

Teaching Receptive and Productive English Language Skills Online: Strategies and Tools

ΜΑΡΙΑ ΜΑΛΙΤΣΑ
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EQUIPMENT OR TOOLS YOU NEED

- Laptop/computer with a camera
- Headset with microphone
- Stable internet connection
- Platform for teaching live
- Whiteboard
- Virtual whiteboard
- Pictures
- Puppets
- Realia (objects)

Exploiting features of the platform

- ▶ **Chat box:** To (display an error and) elicit corrections (peer assessment), to write answers, to give feedback, to carry out brainstorming activities, to elicit students' prior knowledge.
- ▶ **Share Content/ Screen/Web Browser:** To share a text, a table in Google Docs showing different word forms for the student to complete, a picture, etc.
- ▶ **Hand icon** (next to their name): Students use it to show they've finished reading so the teacher knows when to move on, etc.
- ▶ **New (Interactive) Whiteboard:** To draw a picture, to introduce a new word, to elicit missing words in useful phrases, to write notes (e.g. how to form past simple verbs). Students can fill in the missing words in sentences, write an answer, etc. (if you make them 'presenters'). Useful for the teacher to write notes, or for the learner and the teacher to collaborate on notes during the lesson.
- ▶ If you click on 'save', you can have a record of what happened in the lesson. Students can see ideas and examples of language, which they can use as a stimulus for further work. The teacher could also use it to set homework, the next task, etc.

Other digital tools and resources

- ▶ **A grammar reference tool** (e.g. Cambridge Online Dictionary Grammar). You can have this open in your browser while you're teaching an online lesson. In this way, you can refer to grammar rules and you don't have to think of examples while you're teaching and having a conversation. (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/grammar/british-grammar>).
- ▶ **Google Docs**. Teachers can send students a link and ask them to write answers, homework, etc., then share it during the online lesson and give feedback in real time. Students can also use this to show the teacher something they have written or prepared. It can also be used for collaborative online work e.g. writing a text.
- ▶ **Quizlet and other games/activities**. These are tools teachers can use before and/or after the online lesson (asynchronous class) to provide additional controlled practice. Students can use these tools to revise or work on something they've done in the lesson.

An example task (role play) in three stages

Pre task

If your platform had breakout rooms, students could be placed into pairs, i.e. two As or two Bs together, and put into breakout rooms to prepare their roles.

As Webex doesn't have breakout rooms, you would need an alternative approach. You could set up the role play in the lesson, eliciting typical behaviour as per the teacher's notes. Then ask learners to prepare their roles at home for homework or give them time to do it in the lesson.

Which of these you choose depends very much on how much preparation the learners might need. If it's just a few minutes, in lesson is fine. If it's longer, it's better to set it as homework.

During the task

If your platform had breakout rooms, you could put learners into pairs A and B and place them in breakout rooms to conduct the role play. You could monitor each pair and take notes on their performance.

As Webex doesn't have breakout rooms, learners will need to take turns to do this in front of the whole class. To encourage learners to watch and listen carefully to their classmates' role plays, you could set some success criteria and ask students to peer assess each other's performance e.g. use at least three words that they studied in the last lesson, use modal verbs correctly to express strong advice, obligations etc.

After the task

You give feedback by pointing out strong and weak points, how much progress has been made, etc. You write examples etc. on the whiteboard or in the chat box. For more detailed feedback you could keep notes and send students by e-mail, etc.

key skills and techniques teachers need to employ when teaching online

- ▶ **Being able to work with technology is a key skill.**
- ▶ 1. Setting clear learning goals. You need to be able to plan and set clear learning goals so that lessons have a clear purpose and aren't just a case of chatting with the learner.
- ▶ 2. Planning. It is important to plan really well so that you know what you're doing at every step and that there is no 'dead time'.
- ▶ 3. Good management skills. The teaching techniques you use in the face-to-face classroom need to be used in the digital environment too, although they may need to be adapted. Setting up tasks, checking learners have understood the tasks and building rapport can be more difficult online. The teacher needs to give **clear instructions and demonstrations of activities.**
- ▶ Time management skills. Online lessons feel more intense and fast-paced; therefore it can be easy to lose track of one's time. Make sure you teach different skills in the same lesson to add dynamism.
- ▶ 4. Communication skills. Teachers need to develop a wide range of communication skills to make up for the lack of natural face-to-face interaction. First, it is crucial to build an extra sense of patience and empathy. Teachers need to actively listen to students and understand hidden messages due to the difficulty in showing body language and facial expressions (though, it is possible).
- ▶ 5. Being able to grow empathy and patience will also help teachers to build rapport with students.
- ▶ 6. Using gestures. Some gestures, e.g. counting the number of syllables in a word, showing agreement/approval or showing learners that you're listening or waiting for them to speak help make lessons more successful.
- ▶ 7. Establishing and building rapport. It's more difficult to establish rapport in an online lesson than in a face-to-face lesson.

