

Course Topic: Teaching Grammar**Course Instructor:**

Dianne Tyers has held numerous English language teaching, training and management positions over the past 22 years in six different countries. She owns Advance Consulting for Education, INC, an English language teacher training and curriculum development company. Dianne is currently a PhD candidate at OISE, University of Toronto and has a Masters of Applied Linguistics (University of Queensland) and an MBA (University of Western Ontario). She has presented at local, national and international conferences on teaching and management techniques, culture, and language learning.

Course Synopsis:

The typical grammar practice activity comes right out a textbook. It is usually a fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, matching or sentence completion activity. While there is a place in our language classrooms for individual written grammar practice from a textbook, this is not the only type of grammar practice activity that we should use. If we restrict our grammar practice to textbook-based activities, our students will not have the opportunity to work on the language in a more productive, interactive and spontaneous way. In this course, we will take you through different activities that will allow you to take your grammar practice activities out of the textbook to give your students a more engaging and memorable learning experience.

Course Agenda

1. Why do Students Need Grammar Practice Activities?
2. Grammar Practice WITH the Textbook
3. Grammar Practice WITHOUT the Textbook
4. Application

1. Why Do Students Need Grammar Practice Activities?

There are three basic student profiles when it comes to grammar. We will call them Student A, Student B and Student C. Write down a description of each student based upon what you hear in the video.

Student A:

Student B:

Student C:

What kinds of grammar practice activities will help each of these three types of students?

2. Grammar Practice WITH the Textbook

What does a typical grammar practice activity look like? What do students do? What does the teacher do?

3. Grammar Practice WITHOUT the Textbook

A. Team Multiple Choice

15 minutes	<p>Divide the class up into groups of four or five students. Give each group a set of A, B, and C cards. Ask multiple choice questions orally, providing A, B and C options for each question. After each question, each group confers and decides upon the correct answer. They hold up the card corresponding to the answer they have selected. The teacher awards points for each correct answer. To ensure that the activity moves at a good pace, enforce a time limit on each answer. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins.</p> <p>Alternatively: Rather than having multiple answers, ask groups to identify if a sentence is grammatically correct. They hold up a check mark if they think the sentence is correct or an X if they think the sentence is incorrect.</p>
------------	---

Materials for Team Multiple Choice

For Third Conditional. Choose the correct response, A, B, or C.

1. If he had not taken his gloves off,
 - A. He would have gotten frost bite.
 - B. He would not have gotten frost bite.
 - C. He had gotten frost bite.

2. She would not have been sent to prison
 - A. If she had paid the fine.
 - B. If she had not paid the fine.
 - C. If she would have paid the fine.

3. If I had had a map
 - A. I got lost.
 - B. I had gotten lost.
 - C. I would not have gotten lost.

4. I would not have said anything bad about him
 - A. If I had known you were dating him.
 - B. If I know you were dating him.
 - C. If I knew you were dating him.

5. If I had gotten up earlier
 - A. I would have been late.
 - B. I was late.
 - C. I would not have been late.

6. He would have gotten a present
 - A. If you reminded him about her birthday.
 - B. If you would have reminded him.
 - C. If he had remembered her birthday.

B. Team Fill-in-the-Blank

15 minutes	Divide the class up into groups of three, four or five students. Give each group a set of blank pieces of paper and a marker. Ask fill-in-the-blank questions orally. After each question, each group confers and decides upon the correct answer for the blank. They write the answer on a blank piece of paper and hold up their answer. The teacher awards points for each correct answer. To ensure that the activity moves at a good pace, enforce a time limit on each answer. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins.
------------	---

Materials for Team Fill-in-the-Blank

Choose between the simple past and present perfect.

1. Mark _____ a writer soon after graduating from university in 1994.
2. John _____ Microsoft in 1999.
3. Since 1999, she _____ a writer for new software manuals.
4. I _____ the movie at least fifteen times.
5. He _____ yet.
6. My mother _____ already.

