors, good ideas or summary points.

At the end of the task you have a role in making connections between what the students have developed. You may select some pairs to show their work, or you may summarise this for them. Students like to feel a sense of achievement when working together. You don't need to get every pair to report back – that would take too much time – but select students who you know from your observations will be able to make a positive contribution that will help others to learn. This might be an opportunity for students who are usually timid about contributing to build their confidence.

If you have given students a problem to solve, you could give a model answer and then ask them to discuss in pairs how to improve their answer. This will help them to think about their own learning and to learn from their mistakes.

If you are new to pair work, it is important to make notes on any changes you want to make to the task, timing or combinations of pairs. This is important because this is how you will learn and how you will improve your teaching. Organising successful pair work is linked to clear instructions and good time management, as well as succinct summarising – this all takes practice.

## Resource 4: Involving all

### What does it mean to 'involve all'?

The diversity in culture and in society is reflected in the classroom. Students have different languages, interests and abilities. Students come from different social and economic backgrounds. We cannot ignore

these differences; indeed, we should celebrate them, as they can become a vehicle for learning more about each other and the world beyond our own experience. All students have the right to an education and the opportunity to learn regardless of their status, ability and background, and this is recognised in Indian law and the international rights of the child. In his first speech to the nation in 2014, Prime Minister Modi emphasised the importance of valuing all citizens in India regardless of their caste, gender or income. Schools and teachers have a very important role in this respect.

We all have prejudices and views about others that we may not have recognised or addressed. As a teacher, you carry the power to influence every student's experience of education in a positive or negative way. Whether knowingly or not, your underlying prejudices and views will affect how equally your students learn. You can take steps to guard against unequal treatment of your students.

### Three key principles to ensure you involve all in learning

- **Noticing:** Effective teachers are observant, perceptive and sensitive; they *notice* changes in their students. If you are observant, you will notice when a student does something well, when they need help and how they relate to others. You may also perceive changes in your students, which might reflect changes in their home circumstances or other issues. Involving all requires that you notice your students on a daily basis, paying particular attention to students who may feel marginalised or unable to participate.
- **Focus on self-esteem:** Good citizens are ones who are comfortable with who they are. They have self-esteem, know their own strengths and weaknesses, and have the ability to form positive relationships with other people, regardless of background. They respect themselves and they respect others. As a teacher, you can have a significant impact on a young person's self-esteem; be aware of that power and use it to build the self-esteem of every student.
- **Flexibility:** If something is not working in your classroom for specific students, groups or individuals, be prepared to change your plans or stop an activity. Being flexible will enable you make adjustments so that you involve all students more effectively.

### Approaches you can use all the time

- **Modelling good behaviour:** Be an example to your students by treating them all well, regardless of ethnic group, religion or gender. Treat all students with respect and make it clear through your teaching that you value all students equally. Talk to them all respectfully, take account of their opinions when appropriate and encourage them to take responsibility for the classroom by taking on tasks that will benefit everyone.
- **High expectations:** Ability is not fixed; all students can learn and progress if supported appropriately. If a student is finding it difficult to understand the work you are doing in class, then do not assume that they cannot ever understand. Your role as the teacher is to work out how best to help each student learn. If you have high expectations of everyone in your class, your students are more likely to assume that they will learn if they persevere. High expectations should also apply to behaviour. Make sure the expectations are clear and that students treat each other with respect.
- **Build variety into your teaching:** Students learn in different ways. Some students like to write; others prefer to draw mind maps or pictures to represent their ideas. Some students are good listeners; some learn best when they get the opportunity to talk about their ideas. You cannot suit all the students all the time, but you can build variety into your teaching and offer students a choice about some of the learning activities that they undertake.
- **Relate the learning to everyday life:** For some students, what you are asking them to learn appears to be irrelevant to their everyday lives. You can address this by making sure that whenever possible,

you relate the learning to a context that is relevant to them and that you draw on examples from their own experience.

- **Use of language:** Think carefully about the language you use. Use positive language and praise, and do not ridicule students. Always comment on their behaviour and not on them. 'You are annoying me today' is very personal and can be better expressed as 'I am finding your behaviour annoying today. Is there any reason you are finding it difficult to concentrate?', which is much more helpful.
- **Challenge stereotypes:** Find and use resources that show girls in non-stereotypical roles or invite female role models to visit the school, such as scientists. Try to be aware of your own gender stereotyping; you may know that girls play sports and that boys are caring, but often we express this differently, mainly because that is the way we are used to talking in society.
- **Create a safe, welcoming learning environment:** All students need to feel safe and welcome at school. You are in a position to make your students feel welcome by encouraging mutually respectful and friendly behaviour from everyone. Think about how the school and classroom might appear and feel like to different students. Think about where they should be asked to sit and make sure that any students with visual or hearing impairments, or physical disabilities, sit where they can access the lesson. Check that those who are shy or easily distracted are where you can easily include them.

## Specific teaching approaches

There are several specific approaches that will help you to involve all students. These are described in more detail in other key resources, but a brief introduction is given here:

- **Questioning:** If you invite students to put their hands up, the same people tend to answer. There are other ways to involve more students in thinking about the answers and responding to questions. You can direct questions to specific people. Tell the class you will decide who answers, then ask people at the back and sides of the room, rather than those sitting at the front. Give students 'thinking time' and invite contributions from specific people. Use pair or groupwork to build confidence so that you can involve everyone in whole-class discussions.
- **Assessment:** Develop a range of techniques for formative assessment that will help you to know each student well. You need to be creative to uncover hidden talents and shortfalls. Formative assessment will give you accurate information rather than assumptions that can easily be drawn from generalised views about certain students and their abilities. You will then be in a good position to respond to their individual needs.
- **Groupwork and pair work:** Think carefully about how to divide your class into groups or how to make up pairs, taking account of the goal to include all and encourage students to value each other. Ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn from each other and build their confidence in what they know. Some students will have the confidence to express their ideas and ask questions in a small group, but not in front of the whole class.
- **Differentiation:** Setting different tasks for different groups will help students start from where they are and move forward. Setting open-ended tasks will give all students the opportunity to succeed. Offering students a choice of task helps them to feel ownership of their work and to take responsibility for their own learning. Taking account of individual learning needs is difficult, especially in a large class, but by using a variety of tasks and activities it can be done.

## Resource 5: Develop your own English

Here are some tips for improving your own pronunciation:

- Listen to English as much as you can, and notice how words are pronounced.
- Practise saying words or sounds that you find difficult.
- Don't practise individual sounds only; you need to practise speaking longer passages too for stress and rhythm.
- If it is possible, record yourself and listen to the recording. Record yourself again, correcting any mistakes that you have noticed.
- Don't worry about speaking English with a perfect accent. There are many different accents and types of English. What is important is that people can understand you when you speak.

Click on these links to find some more useful resources:

- Pronunciation tips: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/grammar/pron/>
- Phonemic chart: <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/phonemic-chart>

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