



IO3 VAMOS TRAINING COURSE

Module 3 - Technical management
Unit 1 - Reading and Understanding a Text



Unit goals.

By the end of this unit, you should be able to;

Identify the types, purpose, and audience of different texts.

Use a variety of techniques to teach grammar.

Show an understanding of basic language structures, figures of speech, and cultural expression styles.

Clearly explain the different writing styles for texts with different purposes.



Why should we achieve these goals?

- The purpose of this unit is not to ensure the learner has a perfect grasp on grammatical rules. We are not teaching you how to correct a student's errors, nor are we expecting you to rote learn definitions and language syntax.
- The purpose of this unit is to provide an overview of the basic grammatical rules of the English language in the context of the classroom setting. It should be impressed that learning grammar is not about reading, writing, and speaking the language perfectly, but it is about developing overall literacy and enabling people to express themselves in more complex ways, so that they can be better understood by a wider group of people.
- For new migrants who are seeking work and trying to form new social groups, these skills are especially important as they try to navigate a new language and a new culture.





Key principles to bear in mind when teaching grammar.

- Teaching grammar can be particularly tricky, both for the student and the teacher. To best capture your student's attention, keep these basic principles in mind!

1

Build up your own subject knowledge.

To teach grammar effectively, you need to be confident in your own abilities so that you can approach the subject matter flexibly. It's important to not just be one chapter ahead, but be familiar with the whole book!

2

Teach grammar in context.

Teaching grammar in context means teaching it practically. Where do these rules apply? Why are they important? How will this improve my language skills? These are questions that should be asked in class.

3

Read aloud.

This will help put the grammar into context, and will help the student's to internalise these rules. This will help students to successfully use grammar to improve their own writing skills.

4

Remember the purpose of teaching grammar.

The purpose of teaching grammar is not to pass a test, but to improve the fluency of students and must therefore be emphasised in every classroom activity. (reading, writing, speaking,)



5

Give talk a high priority in your classroom.

Focusing on oral skills is important in increasing fluency. By recognising grammar orally, the student will be able to extract greater meaning from the spoken word, and thus respond more accurately. This will lead to more meaningful interactions.

6

Be systematic.

Don't jump in blindly. Find out what your students already know so that you can plan your lessons accordingly. To test their knowledge you could ask them to complete some appropriate exercises.

7

Make learning grammar fun!

Grammar doesn't have to be boring! It is one of the most important language tools, and as such it should be made as fun as possible so that students want to learn it. You can design lessons using investigations, problem-solving and language play to engage your class.

You should keep these tips in mind when planning a lesson!



Some basic definitions.

01

Noun

- A person, place, or thing. This can be the subject or the object of the sentence. For example; cat, horse, father, Ireland.

02

Adjective

- A word that describes or modifies a noun. This can be the answer to questions such as “how many”, “what kind”. For example; red, happy, old.

03

Verb

- An action word. For example; run, shout, play.

04

Adverb

- A word that describes or modifies a verb, and can sometimes modify an adjective. Adverbs usually, but not always end in “-ly”.

05

Pronoun

- A pronoun is a word that can replace a noun in a sentence. It can refer to the subjects of the sentence. For example; her, it, his.

These definitions may seem tedious, but they are really useful!





If you can recognise each part of a sentence, you will be able to better understand its meaning!



06

Preposition

- These often describe the position or relation of one thing to another. For example; “on”, “by”, “around”.

07

Conjunction

- Conjunctions join words, phrases, and clauses in a sentence. There are coordinating, subordinating, and correlative conjunctions. For examples; “and”, “but”.

08

Interjection

- Expressions that can stand on their own or be contained within sentences. These words and phrases often carry strong emotions and convey reactions. For examples: “ah”, “whoops”, “ouch”.

