

# ELT Concourse

## The Cambridge CELTA: a candidate's guide



The CELTA scheme

Preparing for a course

Planning, Teaching and Reflecting on CELTA

The CELTA written assignments

[www.elconcourse.com](http://www.elconcourse.com)

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# Introduction

## How to use this guide

This guide does not pretend to take the place of a properly accredited CELTA course. It is designed for two purposes:

1. As a preparation for a CELTA course giving you some essential background information and a road map to the areas you will cover in more detail on the course itself. If you read through it with some care, you will find that when you start your course you are already familiar with some basic English language teaching concepts, can approach language and skills analysis with confidence and plan your teaching competently.
2. As a handbook and companion for reference while you are doing a CELTA course. The demands of a CELTA course are such that you will often have very little time to research and read while you are doing a course so this guide contains some explanations of key ideas and concepts in English Language Teaching (ELT).

The guide covers all the syllabus areas of the CELTA scheme and assumes no previous teaching experience of any kind. It does, however, assume that you can speak and write in English at a level appropriate to your ambition to teach the language.



## The CELTA Scheme – purposes

CELTA is an initial teaching qualification and a CELTA course is an introduction to the field. It is designed to give you some essential knowledge and a set of teaching tools to work with.

By the end of a CELTA programme you will be able to:

- understand the essential subject knowledge and be familiar with the principles of effective teaching
- use a range of practical skills for teaching English to adult learners
- apply this learning in a real teaching context

## The CELTA Scheme – systems and assessment

CELTA courses are internally assessed against a range of criteria set by Cambridge English. Your tutors assess your performance in the classroom and in written work as the course goes along but a Cambridge-appointed assessor will visit once during every course to verify that the criteria are being properly applied and agree grades for each participant on the course.

### *The assessed components*

1. Planning and teaching: where you show your mastery of practical skills. By the end of the course, you should have demonstrated that you can successfully reach the criteria for this component (see below).
2. Classroom-related written tasks: where you show your understanding of principles and theory. There are four assignments (see below). Each assignment must be between 750 and 1000 words.

These components are integrated and not separately assessed or certificated.

### *What you need to show to pass CELTA*

You can get hold of the entire CELTA syllabus from the Cambridge English website (link below). Briefly, to pass CELTA, you need to show:

1. Planning:  
That you can plan effectively with guidance, can analyse target language adequately and generally select appropriate resources and tasks for successful language and language skills development.
2. Teaching:  
That you can generally deliver effective language and skills lessons, using a variety of classroom teaching techniques with a degree of success
3. Awareness of learners:  
That you have some awareness of learners and some ability to respond so that learners benefit from the lessons.
4. Reflection:  
That you can reflect on some key strengths and weaknesses and generally use these reflections to develop your teaching skills.
5. Written work:  
That you have met the criteria for the assessed written assignments and that means writing clearly, using terminology accurately, see links between theory and practice and referring to a little reading.

(The source for all that is the CELTA Handbook (4<sup>th</sup> edition).)

If you want to get a grade above a 'C' pass, you need to take out some of the words like *generally*, *adequately*, *some*, *a degree of*, *with guidance* and replace them with *usually / consistently*, *well*, *with minimal or no guidance* etc.

### *During the course*

You must:

- teach for a total of six hours
- observe experienced teachers for a total of six hours
- keep a portfolio of your work including all written assignments and teaching materials

### *Certificate grades*

If you meet or exceed the criteria in both components, you will be awarded a CELTA certificate at one of three pass levels, A, B and C.

### *Pass rates*

CELTA pass rates are excellent. More than 95% of all candidates achieve a Pass grade of some sort.

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## The CELTA Scheme – the 5-part syllabus content

This is a brief guide. The full syllabus is obtainable from the Cambridge website at: <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/21816-celta-syllbus.pdf> (that's how they spell it). The syllabus was updated in 2018 and the current version is the fifth edition.

There are five sections to the syllabus:

1. Learners and teachers, and the teaching and learning context  
Assessed via planning and teaching and through written assignment 1
2. Language analysis and awareness  
Assessed via planning and teaching and through written assignment 2
3. Language skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing  
Assessed via planning and teaching and through written assignment 3
4. Planning and resources for different teaching contexts  
Assessed via planning and teaching and through written assignment 4
5. Developing teaching skills and professionalism  
Assessed via planning and teaching and through written assignment 4

On some courses, you will complete 4 independent assignments. On others, two of the assignments may be combined into one longer assignment. The assessment criteria are the same for both approaches.

There is a guide on ELT Concourse unpacking the CELTA syllabus and attempting to translate Cambridge Assessment English-speak into language comprehensible to normal people.

In that guide, the Cambridge specifications have been re-arranged to link the syllabus to the assessment criteria. Then they have been translated and linked to other guides on the site (mostly in the initial-plus training section) to help you meet the criteria.

The guide also considers how best to meet the criteria to get the best possible grade.

