

Section	Lesson	Level	Objective
	Introduction		
<b>1</b>	<b>Articles</b>		
1a	Intruder in the Palace	A2	Students will be better able to understand articles.
1b	Restaurant reviews	B1	Students will be better able to research a restaurant (spoken and online reviews).
1c	Rising sea levels	B1+	Students will be better able to summarise an article for gist.
1d	Internet regulation	B2	Students will be better able to engage with an article in a natural way.
1e	Invisible women	C1	Students will be better able to research a topic online and report it back.
1f	How to turn an article into a lesson		
<b>2</b>	<b>Conversations</b>		
2a	Flying high		Students will be better able to bring their world knowledge into the language classroom; to build confidence listening to longer excerpts.
2b	What to do in a city	B1	Students will be better able to give advice/respond to advice on what to do in a city.
2c	Do me a favour	B1+	Students will be better able to ask and respond to a request.
2d	Text thread	B2	Students will be better able to have a natural discussion about plans on social media.
2e	I can't make it!	C1	Students will be better able to make and follow interactional phone calls.
2f	How to create and exploit your own listening texts		

Section	Vocabulary Focus	Grammar Focus	Skills Focus	Page
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1b	Adjectives/Food/Restaurant chunks	Relative clauses/Conditionals	Writing online reviews Analysing language in context	19
1c	Adverbs & prefaces	Noun phrases	Skim reading	27
1d	Vocabulary for referencing / cohesion	Dependent prepositions	Identifying cohesion / getting meaning from context	33
1e	Language for reporting a news story	Past and present tenses	Keeping your turn	40
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<b>2</b>	<b>Conversations</b>			
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2b	Language for advice	Present perfect/should	Keeping a conversation going	56
2c	Natural spoken language / basic verbs (to go/buy)	Future continuous	Asking for/Replying to favours	62
2d	Discussing plans	Future forms	Turning down an invitation/formality in writing	67
2e	Health vocabulary	Fluents/tense review	Following interactional scripts	72
2f				77

Section	Lesson	Level	Objective
<b>3</b>	<b>Stories</b>		
3a	Making a story come alive	A2	Students will be better able to write a basic descriptive story.
3b	Two friends	B1	Students will be more aware of how they bring to a text...
3c	The coffee shop	B1+	Students will be better able to write a story with a nonlinear timeline.
3d	Phobias	B2	Students will be better able to write an engaging story.
3e	Anecdote	C1	Students will be better able to tell an engaging anecdote.
3f	How to engage students and check comprehension in different ways		
<b>4</b>	<b>Tiny Texts</b>		
4a	I saw the signs	B1	Students will be better able to see learning opportunities in the world around them.
4b	Spoken review	B1	Students will be better able to give a natural, spoken review of a film or tv show.
4c	Quotes and hidden ideas	B1+	Students will produce a collaborative paragraph which summarises the quotes and introduces their opinions.
	When I was a lad	B2	Students will be better able to describe their childhood memories.
	Writing genres and reading register	C1	Students will be better able to recognise different genres of writing.
4f	How to exploit tiny texts and encourage learner autonomy		

Section	Vocabulary Focus	Grammar Focus	Skills Focus	Page
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## Introduction

**“** Ideally a single text would provide the basis for a self-contained lesson. First it would contain within itself enough important features of the language to provide a stimulus to learning. Secondly these features would be well enough exemplified within a single text and would require no supplementation. Most, indeed almost all, naturally occurring texts fulfil the vast majority of these requirements. There is normally a wealth of possibilities to exploit. (Willis 1998: 105)

### Where did it all start?

Quite a few years ago when we were first thinking about writing materials for teachers, we were motivated by three main factors:

- frustration with compartmentalisation,
- frustration with how texts are handled in coursebooks,
- a desire to place text as the focus of the whole lesson.