Tips for new online teachers of English

- ▶ 1. **Plan** lessons to meet your **learners' needs**. Of course, you need to know your students well.
- ▶ 2. Planning is essential but **have a back-up plan**. Make sure that you plan thoroughly and that you anticipate possible problems so that you are prepared when things go wrong or don't work as you planned.
- ▶ 3. Plan fully and make sure there is **a variety of different materials**. In the classroom, a teacher can be dynamic and learners can move around, maintaining **a good pace** to the lesson. In the digital classroom this isn't possible, so a teacher needs to plan to fill every minute of the lesson and to make sure there is a good variety of activities and materials to help vary the pace.
- ▶ 4. Check that the technology works. Problems occur, but you can prevent some by checking everything works in advance. Consider having a technology check with some learner before the first lesson.
- ▶ 5. Understand your platform and practise using it. You can watch video tutorials or read Help pages on the website. Then, practise using the platform by asking friends, family or colleagues to play the student.
- ▶ 6. Make sure you're **familiar with the teaching material**, so you exploit it in a way that ensures you achieve the learning goals.
- ▶ 7. Make sure the students are confident with how the class works. **Establish classroom rules and make expectations clear** to the learners. This will help lessons to go more smoothly.
- ▶ 8. Run an orientation session before you start teaching. This makes the first lesson easier as you and the learners are more relaxed.
- ▶ 9. Be prepared to **use your face a lot**. When you're teaching online your face is in front of the learner more than in a face-to-face classroom. You can use this to your advantage to create and maintain rapport, e.g. by smiling.

Preparing learners for their English language assessments

- ▶ You can adapt the KPG exam preparation materials/past papers (or Cambridge English Exam materials) in the same way you would adapt other resources for online teaching. You can also use the coursebook to guide your lesson activities and supplement with online resources or learner-generated resources like images and vocabulary quizzes.
- ▶ Some exam preparation is better suited to independent study, for example doing a practice test, reading, or doing extended individual writing (use the asynchronous class for that purpose). You and your learners can use your online lessons to discuss difficult questions, share useful strategies and, for example, do collaborative work, speaking practice or group writing (using e.g. Google Docs).
- ▶ There are many lesson plans in [Cambridge Assessment English – Learning English](#), which will help you prepare learners for their Cambridge exams in an online classroom.

TEACHING THE FOUR SKILLS ONLINE

When teaching online you need to transfer your teaching skills from the face-to-face classroom to a digital environment so that you can deliver effective lessons to your learners.

Receptive and productive skills lessons online and face-to-face are similar in many ways, but the use of technology does mean there are some differences.

It is possible to adapt and teach reading, listening, writing and speaking successfully online.

TEACHING READING

- ▶ **Teaching reading** online can be as effective as teaching it face-to-face and **it can be integrated with other skills.**
- ▶ The hardcover books and paper handouts are replaced by their digital versions. The ordinary textbook can be used in its digital form, and there is also an 'interactive version' (<http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/allcourses.php>) .
- ▶ There are many other digital books and websites that teachers can extract text or a story from and share with their online students (some publishers offer now free digital readers).
- ▶ Webex, has the '**Screen-Sharing**' or the '**Share Content**' feature which is quite useful for reading lessons and, also, the '**Share Web Browser**' feature. Additionally, students can use the drawing tools or the '**Annotate**' tool when they are scanning or skimming a text (example).
- ▶ Alternatively, the teacher or student can take a screenshot of their reading materials, save it as a picture or pdf and add it to the cloud or a Google Drive folder.

How do online reading lessons differ from face-to-face reading lessons?

- ▶ 1. The **key difference** is whether the reading is done in the lesson or for homework.
- ▶ 2. Whether learners do the reading task in the lesson or for homework depends on their age and, also, on the text type and the task.
- ▶ 3. Young learners are more likely to read texts in the lesson, as they need support from the teacher.
- ▶ 4. Older learners can read independently, although it depends on the text type and task.
- ▶ 5. If the lesson focus is **reading for specific information (scanning)**, the learners can do the reading **in class**. Doing the task in class pushes learners to **scan-read** and not read everything. The teacher can set a time limit.
- ▶ 6. If the lesson focus is **reading for detailed information**, the learners can do the reading **for homework**. This is likely to take the learner time. This is time best used in the lesson on other things such as speaking.
- ▶ 7. When learners read a text for homework, the next lesson can focus on checking the learners' understanding and follow-up work. The teacher can check answers to the task set for homework and then discuss the text or do some follow-up language work, for example.

How will the text be shared with learners

- ▶ When teaching a reading lesson, it's important to **plan how the text will be shared with learners**.
- ▶ Will you display it on your platform's whiteboard?
- ▶ Display it on your screen and share it with learners during the lesson?
- ▶ Display it on your Web Browser?
- ▶ Or provide learners with a handout to print before the lesson?

