



جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبد الرحمن  
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

# Teaching at the ELI

## ARTICLES AND REFLECTIONS

# TEACHING READING SKILLS

## READING AS A PROCESS

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### PRE-READ TECHNIQUE

For me this is about getting students familiar with the text topic, rather than getting students to look at the text straight away. This can be done in a number of ways either by setting a group or class discussion based on the text and/or by using images to allow students to discuss possible context. Getting students speaking means they can start practicing the target language straight away and it allows the teacher to monitor and spot issues with either comprehension of the topic or particular language use.

### MAKING PREDICTIONS:

Getting students to predict content or language aims is an important part of the reading process, as it allows students to use prior knowledge and experiences to share ideas. This can be done in many ways. One way is to get students to look at pictures and/or titles (depending on their level) and predict what the context or language aims of the text are.

### INTRODUCE VOCABULARY:

Bearing in mind the aim of the lesson, it is a good idea to pre-teach vocabulary, that aids comprehension. Choose only words that make understanding the text imperative. Often this can be the words in the title page, if this is the case then it needs to be pre-taught before the lesson commences. Giving students' vocabulary lists before a lesson can also help with reading comprehension.

### SCANNING:

This involves students reading/scanning the text quickly to identify specific information. This is useful in that it can help the teacher focus

students on key language points.

However, it is important to explain what scanning is to students, before setting tasks. This can be done by giving examples of scanning, such as, restaurant menus, train timetables and airports.

Scanning tasks can include a number of activities, but one that I use a lot is underlining new vocabulary or getting students to identify and extract language points for example go + ing, or verbs in the past etc...

### SKIMMING/ GIST READING:

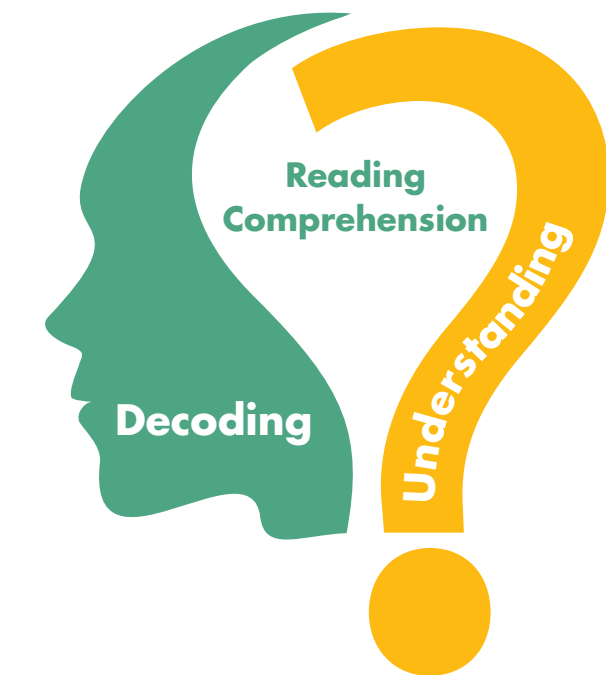
When students read quickly when skimming, this is not the same as scanning as students are only trying to get a general idea or meaning of the text, rather than look for specific vocabulary or language points.

Again, it is important to give students an example of where and when we use skimming in life. A good example to give is to tell students you are in a book shop and need to decide which book to buy. Ask students if they need to read each and every book or could they skim through the back of a book to help them decide?

### READING FOR DETAIL:

This is about students taking their time to read and answer specific questions about the text. It is important to make questions challenging so that students need to read carefully to answer the questions.

It is important for teachers to understand why students are being asked certain questions. Is it to check comprehension of new vocabulary? Do students need to answer grammar-based questions? Are students looking at how spelling plays a part in



comprehension? Or is it to check students understanding of not only the topic but also how the text relates to a student's own life experiences.

Finally as you can see reading is not just about getting students reading and answering questions,

but rather in class we should be looking at ways to use these skills to help us train and meet student needs, so that they can succeed in class and continue to use these skills in life and further study.



## CALL AND MALL

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To many, CALL is a verb that means to communicate with someone and MALL simply means a place to go shopping, however this is not our topic here, **CALL** here means **Computer-Assisted Language Learning**; which means learning by using computers.

**MALL** is: **Mobile Assisted Language Learning**; which means learning language using mobile devices.

### HOW DID IT ALL START?

So we all know that teaching traditionally depended heavily on text books, copybooks and chalkboards, but because of the digital disruption we encounter today; teaching now mainly depends on digital books, internet encyclopedias and other internet sources.

**Technology**, which is defined as anything that makes our life easier, has unquestionably a great impact on people's daily activities. This is highly reflected on why Digital Natives who were brought up during the age of digital technology and are quite familiar with it; can't function properly without their tech devices. Thus, it brings us to the

importance of using technology in the learning process.

CALL goes way back to the 1950's, as it has gone through different phases: Behavioristic, communicative and integrative leading CALL to be widely spread in the education field starting at the early 2000's. I still remember the days when students were punished for bringing their smart devices to school and I think the reason behind that was that schools were not ready for implementing technology into the classroom.

### HOW CAN WE USE CALL IN AN ESL CLASSROOM?

Nowadays; we can implement CALL in our classrooms using all in one software such as Rosetta Stone. On the other hand, a different group of software/websites aiming to develop different skills separately such as Quizlet for flashcards that can help promote the students' lexical resource. FluentQ is also a useful tool to develop speaking skills.

### TRANSITION OF CALL TO MALL

CALL has rapidly transformed to MALL as

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a result of the development of computers to hand-held devices such as smartphones, tabs, MP3 players, etc.

It is worth mentioning that mobile technology has had a great influence on the implementation of some techniques and methods of foreign language teaching. In this regard, several studies have been conducted and they have all proved the positive impacts of mobile technology on learners' progress. To make this point valid, MALL applied in foreign language teaching has had various contributions to teach and practice vocabulary (Lu, 2008), to practice idioms (Thornton&Houser,2005), to develop writing proficiency, to practice listening skill (Edirisingha et al.,2007), and to practice the target language pronunciation (Ducate & Lomicka, 2009).

### HOW TO IMPLEMENT MALL IN THE CLASSROOM?

One of the tools used to assist in implementing MALL in the classroom is SAMR

SAMR represents:

**Substitution:** technology acts as a tool substitute, with no functional change

**Augmentation:** technology acts as a direct tool substitute, with functional improvement

**Modifications:** technology allows for significant task redesign

Redefinition: technology allows for the creation of new tasks previously inconceivable.