#### Frustration with compartmentalisation

Firstly, in many of the observations we conducted, we noticed teachers compartmentalising the systems teaching in their classes. For example, a teacher would discuss spelling and look at vocabulary, before then selecting a separate worksheet for the grammar focus in the class and again another when it came to pronunciation. This seemed to us illogical whilst also being a waste of paper and time. Students ended up with reams of paper we were sure they would not use. It also sometimes led to the classes featuring decontextualized systems teaching, a bit of grammar with a touch of vocab unconnected to the grammar and then pronunciation.

We wanted something different.

#### Frustration with how texts are handled in coursebooks

Our second motivation was convenience and a desire to go further with the texts. Coursebooks normally contain fantastic texts with interesting follow on activities, but too often we felt that there was still more that could be mined from the text. We sought to go somewhat deeper; to dig into them and look at skills or elements of systems which were often sometimes ignored by our fellow teachers and for reasons of space overlooked in the coursebook.

#### A desire to place text as the focus of the whole lesson.

Our third motivation was more about us as people. Both of us had not long since completed our DELTAs and had been both always written materials for our classes, using both authentic and self-created texts. Our aim was to create materials in which one text could serve as the focus for the whole lesson, providing grammar, listening, pronunciation as well as offering a platform for the development of skills. Tomlinson (2003) argued for the use of a text-driven approach to stimulate engagement and we hope that we have followed.

## What happened next?

We decided to share our ideas by writing and presenting workshops at conferences. People seemed receptive to what we were saying, so we began writing our blog. The process of writing more and more lessons sharpened the focus on what we were trying to achieve and allowed us to receive feedback from teachers who used them. As did our experience of teaching the lessons ourselves.

By attending conferences, we came into contact with other ideas which fed into our own. An important one would be Caldwell's ideas on pronunciation and the teaching of listening, namely that what we were taught, it was done so badly. He argued "Currently, we teach it badly – or, to put it more bluntly, we don't teach it at all. We test it, through listening comprehension questions" (Caldwell: online). This was something we felt matched our experiences as observers.

We try to avoid falling into this trap in our own materials. Additionally, we find the idea of the 'greenhouse, garden and jungle' relevant because we have all had students tell us something along the lines of 'in class it is ok, but outside it is so difficult'. These ideas struck a chord with us as we both have a keen interest in listening skills and were both influenced by Field's 2008 book 'Listening in the language classroom'. We therefore sought to add listening lessons that promoted listening and went beyond the classic test of knowledge type gap fill exercises. We tried to ensure that the level of challenge was there in these lessons and that the recordings had some features of authenticity, rather than searching for perfect sound clarity. Field stated back in 1998 that authentic materials were normally used "to help learners to become familiar with the real cadences of the target language". Our experience suggested this was not as common in classrooms as we might hope, especially at lower levels. So even though our lessons may not always feature entirely authentic texts we try to ensure they feature these 'real cadences'.

There was also a determination to ensure that the listening skills were addressed in these lessons rather than just listening practice. Hedge (2000: 237) states a lesson "which asks students 'to listen to the text and answer the questions'" is testing ability rather than developing it. We feel this applies to all of the skills not just listening. Therefore, we aimed not only to provide the students with improved skills, but also to equip teachers, through examples and notes on our lessons, with ways in which the micro skills of listening could be incorporated into their own lesson which throughout the lessons we attempt to do this for all the skills so that a skill is developed and practised rather than the lesson being merely practice of a skill.

## What approaches have we drawn from?

Our approach to lesson writing draws on the concept of 'principled eclecticism' Mellow (2002) defines principled eclecticism as "practical eclecticism is the use of a variety of language learning activities, each of which may have very different characteristics". We agree but additionally argue that busy teachers may not be able to, or in fact desire to follow only one methodology for teaching, and that all teachers make informed decisions on what is best suited to their own class by dipping into their teaching toolkit.

#### The Lesson Approach

Hopefully it will be wrong not to identify the debt we owe to some of the theoretical cornerstones on which our lessons are built. Firstly, the immense debt we, along with many others, owe to Michael Lewis and the Lesson Approach. If there is a strand running through all of our lessons it is the focus on learner fluency, particularly 'noticing'.