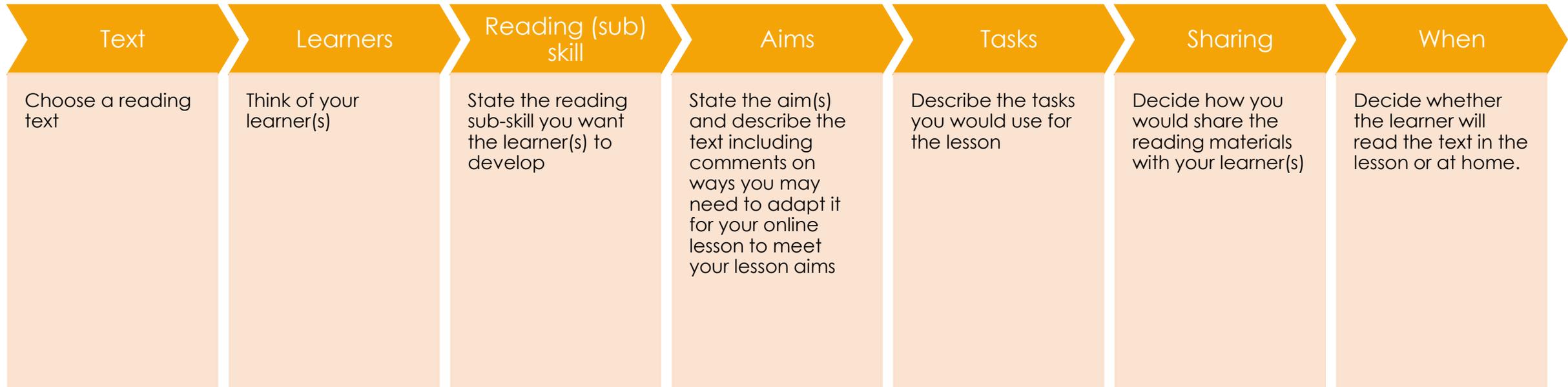
- ▶ Of course, **motivation** also plays a part in deciding whether to ask a learner to read in or out of the lesson. If a learner is unmotivated to read outside the lesson, then you'll need to ask them to read in the lesson.

Displaying and sharing reading materials

- ▶ **Different options for showing materials to learners:** The teacher can use the Screen, the Whiteboard, a PowerPoint slide, a pdf which learners view on their screen.
- ▶ Also, the teacher can display a webpage, a Google Form, a Word document, a picture, a video.
- ▶ **Problems with displaying reading texts:** It makes sense to show texts as a whole, but if you show the text as a whole it doesn't fit on the screen.
- ▶ **Solutions for sharing texts, exercises and activities:** Cutting the text into smaller pieces/chunks. For example, just put a paragraph on the screen or even a few lines from the paragraph. Learners would have the whole text or the whole handout to refer to but what they see on the screen is just the part of the text that you want to focus on.

Means of sharing reading material	Strengths	Weaknesses
Display the text on a whiteboard	Can be displayed quickly and easily in class. All learners can see what you want them to see.	Can only show a very short text or it'll be too small to see. Learners can't see the text after the lesson has ended.
Display the text on your screen and share your screen with learners during the lesson	Can be displayed quickly and easily in class. All learners can see what you want them to see.	Can only show a short text or rely on learners reading at the same pace when you scroll down. Learners can't see the text after the lesson has ended.
Provide learners with a handout before the lesson, e.g. via e-mail or the asynchronous class	Learners can print the handout and have it easily to hand. They can see the whole text and read at their own pace. Learners have the text after the lesson has ended.	Teacher has to prepare and share the handout with the learner before the lesson. Teacher has to make sure the learner can access the tool used to share the handout. Teacher can't see what the learner is looking at.
Provide learners with a link to the text during (or before) the lesson	Learners can quickly click on the link and access the text. They can see all of the text easily and read at their own pace. Learners have access to the text after the lesson has ended.	Teacher has to make sure the link works. Teacher can't see what the learner is looking at.

Preparing an outline for an online reading lesson



Outline of an online reading lesson – an example

- ▶ **Learner:** second grade junior high school student (most probably).
- ▶ **Reading sub-skill:** Understanding past habits and events described in a short text.
- ▶ **The text:** [Unit 2, Lesson 4](#), Think Teen for 2nd Grade Advanced: “Echoes of the Past”. Is there need to adapt it for the needs or purposes of the lesson/students?
- ▶ **The tasks:** First you can click on the ‘Glossary’ so they can look at some related vocabulary. Or you can present a chart you’ve created (e. g. a word document) to teach the vocabulary.
- ▶ Then, learners can write in the chat box answers to the questions at the top or some other questions you have given (orally and by writing them in the chat box, on the New Whiteboard, etc.). You could ask one or two to speak (just like in face-to-face classes).
- ▶ Then they can read the Introduction and answer the question below (in the chat box, etc.), to compare their ideas.
- ▶ **Sharing reading material:** in addition to presenting the relevant web page, you can share a link to the website during the lesson or before.
- ▶ **In or out of class:** the ‘Introduction’ is a short text and learners can read it in class, without them taking up too much time during the lesson. The tasks before and after the main reading task will occupy much of the lesson.