09

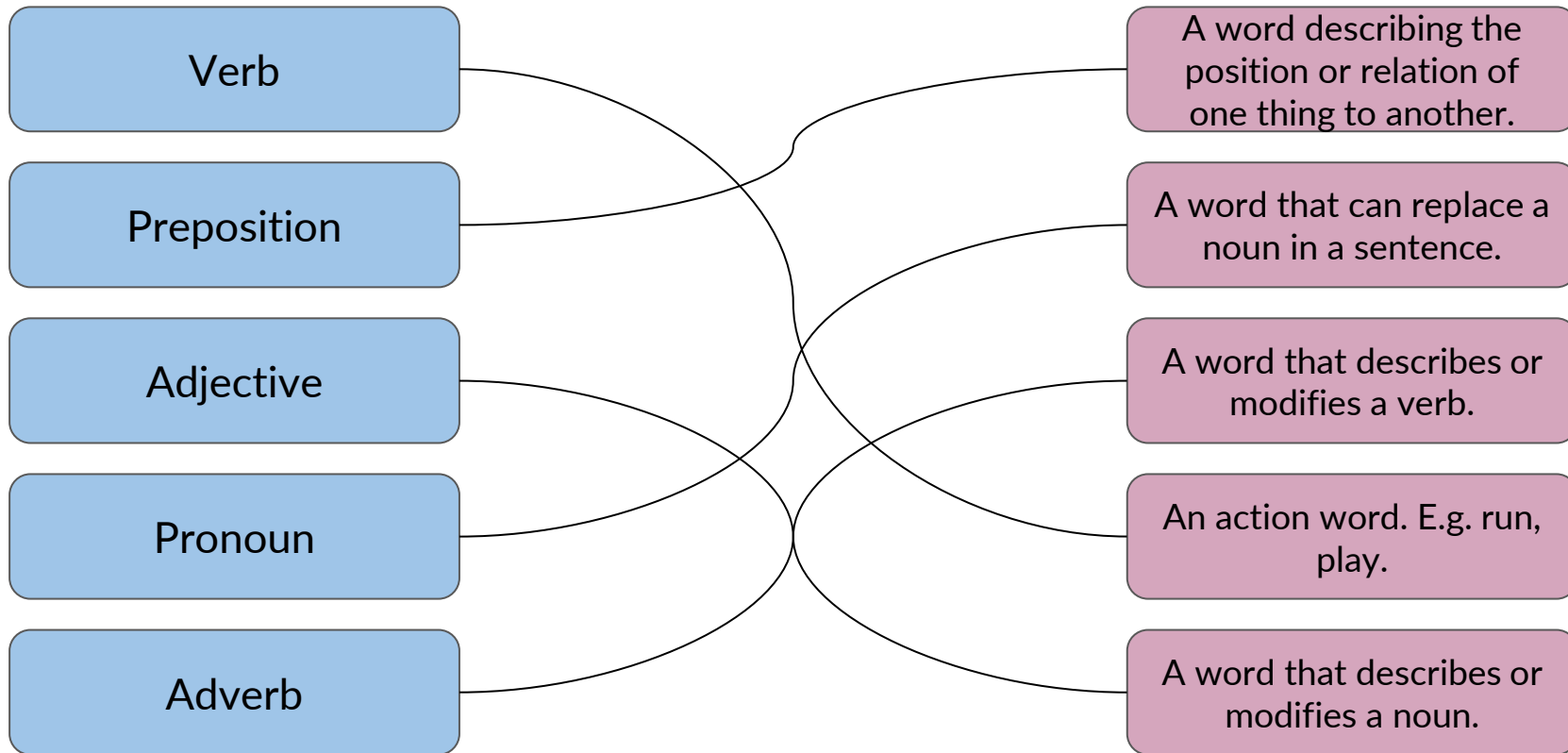
Articles and
determiners

- Articles and determiners specify and identify nouns, and there are indefinite and definite articles. Examples: articles: a, an, the; determiners: these, that, those, enough, much, few, which, what.



Match up!

Match the word with its meaning, and click to reveal the answer!