The guide can be found at:

[www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/celta/syllabuscelta/unpacking\\_celta\\_syllabus.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/celta/syllabuscelta/unpacking_celta_syllabus.html)

There are also individual guides to each area of the CELTA syllabus linked from that guide and from the general CELTA index (which you will find at: [www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/celta/celtaindex.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/celta/celtaindex.html)).

# Essential background for CELTA

This is not a course for CELTA, it is a guide, so what follows is an outline of the critical ideas you will encounter on any CELTA course.

Use the information here to identify the areas you want to learn more about and then follow the links at the end to access the guides on [eltconcourse.com](http://eltconcourse.com). What follows here will give you some essential data to work with and help you to understand what your tutors are talking about.

## Communicative vs. structural approaches to language teaching

Communicative approaches to language teaching start from the premise that people speak and write to communicate something to someone else. For example, we may want to ask a question, give some information, apologise, invite, complain or express an opinion. These things are known as **functions** of language and they form the basis of communicative language teaching.

Structural approaches to language teaching start from the premise that language is a system of rules and patterns and it is these that need to be taught. We need, to be able to speak a language, to master its pronunciation (called the phonological system), its writing (alphabet, spelling and so on), its word classes (adjectives, nouns, verbs etc.) and its tense structures (past, present, future and so on). The list could be very greatly extended, of course.

Nowadays, many teachers who prefer a communicative approach to teaching will not hesitate to teach structure and many teachers who are comfortable with a structural approach will recognise that language is produced to fulfil a communicative function and will include opportunities in teaching programmes for that to happen. Nevertheless, the distinction between the two approaches is real and important.

## Second-language acquisition (SLA)

This refers to how people learn a language other than their first language. Although some people believe the processes are similar if not identical, others will assert that the processes are completely different. Nobody, not even your tutors, knows the right answer.

## Five important concepts

### *Competence vs. Performance*

Competence is the speaker's general, implicit and rarely articulated knowledge of the grammar of a language and Performance is the speaker's actual use of the language in speaking and understanding it.

For example, if you encounter a sentence such as:

*I will tell him when I will see him*

you will recognise it as wrong even if you can't say exactly why. You are applying your language competence. That won't stop many native speakers of the language producing ill-formed and 'wrong' sentences when they speak, especially in informal situations. So, utterances like:

*That's ... um ... it isn't ... I mean ... not quite what was right*

are common enough in people's actual language performance.

### *Use vs. Usage*

If, for example, someone says

*I have a terrible headache*

and the reply is:

*It's nearly 6 o'clock in New York*

we know what the words mean but they carry no communicative value.

That is language usage – paying attention to form rather than communication.

If, on the other hand, the reply is:

*I'll get you something for it*

then we understand the words and they carry useful communicative value.

That is language use – what people do with the language to communicate.

### *Deductive vs. Inductive learning*

Deductive processing involves the application of given rules to the data.

For example, once you have been made aware that putting the right ending (*-d* or *-ed*) on a verb in English forms the past tense, you can take any of hundreds of verbs and form the correct past tense e.g.,

*smoke – smoked*

*finish – finished*

and so on.

Inductive processing works the other way around.

Given the examples of the transformation above and some more examples, such as

*smoke – smoked*

*finish – finished*

*open – opened*

*close – closed*

etc.

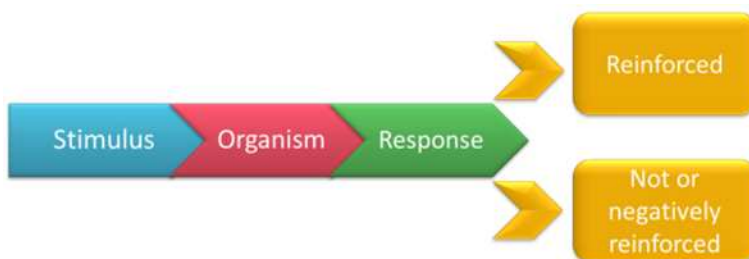
You can figure out for yourself what the rule is.

You will not, by the way, be right for all the verbs in the language because some are irregular (*break – broke*, *come – came* etc.) and this won't help you much with meaning but you will, one way or another, have learned a useful rule.

### *Behaviourism*

It is well attested that one can teach rats (and all sorts of other creatures) by a process of stimulus and reward. Rats, famously, can be taught complex sequences of behaviour such as finding their way through a maze based purely on rewarding, i.e., positively reinforcing, certain behaviours and punishing, i.e., negatively reinforcing, unwanted behaviour.

