

## Teaching ideas for the English for Uni tenses materials

Here are some ideas for teaching with the materials. The materials and lesson plans assume that your students are at an intermediate level or above and already have some knowledge of the grammatical features highlighted on the website. There are of course many ways in which you could adapt the materials for use in class, with different permutations of individual work, pair work and group work, and the ideas below are just suggestions to prompt your own creativity. If you would like to share your teaching ideas for the materials please contact me and we can put your ideas up on the English for Uni blog. My email address is [julia.miller@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:julia.miller@adelaide.edu.au).

I do not know how long your classes are, so the ideas below can be adapted in any way you like. You might want to spend longer on some features than others, or you might want to use a flipped/inverted classroom approach and give the students some things to do before class and use the class time to discuss particularly difficult areas.

The website materials and exercises can be downloaded as pdf files, or as Word files if you want to adapt them yourself.

If you want to use the website exercises in class, I've found that it works well to put a QR code up on a screen for the students to scan so they can go directly to an exercise. To generate a QR code, copy the URL for the exercise and then paste it into a QR code generator, such as this one:

<http://www.qrstuff.com/> You can use this in a very basic way, with all the custom suggestions, and produce a black and white code to copy using either a screen shot or the snipping tool. Then paste this code into a PowerPoint slide and project it on a screen or wall. It takes less than a minute to do this and the students enjoy using the code.

You could also give students a copy of the video transcript and ask them to act out the story. They could even change the story to include different verbs and make a video of their final product.

### Suggestion 1

#### Focus: Reinforcing verb form and use

1. Play the opening of the *You've Got Talent* video story, where the student is consulting Ms Parrot about her essay (0:00 – 0:32). Ask the students what questions they have about verb tenses in English. For example, which tense would they use to describe something that always happens, or that happened in the past and doesn't happen now? Ask them to list different names for tenses in English (e.g. present continuous, past simple, etc.).
2. Explain that they are going to see more of the video. Divide the class into different groups. Group A should look for examples of present tenses; Group B should look for examples of past tenses; Group C should look for examples of future tenses.
3. Play the talent contest part of the video, then stop.
4. Discuss the examples of tenses the students have found and refer to the timeline at the top of the webpage. All the examples from the story are on the website under the headings *Present Simple*,

*Past Simple, Present Perfect* and *Tenses Less Used in Academic Writing*. You may wish to refer to these during this part of your lesson.

5. Ask the students if there are any verbs that are not normally used in a continuous or progressive form. These are called 'stative verbs' and there is a section about them on the website.

6. Do exercise 1, either online or in paper format.

7. Ask the students to do exercises 2 and 5 for homework.

## **Suggestion 2**

### **Focus: Explaining tense use in academic writing**

1. Ask the students what they know about verb tenses in academic English writing. When would they use certain tenses? Ask them to make a list of different tenses and their uses.

2. Play the teaching part of the *You've Got Talent* video story. (This is excerpt/chapter 2, or from 5:13 in the complete video.) How does their list match the examples in the video?

3. Look at the different examples of tenses from the website, under the sections marked *Present simple*, *Past simple* and *Present perfect*. Discuss.

4. Do exercise 3 in class, either as a whole class activity or in pairs.

5. Set exercise 4 for homework.