Useful online reading resources

- ▶ There's a wealth of authentic reading material available to teachers and learners online: **News reports, blogs, reviews, social media posts, advertisements, shopping sites and magazine articles** allow us to create lessons that give learners access to **language used authentically**.
- ▶ There is also a range of useful **reading materials specifically for learners of English** that teachers and learners can exploit, among which digital stories, fairy tales, etc.
- ▶ Below are **four useful resources** that teachers can use to create interesting and level-appropriate online reading lessons for their learners, as well as websites that learners can access themselves. Before using them, you have to answer the following questions:
- ▶ What level of learner is it appropriate for?
- ▶ What age of learner is it appropriate for?
- ▶ Does the site provide a complete reading lesson or do you need to build a lesson around a text?
- ▶ [Breaking News English](#)
- ▶ [News in Levels](#)
- ▶ [Learn Kids short stories](#)
- ▶ [Cambridge Assessment English – Learning English](#)

Who are the reading resources suitable for?

- ▶ **Breaking News English** is a website that teachers can use to prepare lessons. Full lesson plan materials are provided along with texts aimed at different levels. These are for teenagers or adults rather than children.
- ▶ **News in Levels** is a website which takes authentic news stories and simplifies them for mid and lower levels. While audio/video is available, the written texts provide useful vocabulary in bold. These lessons are probably better suited to teens and adults.
- ▶ **Learn Kids** is a website for young learners. The short stories section has videos of short stories with accompanying materials such as the story written in text and activities, e.g. games, discussions etc. It is great for teachers to use in class but students could also watch the videos or read the stories at home.
- ▶ **Cambridge Assessment English** has some free material for learners of different levels. Teachers could adapt this material for classroom use. The activities are usually short and last 5–10 minutes and are best suited to teenage or adult learners.
- ▶ **KPG past papers**
- ▶ The last two might be the focus of subsequent teleconferences

TEACHING LISTENING

- ▶ **Teaching listening**, though a more receptive skill, can be integrated with the productive speaking skill. It's possible and crucial to use **the right equipment**. Teachers need to ensure the students can listen to the videos and audio files, as well as listen to the teacher themselves.
- ▶ On Webex, the teacher can share the computer audio, which will enable the student to listen to the sound as clear as it can be, but they need to use earplugs or a headset to muffle the outside noise (if the student does the class in a noisy place).
- ▶ All listening tasks can be perfectly conducted online, such as pre-listening tasks, watching a video or listening to an audio file, post-listening tasks, and decoding techniques (with the help of the whiteboard, chat box or by sharing resources on the screen e.g. the Web Browser. Alternatively, students could be asked to do them before the online lesson, e.g. by sending them a link or uploading the video in the asynchronous class.
- ▶ The audio can be rewound as many times as needed.

A listening lesson

- ▶ The teacher can ask students to listen to a text and note down a number of things that happened, etc. ...
- ▶ If the teacher wants to make the listening task more difficult, she can turn off her camera so that the students can't see her body language.
- ▶ The teacher notes some of the students' sentences on the Whiteboard and uses them to look at how e.g. we form past tense verbs.
- ▶ **You can also use the listening activities in the coursebook online** (example).

Listening activities for online lessons

- ▶ Let's look at some examples of listening activities that can be incorporated into online lessons or set for homework. These activities provide learners with a variety of text types.
- ▶ As well as that, they have a clear learning goal and help learners develop a particular listening sub-skill.