SAMR model shows teachers that technology can be used in different activities that focus on the production of the language in addition to alleviating any doubts that many teachers may have while implementing MALL into their ESL classroom.

### WHAT MAKES MALL A DESIRABLE STRATEGY?

"Digital natives" are more comfortable expressing themselves using mobile devices

The questions we need to ask ourselves now are: Do the teachers have the ability to use educational technology? And whether Language institutes/universities are sufficiently equipped with all modern technical means to ensure that MALL is applied effectively in the classrooms.



## SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

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# Planning and Rehearsal in Speaking Activities



How often have you launched your students into a speaking activity by saying 'Student A, read role card one and Student B read role card two and try to use the highlighted expressions.' This is often what our coursebooks ask us to do and while there are advantages to using role plays as they can mirror real-life scenarios (Ur, 2011) our course books and often the time we have in class warrants a single swap of roles. The same seems to be true of the telling of anecdotes. But does this single retelling of the anecdote or the single swap of the role-play provide them with enough practice? Sue Swift of Business Talk Milan argues not, and she has a procedure for planning and rehearsal that I have implemented in my classes. Here is her procedure applied to one of my classes.

**1. The Teacher Model :** First, I started with an engaging teacher model. I told my learners of a friend that I had met ten years ago while I was doing a course who would later go on to work with President Obama. I used images and told the story with all the target grammar structures that I wanted them to use later. My students were genuinely interested in my story and asked me several questions. It was through these questions that I was able to check their comprehension and focus on the target language I wanted them to use.

**2. Silent preparation:** After my model, they needed time to think and prepare their anecdotes. I asked them to think of a time they met someone interesting or unusual. Their task was to work individually on their stories. Here I monitored and provided individual support as was necessary. The support focused on grammar and vocabulary and enabled them to ask me questions that pertained to their personal story.

**3. First retelling :** After students had a chance to prepare their anecdotes with my support, they told their stories to a classmate. In this retelling, they were able to see what their limitations were. As I was monitoring, I was also able to see their weaknesses as well and make a note of them.

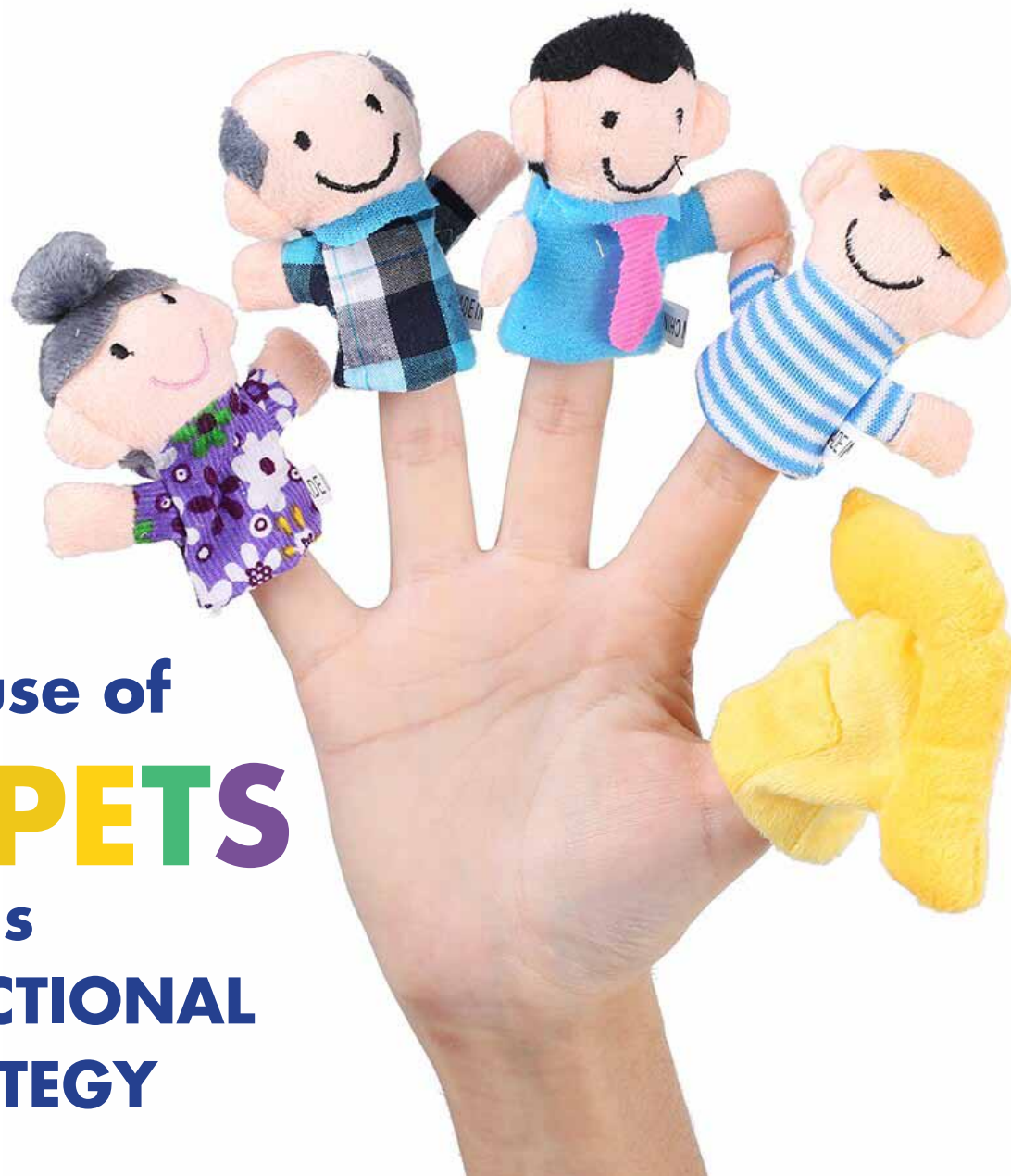
**4. Feedback :** During the whole class feedback session, I was able to tell the students what they did well in their retelling, what mistakes were made, and how they could be corrected. The students made notes and amended the areas of the target language that need correction in their anecdotes.

**5. The second retelling :** After the first retelling and feedback, the students told their stories again and with more confidence this time. Did they do a better job? Yes! The fast finishers told their stories a third time, and yes, their fluency did improve and why would it not they've said the same thing three times now!