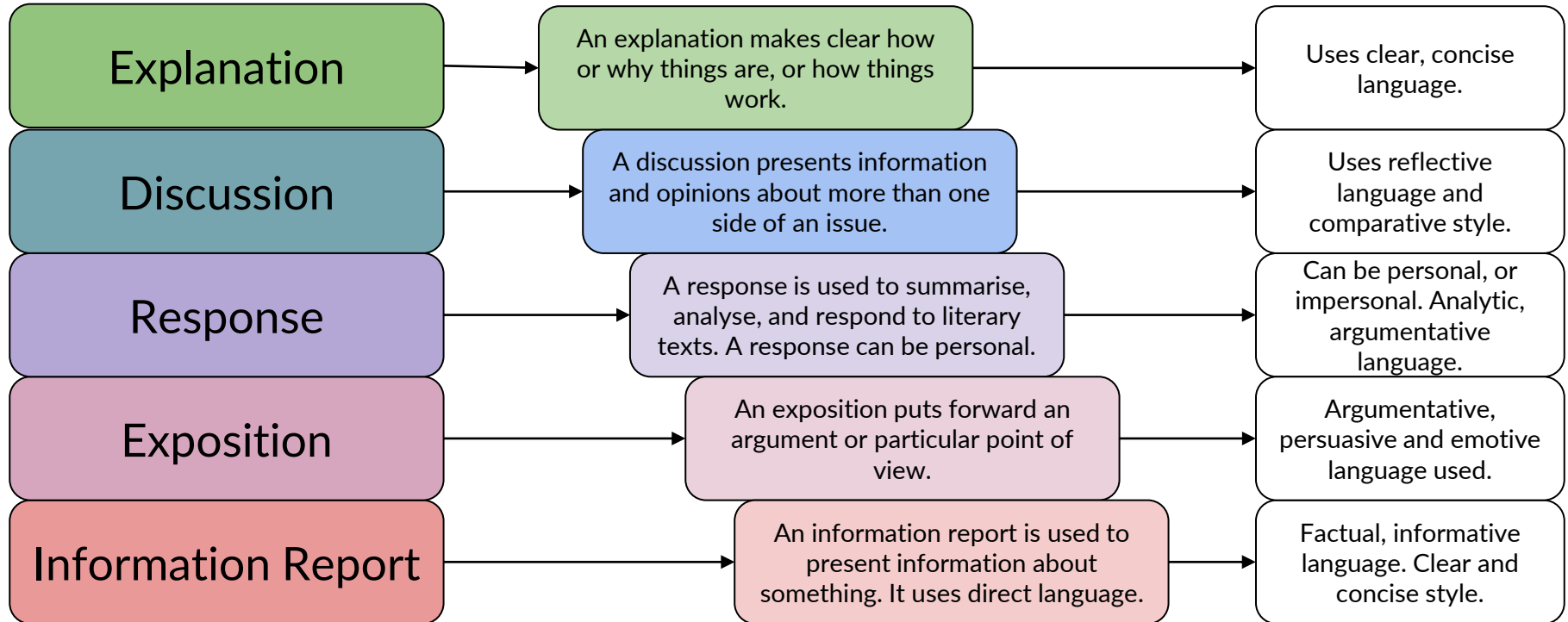
Different texts for different purposes.

- Understanding and extracting meaning from texts which have different purposes and are intended for different audiences is a difficult task.
- A good knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structure, and basic grammatical rules will go a long way in helping you to understand the meaning of any text.
- Beyond this, it is important to be aware that certain words or structures also carry specific meanings, and are key in accurately deciphering the target audience, and genre of the text.

Remember that a text consists not only of letters and words, but also of meanings and goals!



Text genres you should recognise.





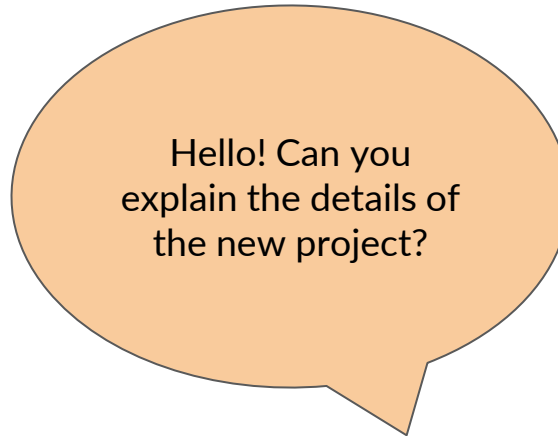
Who is your audience?

- Now that you are familiar with some of the most important text types, let's put your knowledge to the test!

Below, you will see two people. Think about how you would write to each of these people based on their requests.



Hello! How was your weekend?



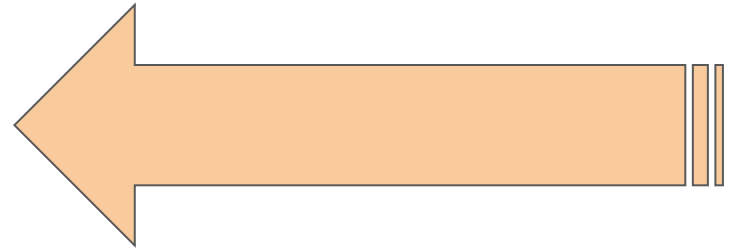
Hello! Can you explain the details of the new project?



Check out this short video on understanding your audience!



This clip may give you a better understanding of how and why you might change your writing style depending on the audience.





Figures of speech.

- Figures of speech are commonly used in every language, but because they are not usually meant to be taken literally, they can be difficult for non-native speakers to understand.
- Becoming familiar with commonly used figures of speech can help to improve one's fluency, and aid integration.
- It can also promote a stronger understanding of the figurative aspects of the target language. As figures of speech are culturally significant (meaning, if they were directly translated to another language they would lose their meaning) it is an important insight into the culture, thinking patterns, norms, and values of the host country.