Example strategies for listening lessons

- ▶ **Jigsaw listening.** Learning objective: To understand the speaker's opinion. For homework, half the class watch one talk and the other half watch a different talk but on the same topic. In the next lesson, two learners from each group compare the speakers' views (with the teacher's help) and the rest of the class listen and add in the chat box the points that were not mentioned or correct their classmates.
- ▶ **A song.** Learning objective: To implicitly learn new vocabulary and language in an engaging way. A young learner watches a video of people performing a song. The teacher helps the learner to learn the words using pictures and mime, and they sing along.
- ▶ **A dictogloss.** Learning objective: To listen for the key points and key words/phrases. In class, the teacher reads out a short text giving factual information. The learner listens and then takes notes about what they heard. These two steps are repeated. The learner then uses their notes to reconstruct the text, e.g. typing it onto the whiteboard, etc. The teacher offers feedback and support to help the learner be more accurate. Finally, the learner compares their text to the original.
- ▶ **A film clip.** Learning objective: To use body language and facial expressions to understand meaning. In class, learners watch a short clip from a film with no sound. They predict what they think the people were saying and type their ideas into the chat box. They then watch with the sound on to check.
- ▶ **Questions.** Learning objective: To recognize weak forms and connected speech. In class, the teacher reads out a set of questions. Each time, the learner has to count the number of words they hear. The teacher asks the questions again and the learner answers them.
- ▶ **Which photo?** Learning objective: To understand prepositions of place. In class, the teacher displays six photos using the share screen function. The teacher then reads out a sentence to describe one of the photos, saying where something is, e.g. The cat's sitting on the table. The young learner says which photo the teacher is describing.

Listening resources

- ▶ The main source of listening practice for online learners is their **teacher**.
- ▶ How a teacher can best exploit teacher talking time as listening practice?
- ▶ The benefits of using **recorded material**:
- ▶ It adds variety to the lesson so the learner isn't only listening to the teacher. It provides an opportunity for the teacher to bring other voices into the classroom and it gives learners a chance to hear different voices and accents.
- ▶ The teacher should set a task to give learners a purpose to listen and to check their understanding.
- ▶ What you need to check before a lesson is that recorded materials will work on your platform. You can ask a family member to check it with you.
- ▶ You also need to check copyright issues.

Useful online listening resources

- ▶ **TED Talks**
- ▶ **YouTube videos and news items**
- ▶ Listening to a range of listening materials will help learners get used to hearing different accents, which will help them to deal with different situations better.
- ▶ The following resources could prove useful:
- ▶ [CBeebies](#)
- ▶ [ESL Brains](#)
- ▶ [ello - English Listening Lesson Library Online](#)
- ▶ [LyricsTraining](#)

Who are they suitable for

- ▶ **TEDxESL** provides clips of talks where people give their views on a variety of topics. This high-level authentic material could help older students (B2 level +) to better follow different points of view. **ello** also provides opportunities to listen to people talking about different topics and giving their opinions although the texts are quite short.
- ▶ **Lyrics training.** For teenagers (A2+ level) can give them listening practice and they can choose the music they like. They might also find some of the recordings on **ello** interesting, too.
- ▶ **ello** provides hundreds of short audio or video clips with accompanying multiple-choice questions. Students who do not have much time or get easily bored (B1 level) could benefit from **ello**. It can also give practice in listening to a variety of accents. They could also watch videos where the transcript is available to help them follow what they hear.
- ▶ **CBeebies** sites. For very young (beginner) learners. Useful for listening and singing along to the songs.

Other useful listening resources:

[BBC Learning English](#)

[Channel One News](#)

[Big Think](#)

[British Council short stories for kids](#)

[British Council LearnEnglish Teens](#) – tasks for teenager

[Edpuzzle](#) . Free and paid for versions.

[ESLvideo](#)

TEACHING SPEAKING

- ▶ **Teaching speaking** online is not like talking to a friend, even though this idea may help students to feel more comfortable and confident.
- ▶ **Teaching speaking online** requires the teacher to listen and watch the students all the time, monitor their language, give feedback, and encourage participation and engagement just as teachers do in the face-to-face classroom.
- ▶ **Feedback** can be delayed or on the spot and teachers can write on the chat box as students speak or wrap up at the end of a task. Also, the teacher can use the chat box or the screen (if they're sharing it) to clarify questions.

Key things to remember when teaching a speaking lesson

Lesson objectives	It's important to have clear objectives and you should have a good reason for doing speaking activities.
Lesson staging/ framework	Frameworks for online speaking lessons are similar to those in a face-to-face lesson. You'll have some preparation work, then you'll do the speaking task, then you'll have some feedback afterwards.
Instructions	You need to be very clear with instructions because of the distance that comes with the online teaching situation. When giving instructions make sure that: your language is graded, you enunciate clearly, you check that learners understand what to do, you give a demonstration of the activity. You can also type instructions into the chat box.
Managing time lags	Leave enough 'wait time' after you ask a question so that the learner has time to receive the question across the distance, to think of an answer and then to produce the answer.
Managing dominant and quiet learners	Use the chat box to help weaker students become more confident and to chat to you until they are ready to speak.
Feedback	Use the chat box to give personalized feedback to individual learners directly. Use the whiteboard or a Word document to give whole class feedback.

A group online speaking lesson

- ▶ Planning a group speaking lesson is often more challenging than planning a one-to-one speaking lesson.
- ▶ We need to consider how we can ensure all learners in the group have the opportunity to develop their speaking skills.