## THE USE OF PUPPETS

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# The use of PUPPETS as INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

Instructional methods are how information presented, falling into two categories, teacher-centered & student-centered approaches (Shuell, 1996). Teacher-centered instruction has been criticized as ineffective and grounded behaviorism, (Marshall, 1992, Stoddard, Connell, Stgoftlett and Peck, 1993) however, this is not the case if delivered effectively (Eggen & Kauchak, 2001). Using puppets as a teaching tool in the classroom goes under student-centered. Providing yourself with one of the most inexpensive aids in the classroom, using puppets helps in delivering the right content to the right learner in the right time through the right delivery method.

### HOW TO USE PUPPETS IN THE CLASSROOM?

- Props speak louder than words! Colour, counting, anything goes.
- Behaviour management & keeping the class quiet.
- Checking errors.
- Comprehension questions during reading.
- Controlled and freer practice and making up conversations.
- Revision

Once, I read a study on the impact & types of puppets on students achievement by Reidmiller, Sandra M., Ph.D, Robert Morris University, 2010. The purpose of the study was to

investigate using puppetry as a learning strategy in the teaching of vocabulary for secondary level Ss. It concluded that adding puppetry to content area of classrooms is recommended as one teaching strategy which educators might use for vocabulary instruction. As I always implement gamification and puppetry in my classroom, I give an example of Ss using puppets to interview each other about their favourite restaurants and foods. This way, shy Ss hide behind their puppets and start communicating with their peers actively.

### THE STRENGTHS OF USING PUPPETS INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

- 1. Design Thinking :** as students can make and design them as their ultimate learning partner.
- 2. Growth Mindset :** puppets make mistakes and that kills perfectionism and gives students a practical lesson in imperfection.
- 3. Sharable Media :** as students benefit from each other; peer learning.

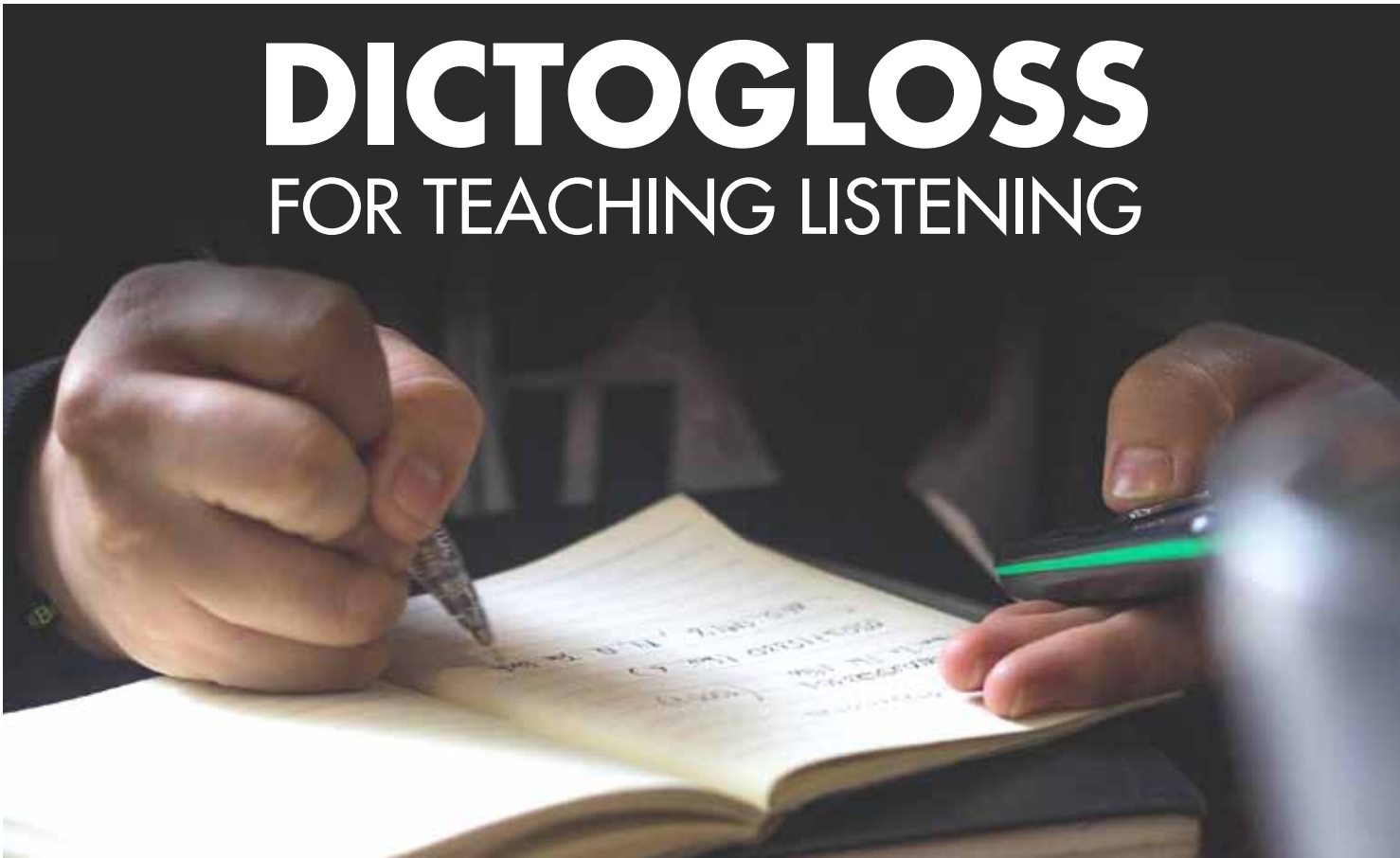




DICTOGLOSS

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# DICTOGLOSS FOR TEACHING LISTENING



Dictogloss, is an excellent technique in getting students to incorporate all the four skills of language acquisition. It also enhances the cognitive strategy of teaching. Despite the essential factor of an instructor creating a comfortable, secure environment to overcome any feeling of fear of error and inadequacy, and establishing a good rapport with students, the element of learners Individual Differences (ID) is highly neglected and overlooked. The Dictogloss teaching methodology has the potential to engage students with different aptitudes and abilities, thus, covertly addressing differences in students strategies preferences.