C. Running Grammar Practice

10 minutes	Cut a written exercise up, so that there is one question or sentence on each slip of paper. Tape the slips of paper around the room. Divide your students into pairs and give each pair an answer sheet. Students must leave their answer sheet and pencils/pens at their desks. When the teacher says go, students circulate around the room to the different questions. They read the question and decide on the answer. They go back to their desk and write the answer on their answer sheet. If they are not sure of the answer, they can confer with their partner. When all pairs are done take up the answers as a class.
------------	---

Materials for Running Grammar Practice

1. I'll look for your book and if I (find) it I (give) you a ring.
2. If you (see) Tom tell him I have a message for him.

3. I won't wake up if the alarm (not go) off.
4. You'd better take the day off tomorrow if you (not feel) well.
5. If drivers (brake) suddenly on a snowy road they (skid).
6. You can use my cell phone if yours (not work).
7. If you (tell) the truth, I'm sure they (believe) you.
8. If it's a baby girl, we (name) her Anna.
9. If I (give) her a diamond ring she (sell) it.
10. If you (meet) a bear (run).

D. Word Order Activity

10 minutes	Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Give each group a set of word cards. Students work together to make as many different sentences as possible from the cards. One person in the group should be designated as the scribe. Confirm the possibilities as a class.
------------	--

E. Oral Drills

5-8 minutes	Establish the pattern of the drill, including the sentence structure and how students are to substitute changes in. Complete the drill, with substitutions. Move on to variations including: volume, speed, intonation, accent, characters, feeling, state, choral (whole group), divide the class into A's and B's, men and women, and closed pairs (students drill with the person beside them).
-------------	--

Sample Lesson Using Oral Drills

Time	Procedure
1 min	1. Say the following utterance 2-3 times: "How much milk do we have?" Signal the class to repeat as a chorus. Indicate individual students (5) to repeat it. Correct pronunciation where necessary.
1 min	2. Repeat the sentence again and get class to chorus it. Supply the prompt "rice" and indicate a student to supply the utterance: "How much rice do we have?" Continue with prompts: meat, juice, sugar, spaghetti, wine, oil, coffee
1 min	3. Repeat first step, but with "How many bananas do we have?"
1 min	4. Repeat second step with the following prompts: potatoes, eggs, onions, tomatoes, apples, lemons

1 min	5. Supply prompts that are a mixture of countable and uncountable nouns: eggs, meat, coffee, apples, sugar, wine, tomatoes, rice, potatoes.
5 min	6. Have students work in pairs to test each other.

F. Substitution Charts

10 minutes	Write a substitution chart on the board. Model an example sentence from the chart. Elicit more choices for the fourth column in the chart, so that students can personalize the activity. Put the class in groups of four. Instruct them to produce as many true sentences about the group as they can in ten minutes, using only sentences generated by the chart. A spokesperson for the group will report the results to the class.
------------	--

Sample Substitution Chart

One person	in our group	is going to	have __ children.
Everyone			get married in five years.
No one		work abroad.	
Two people		are going to	?
Three people			?

G. Putting it into Practice

Think of a grammar target you will be presenting in the coming week. Create a grammar practice activity for that target that takes the grammar practice out of your textbook.

--	--

4. Application

Let's go back to the beginning and think about our students, student A, B and C. Recall that student A is accurate but not fluent, student B is fluent but not accurate, and student C is accurate and fluent but doesn't use complex grammar structures. Which of the activities presented in this course help which students?

Student A needs activities that are going to improve fluency. The best activity for fluency is oral drills. This helps students become automatic with their language. Substitution charts also help with fluency.

Student B needs grammar practice activities that focus on accuracy. Team multiple choice, team fill-in-the-blank and word order are all activities that will help accomplish this.

Student C needs to build up the complexity of the grammatical structures that he or she uses, so activities that will help student C include team multiple choice, word order and running grammar practice.

A Final Tip: Many teachers, by default, rely solely on the grammar practice activities found in their textbooks. Using the activities presented in this course, you can take your grammar teaching to the next level and make grammar come alive for your students!

Thanks for participating!

www.aceducation.ca