A group online speaking lesson

Platform feature	How it is exploited
Breakout rooms	Pair work in the lead-in and also when completing the first speaking task (role play).
Chat box	To elicit useful phrases for the speaking task; to set a listening task for students, e.g. type in phrases they hear when half the class are performing (e.g. a role play); to elicit corrections to errors.
Interactive Whiteboard	To get students completing useful phrases they can use in the speaking tasks; to introduce useful phrases.
Share screen/Share content	To share a spreadsheet with the speaking tasks set out. The useful language is also on there and presumably this document will be shared with learners at the end of the lesson.
Hand icon	Students show when they've finished reading the task so that the teacher knows when to move on, etc.

Dealing with error correction in online speaking lessons

- ▶ **Feedback** is an essential part of the learning process and learners in an online environment need to know where they are now in their learning, where they need to go and how they can get there just as much as a learner in a face-to-face context.
- ▶ Try to give feedback **as soon as possible** (in the synchronous or asynchronous classroom).
- ▶ **One element of feedback is error correction.** Error correction online is likely to be dealt with slightly differently than in face-to-face lessons.
- ▶ You can ask students to write what they hear in the chat box, e.g. certain words, ideas, etc. (peer assessment).
- ▶ You can also use the Polling/Polling Questions function of Webex.
- ▶ You can use gesture to show that the answer is correct or not.
- ▶ You can keep notes and provide comments after the activity (using the Whiteboard, etc. or some asynchronous mode).

Developing speaking skills outside a lesson

- ▶ Speaking practice is no longer something that can only be done in a lesson.
- ▶ There are many digital tools that allow learners to communicate outside the classroom and complete speaking tasks (e.g. in the asynchronous classroom).
- ▶ The following tools can benefit learners.
- ▶ [Voki](#)
- ▶ [Flipgrid](#)
- ▶ [Voice Spice](#)
- ▶ [Vocaroo](#)
- ▶ [Lingt](#)

Basic functionalities

- ▶ 1. **Voki** – The teacher creates an avatar and adds their voice, introducing themselves to a new student, introducing a topic, etc. The student creates their own avatar and speaks using their own voice or another voice of their choice (female, child, American accent, etc.). Basic characters are free but learners need to sign up to use it. Free app available.
- ▶ 2. **Flipgrid** - The teacher records a video, asking all of their students at an intermediate level to talk about a film they've enjoyed watching recently. The students then record their own videos (**this requires parents' permission**), completing the speaking task. The teacher provides overall feedback on the students' performance. This is a video discussion platform where teachers create a private space for a class, set a speaking task and learners reply with a video. One classroom is free. You can create as many discussions within that classroom as you like and learners don't need to sign up. Free app available.
- ▶ 3. **Voice Spice** - Students record themselves talking e.g. about an enjoyable trip away to practise using the past simple. They share a link to their recording (via their class online chat group, etc.) and listen to each other's. In the next lesson, they vote for the most enjoyable trip and the teacher gives overall feedback. Learners can record and share audio recordings for free. They simply go to the website, make their recording, save it and then save the link. The recording is stored in the cloud. Students share the link with you and/or classmates to listen to.

Helping students to improve their pronunciation

- ▶ Online teachers can help learners to develop their pronunciation in much the same way as face-to-face teachers do: by modelling pronunciation and giving learners the opportunity to practise that same pronunciation with feedback and tips from the teacher.
- ▶ There are **tools** that online teachers can exploit to benefit their students' pronunciation.
- ▶ The first step to helping learners with their pronunciation is diagnosing issues they may have in relation to sounds, word stress, sentence stress and intonation.
- ▶ You can ask a student to record themselves talking about something they're interested in for 1-2 minutes and then share the recording with you via **SpeakPipe**.
- ▶ 1. **A teacher can** get close to the camera to show the position of their mouth when producing a sound. The student can do the same to see if the position of their mouth is the same.
- ▶ 2. **A teacher can** use the whiteboard to show how words are linked together (intonation patterns).
- ▶ 3. **Students can** listen and notice the pronunciation in online videos and use it to improve their own pronunciation.
- ▶ 4. **Students can** use online tools such as **Macmillan's Sounds** app to practise pronouncing sounds.

Useful online tools for developing pronunciation

- ▶ Some useful online tools that teachers can use in lessons, and learners can use outside of lessons, to improve their pronunciation:
- ▶ **Interactive Phonemic Chart:** A free, interactive version of the phonemic chart. Learners click on each sound to hear it or alternatively download a non-interactive version.
- ▶ **Sounds:** The pronunciation app: Learners can study sounds and practise using them. Free version available. Paid-for full version available. Includes an interactive phonemic chart.
- ▶ **Forvo:** A free pronunciation dictionary. Learners listen to how words, including names of places etc., are pronounced by people from around the world.
- ▶ **EnglishCentral:** A website and app. Learners watch a video, learn the words, record themselves copying the pronunciation and get a grade. Minimal free content. A lot of content with a subscription.
- ▶ **BBC Learning English:** Tim's free pronunciation workshop videos look at the sounds of English including weak forms and assimilation.
- ▶ **Ship or Sheep:** Free practice of minimal pairs.