The first simplified methodology of the Dictogloss exercise is to dictate a sentence, constructed by the instructor, using the target vocabulary and tense structure students are familiar with at the level. For example a sentence with a maximum of 20 words is dictated, eg. "My friend is married with two children and she is a student at university. We often meet for coffee after classes".

Students listen first to the dictation, then reconstruct the sentence, working individually. After given a short time to do the reconstruction, they listen again to the dictation to note their accuracy. Then, teamed in pairs, the exact dictation is completed with each other's assistance. This exercise introduces students to the Dictogloss method of activity.

Moving on to a more intense method of the Dictogloss technique, is for students to listen to a longer dictation and listen for a specific target language. This could be for the present simple tense or for the present progressive tense.



Working in pairs, the students only write the target language. For the correction step, students exchange their results of the target language to another pair for correction. At this stage the instructor monitors and offers a facilitative role to assess whether students are keeping up or require further instruction on the subject.

The Dictogloss is also effective in getting students to listen for verbs of frequency. The dictation can be constructed to bring forth a clear understanding of the different verbs of frequency, for example, "Next week is a long weekend and sometimes we visit my cousins in Jeddah". Students get to understand the meaning of something that happens occasionally. The instructor can also dictate sentences, expressing the different forms of verbs of frequency, without using the verb. An example:- "From Sunday to Sunday we eat Kabsa" – Students are required to complete the verbs of frequency. The listening is followed by writing, demonstrating an understanding of completed lessons. The teaching of commas and full stops can be emphasized in

writing with the listening method. A more advanced method of Dictogloss for a writing assignment is to dictate an introductory paragraph to students. A warm-up session introduces the students to the writing task and the use of imagination to complete the storyline. A few examples are given and eliciting from students examples to reinforce

understanding. The introductory paragraph could be preparing to travel to another country for a much-anticipated appointment. The students are required to complete the essay. The imagination of students working in pairs delivers amazing accounts of events. From listening to the introduction, without any written support, the students continue the writing task.

The benefit of the Dictogloss method is that it includes all the four skills in language learning. The students listen with concentration. Students write when reconstructing the dictation or completing any other writing tasks.

Students speak by reading their version of the dictation. The exchange of different versions creates speaking amongst the students. Students interact and support each other, creating an educational social interaction.

The Dictogloss, done at regular times in class, remains an effective teaching strategy in preparing students for greater command of the English language.

- 4. Puppets as Co-Teacher :** as they get students' interest so it becomes easier for students to read the teacher's best intentions. It's easier to deliver information through a puppet.
- 5. Making Learners Less Threatening :** through pretending with a puppet and not actually doing the real try to experiment.
- 6. Puppets help students build media literacy and skills.**
- 7. Puppets Support All the Four Cs :** Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration and Creativity.
- 8. Using puppets can help students to imagine other people complexity :** by (literally) getting inside the puppet's head, they can learn to be more empathetic and caring towards others.
- 9. Establish and Develop Complex Narratives.**
- 10. Puppets Create Engagement at All Ages:** help older ones to be silly behind the puppet & younger kids love them. PUPPETS ARE MAGIC.

## ARE THERE ANY WEAKNESSES FOR USING PUPPETS AS A TEACHING STRATEGY?

Everything has its advantages and disadvantages. Sometimes the shape and colour of puppets distract Ss from the information delivered. So there are some certain Don'ts which you; as a teacher should avoid. I will state some of them as follows:

- Don't provide more detail than necessary.
- Don't leave anything implied or assumed or needing explanation.
- Don't let your students see your puppet not working.
- Don't leave your puppet on display all the time and always put it back in his house.
- Don't use a puppet that you are not comfortable with and always use the puppet you enjoy and feel relaxed with.
- This methodology is sometimes not appropriate with participants with low-self discipline.
- Last but not least, don't prepare it once, then forget about it.



To use a puppet, you don't need to be a puppeteer or a ventriloquist!

Just make your puppet fun, informative and engage emotions. Using puppets is an instructional strategy and whether it succeeds or not inside the classroom depends on the teacher, type of learners, context, time and place involved in the learning process.



PROCEDURE



SKILLS  
RELATED  
TASKS

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**A.** This text would be interesting for the elementary level class as I have observed them passionately discussing travel when the topic has arisen during teaching, which will help them to engage with the lesson. Travel, and by extension the topic of hotels, is a theme that all the students, regardless of their mixed age range, have knowledge of which will facilitate their understanding

by relating it to a real situation. Being a lexical set, all the new vocabulary is context-specific, meeting the students' need to have a clear, contextualised method of conveying meaning given that their knowledge of vocabulary is relatively small. The text is basic in structure and of a short length, which, following observations, will prevent the group from being

overwhelmed by new material.  
**B. LEAD-IN :** The teacher would project a picture of a hotel onto the whiteboard

and invite students to tell them about their own experiences of travel. In pairs, the students would discuss the best or worst hotel they have stayed in. During open-class feedback, the teacher would nominate students to tell their partner's experience.

**AIM :** To generate interest and contextualise the lesson by introducing a theme. To personalise the lesson to ensure participation of all students.

**RATIONALE :** As J. Harner says "a good context should be interesting for the students" as this will help them to engage with the lesson and want to be exposed to the new information, facilitating learning.

**READING FOR GENERAL INFORMATION :** The teacher would pre-teach key vocabulary using images and descriptions then ask the students to quickly read the text, individually, and tick the pictures that are in the hotel description. Students discuss and choose the options in pairs. Open-class feedback would be conducted with the teacher nominating students to give the answers.

**AIM :** To motivate the students through visual aids and enable the following tasks by introducing the students to the text and the context-specific vocabulary.

**RATIONALE :** Imagery, as F. Grellet mentions "lends itself to a variety of interpretations [and] is used as the starting point of a discussion", of travel in this

context, which will generate further interest and 'create the desire to learn and read more effectively than simple questions".

**READING FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION :** The teacher would pre-teach vocabulary before directing the students to read the questions in the grid. The teacher would model the first answer by eliciting it from students then ask them to complete the grid using the information from the reading. Students would be directed to work in pairs and open-class feedback would be conducted by the teacher nominating students, based on monitoring, for the answers to each question.

**AIM :** To familiarise the students with the form of the text (an advertisement) by developing their ability to scan and 'extract specific bits of information' from the text.

**RATIONALE :** As F. Grellet says, by providing a task that considers the form, 'it will then be easier for the students to grasp the general organization of a given text', which will help the students to develop understanding of written meaning.