Can you think of any commonly used figures of speech?



Types of figures of speech.

A comparison
between two
similar things. E.g.
Tree is to leaf as
flower is to petal.

Analogy

Metaphor

A word or phrase is
used to suggest a
likeness between
them. E.g. Life is a
rollercoaster.

Directly compares
two things using
'like' or 'as'. E.g. As
busy as a bee.

Simile

Idiom

An expression with
a figurative
meaning that
cannot be assumed
from its literal
meaning. E.g. It's a
piece of cake. (It's
easy)





Identify the figures of speech.

Look at the following examples of figures of speech. Do you think they are metaphors, similes, analogies, or idioms? Click to reveal the answer, once you've made your guess!

Life is a highway.

Metaphor

Bite the bullet.

Idiom

As brave as a lion.

Simile

Joy is to fun what the deep sea is to a puddle.

Analogy



Some more basic definitions.

01

Phrase

- An expression which contains a single thought but is not necessarily a complete sentence. Words make up phrases; phrases make up sentences. By some definitions, a phrase cannot contain a verb.

02

Sentence

- The basic unit of writing. A sentence should have a subject and a predicate. In other words, it should at least have a noun and a verb.

03

Declarative

- The majority of sentences are declarative. A declarative sentence makes a statement. This sentence is declarative, as are the previous two.

04

Interrogatory

- An interrogative sentence asks a question. Do you understand that? Which of these sentences is an example?

05

Imperative

- An imperative sentence gives a command. Example: "Shut up and kiss me." Note that an imperative sentence does not require a subject; the pronoun "you" is implied.

Can you think
of any
examples of
commonly
used phrases?





These ones
are a bit more
advanced, but
it's useful to
be able to
recognise
them!

06

Tense

- This expresses a time reference. Past, present, and future. There are as many as 12 tenses in English. Verbs will usually take on a different form depending on the tense.

07

Metaphor

- A word or a phrase used to describe something as if it were something else. *Example:* 'Life is a rollercoaster.'

08

Simile

- Describes something by comparing it to something else, using like or as. *Example:* 'happy as a clam'.

09

Metonymy

- Figure of speech in which one word or phrase is substituted for another with which it's closely associated (such as "crown" for "royalty").





Cultural expression styles.

- Speaking a new language is not as easy as simply translating directly what you want to say into the target language.
- Patterns of communication are often culturally specific. Words and phrases can have literal and figurative meanings coloured by the norms and values of the people who speak them.
- Cultural differences in language result in distinct styles and use. For example, the English spoken in Ireland differs from the English spoken in Australia.
- It is important therefore, to build up a strong knowledge of the culture that speaks the language. Only then will the non-native speaker be able to fully and accurately interpret the written and spoken word.

Are there any cultural differences between your native language and your second language?



Do we think differently in different languages?



Not only do we express ourselves differently verbally, but there are also some interesting differences in body language around the world. Check out this short video on gestures to find out more!





Strategies for teaching and learning the cultural aspects of a second language.

Provide cultural learning materials.

Engaging with a new culture can be simple. Providing cultural materials such as films, TV shows, newspapers, foods, and other cultural experiences can be very helpful for students. Teachers should use materials which are relevant, and appropriate for the age and skill level of the learner.

Discuss common proverbs.

Proverbs can tell you a lot about the history of a country. More interestingly, it can inform you about the values, beliefs, and way of life of the people who speak the language. It may be helpful for students to compare and contrast the proverbs of their own language and the target language.

Sociocultural roleplays.

By taking a sociocultural approach, students can improve their cross-cultural communication skills using the target language. Role play will allow students to experience real life scenarios and gain a greater insight into how natives might react or respond to certain situations. This will aid the learner's cultural integration.



Use culture capsules.

Culture capsules are a brief description of some aspects of a target culture alongside contrasting information from the student's native culture. To do this, students should conduct independent research. Topics for research could include things like family life, customs, history, and attitudes.

View students as cultural resources.

If you have a diverse, multicultural group of students, you should use that to your advantage! Students will have the opportunity to make connections between their own culture, the target culture, and the cultures of others. Use similarities and differences between cultures as a talking point for discussions.

Use computer technology.

Computer based language learning programmes can provide language learners with more independence and the ability to explore the language at their own pace. Using online resources such as videos, games, and activities can be a great way to make the learning experience more interactive and engaging.



Thanks!