TEACHING WRITING

- ▶ **Teaching writing** in a face-to-face classroom is usually overlooked because it may be perceived as time-consuming and it's generally seen as a homework task.
- ▶ Teaching writing online can be a fun and enjoyable experience as long as teachers are aware of the tools available and let their creativity spark.
- ▶ Writing is a process that involves thinking, brainstorming ideas, polishing them, thinking about the structure, connecting ideas, proofreading and so on.
- ▶ At lower levels, writing out a jumbled-word sentence from a text shared on the screen is a writing task. Similarly, at higher levels, it is crucial that teachers **set the context of any writing activities** and design an integrated skills lesson. For instance, having a brainstorming activity in which students write their ideas in the chat box about the text beforehand can help students come up with creative ideas and motivates them to write.
- ▶ Also, another great way to get students to write online is through a collaborative writing activity. This can be done by sharing a **Google Docs file** where each student is able to write at the same time on the same file (example).

Teaching writing skills in online lessons

- ▶ While an online teacher's approach to writing skills will be similar to that of a teacher in a face-to-face classroom, there are some differences due to the nature of teaching online.

Activities done in and out of the lesson	The actual writing part of a lesson will probably be done at home but pre-writing and post-writing tasks can be done in class.
Lesson structure	As in a face-to-face lesson, the teacher will perhaps show a model, analyze the structure/layout and some language, do some language input and then give feedback to the learner after they've written the text.
Writing sub-skills	Teachers might want to do some work on sub-skills during the lesson such as punctuation, linking ideas, helping learners to use a wider variety of vocabulary or word order.
Feedback on writing	When learners send their work online, there are a few different ways of giving feedback using digital tools (examples below).

An example

- ▶ **Example:** Imagine you're teaching a writing lesson to a B2-level class. The lesson focus is on structuring a paragraph in an essay.
- ▶ 1. In class: You provide the learners with a model essay paragraph and ask them to identify where the main point is stated (the topic sentence) and the purpose of the other sentences (supporting details). They can write their answers in the chat box. This is best done in the lesson as the task is short and the learner will need support from you.
- ▶ 2. Then you ask the learners to put five sentences in the correct order to create a cohesive and coherent paragraph. This is best done in the lesson as it checks the learners' understanding of paragraph structure.
- ▶ 3. You ask the learners to write an essay paragraph on a topic already discussed in a previous lesson. If the paragraph will take the learners some time, it might be best done at home. However, it could be done collaboratively in class, with you guiding (e.g. What's your topic sentence going to be?) You could also have a combination of the two, with some preparation done together in class, and the learners finishing the paragraph for homework.
- ▶ 4. You ask the learners to write a complete essay. This is best done at home as the learners will need time to think, plan and write.
- ▶ 5. You provide feedback to the learners on the quality of their essay. This can be done orally in the next lesson or it could be given in oral or written form for the learners to review at home. Either way, it's a good idea to check learners have understood your feedback, as the message a teacher wants to convey is sometimes misunderstood.

Using Google Docs for writing tasks

- ▶ You have created a handout using Google Docs. The handout includes a picture lesson, a model text and exercises and you share a link to it with your students before the lesson. The students can write onto the handout and complete the tasks:
- ▶ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/11fSqRkBeQALxql86DsXXzp4LNrkhyh4h2DHhjhcKxaM/edit>
- ▶ They can also analyze a model paragraph easily and discuss it with the teacher. The completed handout gives students the information they need to be able to go away and write their own well-organised paragraph for homework.
- ▶ You can also ask them to talk through their answers out loud so that you can understand their thinking better and help them where necessary.

Giving feedback on written work in a digital environment

- ▶ There are several digital tools that allow online teachers to provide useful feedback to learners on their written work. Teachers can provide feedback orally in a lesson or send feedback via e-mail or a shared link outside the lesson.
- ▶ **Video**
- ▶ You can use a video which shows a screencast providing oral feedback when marking a piece of written work produced by your learners (example). What are the strengths and weaknesses of this format, for both the learner and the teacher? (write answers in chat box)
- ▶ Note that a good tool for such feedback is [Screeencast-o-matic](#). It allows you to create the video, save it in the cloud and share a link to it with your student.

Giving feedback on written work in a digital environment

Tool	Strengths	Weaknesses
Review tools in a word processing document i.e. track changes and comments	Teacher can correct errors with track changes. Learners can accept changes and edit work. Teacher can add comments to explain suggested changes.	Learners may simply accept changes without understanding why. Teacher has to share it with the learner using another tool (e.g. email) unlike the next option below.
A shared document e.g. Google docs, PrimaryPad	Allow peer editing and feedback. Text in different colours to show who wrote what. Can add comments. More collaborative.	One learner can accidentally delete the work of another, although previous drafts can be found.
Interactive Whiteboard	Feedback can be provided to the whole class.	Only a few sentences can be displayed at one time.