**READING FOR DETAIL :** Students would be directed by the teacher to read the sentences and use the text to find out if they are true or false. The students would discuss their answers in pairs before open-class feedback is conducted.

**AIM :** To encourage the students to find meaning in context and check comprehension of a given text.

**RATIONALE :** By rephrasing the information in the text, students are encouraged to use the context to find meaning of vocabulary, this solidifies what they have learnt in the lesson and conveys how much they have understood from the text.

**PERSONAL RESPONSE TO THE TEXT:** Students would be directed to talk in pairs and discuss whether they would stay in this hotel and why/not. During open-class feedback, students would be nominated to talk about their partner's opinion.

**AIM :** To provide free speaking practice and develop reasoning skills while relating what they have learnt to their own lives to encourage learning.

**RATIONALE :** By personalising the text, students are more likely to continue reading

for pleasure rather than necessity.

**C. LEAD-IN :** Following the personal response feedback, the teacher would ask students to discuss in pairs what are the most important/attractive features of a hotel for them. In open-class feedback the teacher would take suggestions from the students and write these as a brainstorm on the whiteboard.

**AIM :** To encourage a personal response to the text and provide a medium through which to generate ideas and enable the following task.

**RATIONALE :** By personalising the lesson, students are more likely to be engaged which will make the task more effective.

**PLANNING FOR WRITING:** The teacher would ask students

to work in groups and make a small poster using the questions provided to advertise their own imaginary hotel. The teacher monitors and provides any vocabulary. During open-class feedback each group provides one of the things advertised at their hotel.

**AIM :** To provide a model for students to use to plan the features of their own advertisement. To use interaction as a way to engage students and provide support for the planning process.

**RATIONALE :** By providing a model, students will find planning and writing the advertisement easier whilst the task will remain personalised to them.

**WRITING :** The teacher would split each group up and allocate a topic for them to write a sentence about. In groups, the students work together whilst writing to ensure continuity of the whole advertisement. In open-class feedback one student from each group reads the short advertisement.

**AIM :** To provide a writing task which is appropriate to the level of the students

and refers back to the reading part of the lesson to provide continuity.

**RATIONALE :** By providing a joint writing task, every student is able to practice their writing ability but the length of writing remains tailored to the groups level, so

that they are not overwhelmed with the task. Group work is communicative and takes the pressure off writing.

APPENDIX 1

Read the advertisements of hotels in Berlin below and match them with the pictures accordingly.

1



2



3



4



5



Hotel Pension Wittelsbach

The Bedroom here are huge and some are ornately decorated. This hotel is recommended for families. There are plenty of toys and the nursery room are done up in the style of a palace and the "Wild West"

Comfort Hotel Frühling am Zoo

This is a mid-range hotel situated in nineteenth century building on th kurfurstendom. It doesn't have a restaurant, and the hotel is located over a row of shops and the windows in the bedrooms overlook a busy street. Although the windows have been soundproofed, there is no air conditioning so in summer the noise may affect light sleepers. The hotel also offers apartments with small kitchens.

Hotel Seehof Berlin

This is a n amazing hotel situated in the town centre. It is only ten minutes on foot from the Messegelände (the complex of trade fair halls) but at the same time it overlooks a picturesque lake. The modern structure of this hotel does not reveal the stylish interiors. If you like large rooms with mahogany furniture and a lakeside view, you will love this place. It's restaurant, the Restaurant Au Lac is one of the best in Berlin.

Die Fabrik

Die Fabrik is a type of youth hostel set in an old factory building. It's simple furnishings are made from pale wood and there are shared bathrooms along the corridors. However, it's eas-going atmosphere appeals not only to young people. Apart from single and double rooms., it also offers rooms for three or four people and even larger group rooms where the price of a bed is very cheap.

Forum Hotel

Modern and functional, all rooms offer either a bath or shower on suite, direct dial telephone, satellite and pay TV, minibar and hairdryer. Unfortunately, the rooms tend to be small and without air conditioning so any room that catch the sun can get hot in summer. However, room on the upper floor are equipped with extras such air conditioning, some business facilities like a work station, modern connection and safe and provide magnificent views over the city

APPENDIX 2

Materials for Pre-Teaching Vocabulary

**Advertisement :** a piece of writing written to make you want to go there. Compare to a television advertisement if necessary.



SHOWER



INTERNET ACCESS WIFI

\*\*\*\*\*  
Is perfect for: it is ideal for. i.e. families will want to go to the hotel  
\*\*\*\*\*

APPENDIX 3

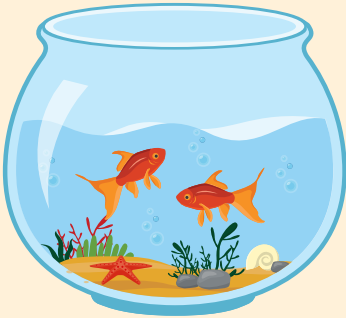
Reading for general information

Tick the pictures that are in the hotel advertisement:

1



2



4



3



5



6



APPENDIX 4

Pre-teach vocabulary for detailed reading task:

- OPEN :** The opposite to closed mime opening a door
- GUEST :** Someone who lives (stays) at the hotel
- TO STAY :** To be somewhere for a bit of time  
[mime walking to a hotel, looking at my watch and sleeping]
- FACILITY :** Rooms the hotel has – for example a restaurant, a spa...
- FEATURE :** objects the hotel has – for example a television, a bed...
- COMPLIMENTARY :** free – do not have to pay

APPENDIX 5

Reading for specific information

COMPLETE THE GRID:

Where is the hotel?	
When is the hotel open?	
How many rooms does the hotel have?	
Who stays in the hotel?	
Where can the guests eat?	



## WHAT IS DOGME?

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### APPENDIX 6

#### Reading for detail

Using the text, say whether these sentences are true or false:

1. The hotel is only open in summer.
2. There are shops near the hotel.
3. All the rooms have a bathroom.
4. Evening meals are included in the price of the room.
5. Children are not allowed in the hotel.

### APPENDIX 7

#### Model for planning writing task

**Where is the hotel?**

- in a town, by the sea, on a mountain.....

**Who goes to the hotel?**

- families, business people, people on holiday...

**What facilities does the hotel have?**

- a restaurant, a swimming pool

**What features does the room have?**

- internet access, bathroom television...

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## CONVERSATIONS IN A DOGME LESSON

### ORIGINS

The term stems from a group of Danish film-makers, led by Lars von Trier, who signed 'a vow of chastity' in which they 'rejected the superficiality and "trickery" of mainstream film-making' (Thornbury 2000). A self-imposed ban was put on features such as special effects, lighting, additional props and rigid technique. Instead, the story was put at the forefront of the film, with the characters integral to the story naturally coming to prominence. In his short article of 2000, Thornbury seized upon this term and argued that its principles could and should be applied to ELT.

He stated that class time 'should centre on the local and relevant concerns of the people in the room, not on the remote world of course book characters, nor the contrived world of grammatical structures', that 'no methodological structures should interfere with, nor inhibit, the free-flow of participant-driven input, output and feedback' (Ibid 2000). He encouraged a back-to basics approach, away from course books and methodology, where lessons are learner-led and acquisition arises from conversation.

The fact that this article garnered so much immediate interest and support from across the teaching world in various internet forums, indicates that it struck a chord with pre-existing ideas and practices across the teaching

world (Dold 2013). Above all, it resonated amongst those who were already deeply dissatisfied and disillusioned with the course book approach and imposed syllabus that is common across much of our profession (Xerri 2012). Crucially, it allowed many professionals to recognise that they were not alone and validated their pre-existing ideas and practice (Dold 2013).

Since Thornbury's article, the main Dogme internet forum has been awash with teachers attaching themselves to the philosophy. It is here where 'like-minded practitioners' met and 'Dogme's principles, antecedents, and practices were aired, debated, rejected, and embraced', often as a response to extreme criticism (Thornbury 2013).

### PRINCIPLES AND REASONING

**Principal 1 :** Classes should be conversation-driven and this conversation should be about the students, their views or interests. The teacher and fellow students can scaffold this conversation and provide feedback to improve it.

**Reasoning :** Conversation is "the most common and the most appropriate vehicle for the exchange of interpersonal meaning" (Meddings and Thornbury 2009:10). Language is a social and dialogic process and knowledge is co-constructed rather than obtained from a teacher or coursebook (Thornbury 2005). This is similar to the way in which we learn our

L1, we do not go to school and study the grammar before we speak.

By making the conversation learner-driven, emerging language will be more meaningful and thus memorable (Thornbury and Meddings 2009). Conversation also allows students to negotiate meaning and enables the input-output-feedback process to occur. Furthermore, effective scaffolding will allow learners "to feel safe enough to take risks and thus extend their present competence" (Thornbury 2009: 10). Studies conducted by Swain, Lapkin and colleagues have shown that 'language use and language learning can co-occur. It is language use mediating language learning. It is cognitive activity and it is social activity' (cited in Lightbown and Spada 2006).

**Principal 2:** In his original article Thornbury wrote very critically of course-books, technology and any other imposed materials in the classroom and sought to remove them all (Thornbury 2000). Since then, the general Dogme stance has evolved somewhat. Many are now considering Delta 2.0, an approach that places Dogme learning online, as long as it remains learner-centred. Others are seeking to provide texts that are localised, relevant or are created or selected by the learner (Meddings and Thornbury 2009).

**Reasoning:** Imposed material obscures the inner life of the students and inhibits real communication (Thornbury 2000). By allowing students to become the providers of input, the content is relevant and learners are more engaged, thus the learning process is activated (Thornbury 2005).

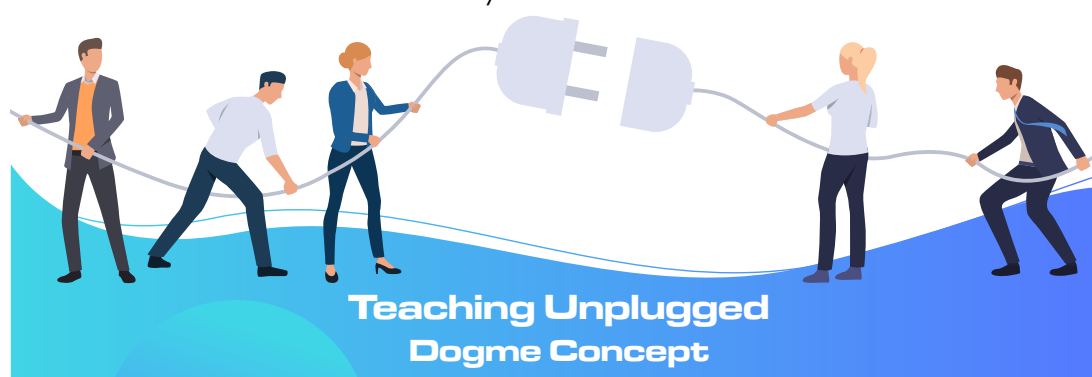
Removing an imposed generic grammar syllabus allows grammar to emerge or to be uncovered naturally depending on the learners' present need (Meddings and Thornbury 2009). The absence of a coursebook also gives the teacher 'more space in which to...open up previously uncharted territory in {their} experience of noticing and fostering learning'.

**The teacher is free to react to learners needs and focus on emergent language.**

**Principal 3 :** Through conversation and the right conditions, language, or the need for it, will emerge naturally. Emergent language is language that is "above the profile of a learner's general language use" (Gaughan 2012). The teacher must thus promote 'the kind of classroom dynamic which is conducive to a dialogic and emergent pedagogy' and then "optimise language learning affordances, by...directing attention to features of the emergent language" (Thornbury 2005).

**Reasoning:** As early Dogme experiments have shown, language will emerge given the right environment (Hamilton 2000).

If language, or the need for it, emerges naturally and is





provided at that moment by the teacher or a fellow student it is more salient, contextualised and therefore more memorable (Thornbury 2013b).

PERSONAL INTEREST

I firmly believe that we learn languages because of a desire to communicate, both L1 and L2. When learning a L1 this occurs, aided by feedback, focus on form and scaffolding from those around us, usually parents. Studies have shown that even with a huge amount of input, unless there is some form of meaningful communication which is shaped through feedback, children fail to acquire language. Personally, I have had no formal lessons in Spanish, yet through conversation that was personal and meaningful to me, I have managed to reach a B2 level and can easily express myself. At times I was frustrated during these conversations as my interlocutors, not being teachers, couldn't explain certain rules of form or meaning to me. Dogme provides the perfect learning scenario; conversation and an able teacher, who is willing to provide feedback and explanation.