Useful digital tools for developing writing skills

- ▶ There are **many tools online** that learners can use to help them develop their writing skills. Some of those tools encourage creative writing, some provide support and others provide feedback.
- ▶ Which tools are the most appropriate for different learners?
- ▶ There may be more than one site that you could use with each type of learner.
- ▶ **Examples:** Learners who want to be creative: **Storybird** (you can choose free art and then use it to create a short story, a story book or a poem and publish it online anonymously. Designed to be child-friendly but great for adults too). / **Make Beliefs Comix** (you can create free, simple cartoon strips for free).
- ▶ Learners who want to create a product: **Storybird /Make Beliefs Comix/ Storymaker, StoryboardThat**
- ▶ Learners who want feedback on their writing: **Write & Improve** (they copy and paste in their writing and receive immediate feedback generated by the computer on accuracy and use of English). Free.
- ▶ Young learners: Spelling City

Setting context (Methods)

- ▶ Using pictures
- ▶ Creating a cartoon
- ▶ Using a film clip
- ▶ Telling an anecdote or story
- ▶ Using an avatar
- ▶ Using drawings
- ▶ Using a short text
- ▶ Creating a pdf or video presentation
- ▶ Using realia (props)
- ▶ Using the learners

Useful online tools for setting context

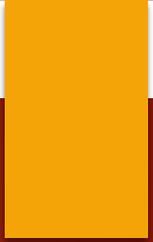
- ▶ **SMS GENERATOR**, for writing a chat, e.g. between fictional characters.
- ▶ **MAKE BELIEFS COMIX, SKETCH.IO, STORYBIRD**, e.g. for drawing an outline of a human body, which the teacher then uses to teach a young learner the names of the parts of the body.
- ▶ **SKETCH.IOB**, e.g. before the lesson, the teacher creates a comic strip which shows a conversation between two people talking about their plans for the evening (the learners will use the present continuous and 'going to' for future arrangements and plans). The teacher displays this on the shared whiteboard in the live lesson.
- ▶ **MAKE BELIEFS COMIXC**, e.g. for creating a short story book which involves a large image accompanied by a short text (for the learners to understand a story in the past which uses irregular past verbs). In the lesson, the teacher displays the story book on his screen and shares his screen with learners.
- ▶ **CAPTION GENERATOR** (allows you to add subtitles to videos).
- ▶ **STORYBIRDD/ SMS GENERATOR**, e.g. for creating a text conversation between two people making arrangements to go out. In the live lesson, the teacher displays the image on the shared screen or Web Browser.

Flipping your online classroom

- ▶ Flipping the classroom has gained popularity in recent years.
- ▶ The flipped classroom stemmed from subject teachers' desire to engage learners in problem solving or inquiry based activities, etc. and provide learners with more application of the things they learn.
- ▶ It involves learners receiving input (e.g. via a video) from the teacher for homework and spending lesson time putting that knowledge into practice with teacher support.
- ▶ You can give learners input via the asynchronous class, a link, etc.
- ▶ Some English language teachers have been experimenting with this approach in order to provide learners with more practice during lesson time.
- ▶ **The staging of a flipped lesson** (an example) is as follows:
 - ▶ 1. The teacher asks learners to read a story/novel, etc. or watch a video, e.g. a **TEDx** speech, **TedEd**, **ESL bits** (for individual study, can read and listen at the same time to novels, stories, songs, etc. – no registration needed).
 - ▶ 2. Learners read the book or watch the video for homework and complete some tasks.
 - ▶ 3. In the live lesson they are asked to comment on certain points, answer questions or discuss, to make a presentation, etc.

Useful online tools for grammar and vocabulary lessons

- ▶ These can be used when teaching language online, either during a lesson, or when setting learners homework, or if you're encouraging them to do some self-study.
- ▶ Are you familiar with the following tools? What can each one do?
- ▶ Is it for use in lessons, for self-study or both?
- ▶ For what purpose can it be used in online learning?
- ▶ What age group(s) of learners is it appropriate for?
- ▶ If you're already familiar with it in the face-to-face classroom, how might it work differently in an online environment?
- ▶ 1. **Kahoot:** Kahoot is an online tool designed to check learners' understanding or knowledge.
- ▶ 2. **Quizlet:** Quizlet is an online tool designed to help learners learn and practice vocabulary, spelling, etc.
- ▶ 3. **Quiz your English:** The Quiz your English app is a language game which learners play with other users from around the world and compete for points.
- ▶ 4. **Vocabulary.com**



Thank You