Through reflection I have noticed that I share many of the frustrations that Dogmeists have had with course-book driven, syllabus-led teaching. I have agonised over how to make an article on Abba engaging for my Saudi students. I have had to curtail interesting discussions and activities because there was no time on the syllabus, and this is what would be tested. Students have wanted to go online to show things they are interested in and I have been afraid to allow it as it was not part of the plan. When students wanted to talk about their previous weekends, I would avoid the subject as I knew that 'the past' would come later in the course. The groans as I would say 'okay, back to the book' are very revealing. From reading about Hamilton's(2000) and Xerri's(2012) pleasurable teaching experiences with Dogme and their happy and engaged students, I have been keen to experiment. I have also been very disappointed in finding that, having 'taught' a structure and watched the learners do the exercises perfectly, they would fail to produce this structure correctly when the occasion arose. There was no real association between need and structure. I have also been told by students throughout my career that they felt less willing to communicate, the more grammar that they studied. A focus on forms which they neither needed nor were ready for impeded their fluency.

TOPIC CHOICE

I chose to pursue the theme of tourism as it is one that some students have expressed an interest in in

their feedback forms. It is also a generic topic and one that nearly everybody will have an opinion on, thus lending itself to conversation. Students in Saudi Arabia have been witnessing plenty of entertainment activities they can comment on and recommend. They will also have been exposed to the written form of much of the lexis as English is the international language of tourism. However, they may struggle to produce the spoken form accurately. As many of the group have expressed an interest in travelling and also may communicate with tourists here, I feel the lexis of tourism and structures to give advice will be language that they can utilise in the future in the real world.

STAGING

Students start with a basic brainstorming task on the topic of tourist activities in a city. They are given headings to help focus on the task, sometimes a more specific framework produces more results. I monitor to support them in their attempts to produce the target language. The language is then fed back as an open group. I anticipate there will be problems with verb conjugations and pronunciation. Also, knowing the most natural way to express things, such as 'going to a mall' compared to 'going shopping'. By guiding students towards noticing features of form, I will speed the cognitive acquisition process (Batstone 1994).

Students then group themselves according to which category is most important for them as a tourist. They then discuss their reasons for this choice in a personalised communicative process, re-using the language in a meaningful context. The stronger students and I will be able to scaffold communication (Lightbown and Spada 2006). Through monitoring, any emerging language will be retrieved and analysed on the board after.

Students then discuss what Saudi Arabia has to offer for tourists and their own favourite activities to do in the city. They are then asked to offer me advice to those who are new to the country. This should engage them as it has real meaning and is not an artificially created scenario. It is also a topic on which they are more knowledgeable than I am, so they may feel empowered and that their opinions are valid (Thornbury 2005). At this stage I will try to elicit different structures to give advice and maybe model my own. All the lexis and structures can be recycled in the homework task, which will consolidate their understanding.



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**What are the approaches to help learners overcome listening difficulties and factors for successful listening practice?**

One method to engage students is for the teacher to read parts of a reading text and ask them to listen for what they understand or the main idea of each part of the text. By breaking down the activity and giving students a focus, they will be able to manage their listening better and the task won't be as daunting. Also, some students struggle to read, so by having the teacher read the students can focus on the listening task. Students always have to have a purpose when listening.

What are they listening for? The teacher must highlight the purpose and make it clear for the students. A teacher can give students a fill in the gap activity which targets specific language or grammar. Another method is to get students to order a conversation and then listen for the order or give certain details. If students get a set of questions to answer, the teacher must stress the importance of highlighting key words in the question prior to listening.

**How do you motivate students for listening?**

Motivating students to listen can be a challenge as they always want to translate and know the meaning of each word. Students need to be relaxed

and focused. The teacher should stress the importance of not translating every word. A good strategy is to pre-teach any problematic words and perhaps find synonyms for particular words.

Students also need to listen to what they are truly interested in. At home, students can watch films, TV shows, You-tube videos or the news to develop their listening or perhaps listen to songs, or a podcast of their choice. In class, the teacher can choose any of the above items that she thinks may capture her students' interest in order to enhance a lesson.

**What are some ways you cognitively engage students and make listening tasks collaborative? How do you maximize listening practice for students in class?**

Students need to be aware of what their classmates are saying. A good technique, which can be used as a management tool as well is and to keep them engaged, is to ask if they agree or disagree with another student's response and why.

A teacher can do a dictogloss activity where students hear a text being read. The second time they have to try to get specific/ key words and the third time they listen again to add any new information. At the end, students must work together to recompose the text verbally.

Another activity, which is useful is a jigsaw reading. A teacher can divide a reading text so that she has expert groups. These groups will answer a few comprehension questions about the reading. When the teacher re-groups the students, they will again verbally have to tell other students what their paragraph was about and the other student

will have to listen and jot down ideas. In this way, students have manageable chunks to read and share and are using all four skills in a collaborative way to complete the task at hand.

A great activity to do with students if you have time is a web-quest. The teacher can give students a few links to go to in order to collect information from audio/video files.

**How could learners develop listening themselves?**

Students must have the intrinsic motivation to want to get better. They need to listen to what they enjoy and in different dialects and forms.

**What are some learning apps student can use?**

Randall's ESL cyber listening lab is a good website with variety which students can use to improve their listening skills. An application called Duolingo scaffolds words in order to build up their knowledge of English. Another application called Beelinguapp has stories in English, which are read aloud and students can follow along. The text is available in Arabic as well. A final application is called LingQ-Language Learning which is an interactive language learning app that gives real world content and vocab in context. It uses Youtube videos, audio books and songs.







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#### What approaches can we adopt to help learners overcome listening difficulties?

There are many different approaches that we can adopt-when encouraging/helping learners overcome difficulties. It is important that students are given time to explore the topic in question, through discussions and or visual reminders that will not only activate schemata but also develop their knowledge of a particular subject. That said we should also encourage students to actively seek knowledge outside of the classroom-on a number of topics, through authentic means such as newspapers, fictional and non-fictional books etc...

In my experience often students who struggle with listening have very limited vocabulary-this can pose major problems for students, who instead of listening for comprehension-end up getting confused trying to decipher lexis. Whilst there is no guarantee that students will know every word they hear, pre-teaching difficult or new words cannot only build a student's confidence, but also get them ready to listen and understand the context of what they are listening to.

#### Current insights into motivation and listening

Motivating students to listen can be difficult and poses a number of obstacles for teachers who are trying to keep up with tight pacing schedules -this can sometimes leave little time for extensive activities. It's no secret that people listen to what interests them. One approach is to find out about students' likes and interests -through rapport building activities and or mini quizzes. Activities can then be designed around their likes and interests. Coursebook topics can be adapted, so that they are appealing- an example could be making suggestions and giving advice about different countries ( Book 1, ENG Unlimited, Cambridge Press) by using relative news extracts-about Saudi and the new tourist visas-teachers can get students to listen and then give advice/suggestions to prospective visitors to Saudi Arabia.

#### How can we maximize opportunities for listening practice in the classroom?

The majority of students have mobile phones-which can be utilised in class. Listening tasks can be sent straight to their phones-through WhatsApp or

other phone apps. Here students have more control over what they are doing and can stop or listen again if needs be. This is good for weaker students. Also, grammar questions can be recorded and sent through student groups-to help them practice listening and answering grammar related questions. Getting students to record themselves giving a presentation. These presentations can then be played in class-for students to listen and write questions about. Also note taking is an important part of listening as it helps students list key points. Students like to play games in class, this gives teachers an opportunity to use listening to deliver activities, where students are actively listening in order to win. Instead of writing out quiz questions, teachers could record quiz questions and create a game where students are listening in teams and having to answer questions they hear. Making sure classrooms are student centred can help develop students listening, as most activities require student participation.

#### Do you use learning apps in school?

As explained, it is important for students to feel confident, motivated and ready through the exploration of topics, pre-learning new lexis and finding a personal connection to what is happening in class. Learning applications can help teachers immensely with this task, I use Ted-Ed which allows students to pick different topics and then answer relevant comprehension topics -after watching a video. This is an excellent way to build not only active listening skills, but also to develop students critical thinking abilities. I am a big fan of WhatsApp as it allows me to use it to create a number of listening activities from quizzes to project tasks. Kahoots is another app that is popular with students. Youtube is another app that I use for listening as you can find many short videos on a number of topics. My favourite videos are the dilemma videos, as the students love solving dilemmas. Another site I use is Freerice, this app allows students to actively take part in raising money for world food programmes, as the app donates grains of rice for correct answers. Finally whatever approaches/strategies we use, should help students develop different listening skills, whether active or passively.



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#### Have you tried any cognitive-engaging, collaborative tasks that worked well with your students?

One of the activities I feel like is really engaging is when they start recording their speech and their friends listening to it, so it's a kind of listening and speaking activity. I feel speaking and listening is always linked so I tell them to exchange their recordings and give feedback. This gives them confidence and make them learn more from their peers.

#### How could learners go about developing these aspects themselves?

I advise them to watch programs or TV shows or movies and they try to listen without subtitles. I don't ask them to do something that they hear for the first time. It has to be a familiar context so they focus on the specific parts, especially at the beginning. Once they get the main idea then they start going into the details so they don't get frustrated if they don't know the context. Teacher should do such activities consistently to form a habit with the students. The teacher can use a variety of activities like listening to the podcast or any TV shows on regular basis so that they can master this skill.

#### What types of listening activities have you found worked well/less well?

In our book we usually have a listening text and then a few questions maybe a conversation. I don't start with the listening first, I make them curious about what they're going to listen, because if you tell them listen to this audio and answer the questions they will feel lost completely without the context. I build the context first, I ask them to predict and then I make them listen and then I make my own questions to make sure that they understood the context then I tell them to answer from their own memory so it kind of becomes like a memory test, challenging them a bit because they don't know what's coming next. I also use the learning apps related to listening. I recommend my students to listen to podcasts even outside the classroom, even TEDTALKS where they can pick up topics of their own interest and then they present it as a discussion. There's another app that I use and it's called EDPUZZLE. It's a website which has many interesting strategies to make sure students are attentive to what's happening. You can pick a YouTube video or any audios. When I did Unit 2 (Cambridge Unlimited), which is about various jobs of the people, I chose a video and added questions. So, the interesting part in this is that the students won't know when the questions would show up so they remain attentive. You can do this as an individual work or as a group activity. You get to know how

many students answered and who got the maximum marks or how many haven't even tried.



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#### What approaches can we adopt to help learners overcome listening difficulties?

First of all, choose a short audio track that presents information that may be easily summarized. It is important to clarify that students aren't expected to deliver details, like numbers, names or statistics, but rather express the main point. Students can grasp specific information and details that are relevant, important or necessary, so learners can show more interest in listening. Also, prepare a short list of questions which they must read before listening, of what, when, where, how. Usually quite often in listening students receive instructions to put answer in order as they listen, where they lose interest. In order to be successful, give students the steps before the actual listening to look through and have them listen and put them in order, this way they at least have the basis to start a listening and are clear on what they are looking for. Listening activities offer great opportunities to teach new words or review vocabulary previously taught. Blend the same vocabulary in the listening script to identify and remember



previous words. Make listening interesting. With a carefully selected listening activity, you also have the opportunity to teach students about the difficult words and blend together. Choose topics that interest them or are related to their culture, in which they will also feel connected and interested. Attitudes, opinions and feelings can sometimes be conveyed through listening. If the purpose of the listening activity is clear, which will give them a fresh outlook on the whole listening experience.

#### How can we maximize opportunities for listening practice in the classroom?

Firstly, we can utilize listening with videos. We want them to be able to listen, understand and respond. A large part of the listening involves reading a speaker's facial expression and body language, which can vary from culture to culture. So, most of the time, your students need to practice their listening skills by watching videos. Secondly, tell them the title of the piece, and ask them to guess what it is about, or what they think might happen

in the listening. Ask questions before the actual listening, in regard of the listening they will be doing, this will cut down the time as they are aware of what they are looking for. Give students vocabulary ahead of the listening activity, specially new vocabulary which they haven't heard before, which will save time in the classroom. Tell them to listen for specific words and expressions, as this will cut down the time not to keep repeating the audio. We have to repeat the audio twice, but at least this way they know what to look for, and their mind will be focused. They should also have some words they already know to listen for, to help them focus and improve the skill of listening. Give them specific questions to focus on, such as, what is the word that comes after the target word, who says this word or how many times you hear this word? It also depends on the level of the class. Tell them to listen for sequence and order, for example, you can give them a worksheet that they have to put into the right order as they hear the words or sentences, this will process things quickly and will help maximize the opportunity in the classroom for listening activity.



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