Behaviourism is the theory of learning that still underlies how you train your dog or drill your learners' pronunciation. It can be visualised like this:



Briefly, and somewhat unscientifically:

1. The process starts with a stimulus, say, a question from the teacher such as *Where did you go yesterday?* put to the organism (in this case, a learner of English). The stimulus can elicit a variety of responses but only the 'right' one will be reinforced.
2. So, for example, if the organism responds with *I go to the cinema* the teacher will negatively reinforce it with *No, that's wrong* or simply not reinforce it by saying nothing.
3. If, on the other hand, the organism produces the preferred response, *I went to the cinema* the teacher will reinforce it with *Yes, that's right!* (preferably in a loud and enthusiastic voice because the strength of the reinforcement is critical in instilling the correct habit). In this case, the reward is the teacher's approval but it could just as well be a chocolate biscuit.



4. Enough Stimulus > Response > Reinforcement cycles will see the habit instilled and the language acquired.

This theory of learning underlies drilling language in the classroom, setting mechanical (and not so mechanical) exercises, repetition of language and much else.

### *Cognitivism*

Is the opposed view and sees language learning as an active process involving the learners in thinking, forming associations and hypothesising rules from the data they are given. An influential idea is called Active Construction of Grammar Theory which asserts that learners of both first and second languages are actively hypothesising what its rules are and refining their hypotheses as more data become available. It explains, among much else, the fact that both first and second language learners may apply a newly-acquired rule indiscriminately and, for example, put an *-ed* ending on all verbs to show past tenses before they refine the hypothesis and link the phenomenon only to regular verbs in English.

For example, a child learning English as its first language and an older learner learning it as an additional language may both start by saying *came* and *went* and then, having spotted the rule for making past tenses in English, start to say *comed* and *goed* before noticing the exceptions and limitations and reverting to the correct forms. For obvious reasons, that is known as the U-shaped learning curve.

### *Links to guides on eltconcourse.com*

There are some guides on the site, the first two being the most important:

An overview of methodology – what it is and how we can describe it

[www.eltconcourse.com/training/methodology.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/methodology.html)

How learning happens

<http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/teaching/learning.html>

The background theory index on the site for more is at

[http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/indexes\\_ip/backgroundandmethodologyindex\\_ip.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/indexes_ip/backgroundandmethodologyindex_ip.html)

For a little more on key concepts for CELTA which includes other areas and a pair of tests, try

[www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/celta/key\\_celta\\_concepts.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/celta/key_celta_concepts.html)

# A glossary of methodology and background terminology

You will not need to understand and use everything in this list for the purposes of a CELTA course but if you are confused by some terms you hear or read about, this may help.

Term	Gloss
Acceptability	A judgement concerning the appropriateness or accuracy of a language item
Achievement test	A test designed to measure how well something has been learned
Acquisition	A term contrasted with learning referring to the unconscious acquiring of a language
Active vocabulary	The vocabulary a learner can use as well as understand
Adjacency pair	Two utterances related by function and often co-occurring. For example, accusing and apologising
Affect	Emotional effect
Affective filter	A hindrance to learning caused by stress or uncertainty
Approach	A term often used instead of <i>methodology</i> to describe a theory of language and a theory of learning. E.g., a communicative approach
Appropriateness	Descriptive of the social acceptability of a language item
Audio-visual aid	Any chart, diagram, video sequence or audio recording etc. used in a classroom
Aural	Referring to hearing / listening
Authenticity	The degree to which teaching materials come from the 'real world'
Behaviourism	A theory of learning based around the acquisition of habit and reinforcement of learning
Cloze test	Technically, removing, e.g., every fifth or seventh word from a passage and asking test takers to guess the missing words. Informally, a gap-fill test
Cognate	A word which has the same derivation and is similar in form in more than one language (meaning may or may not vary)
Cognition	Mental processes such as thinking, remembering, recognising, inferencing, deducing and classifying
Communicative	To do with the exchange of information, feelings, attitudes etc. between a Sender (the speaker / writer) and the Receiver (the listener / reader)
Communicative Language Teaching	An approach which has as its aim the ability to communicate effectively and which uses simulated or real communicative situations in teaching
Communicative competence	The ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) form accurate language</li> <li>b) understand the rules of speaking</li> <li>c) know how to make and understand speech acts and perform identifiable functions in language</li> <li>d) know where and when to use the language (i.e., understand what is appropriate)</li> </ul>
Competence	A person's internalised grammar
Comprehensible input	Input of language which can be understood and form the basis of learning

Term	Gloss
Computer assisted language learning (CALL)	Using computers as a major element in the teaching-learning process
Concept checking question	A display question intended to ascertain whether an idea has been understood
Co-text and Context	The first refers to the language around an item, the second to the broader setting in which the language occurs. The term context is often used for both.
Co-operative / Collaborative learning	An approach in which learners are organised into groups or pairs to work together
Deductive learning	Learning based on being given the rule and from that to produce acceptable language
Delayed correction	A technique which avoids the interruption of an activity and leaves correction of language until its completion
Descriptive grammar	Grammar which describes what native speakers do rather than attempting to say what is right or wrong
Direct method	Teaching a language in the language
Discourse analysis	Analysing language above the level of the sentence
Discovery learning	Learning through being led to the rules by observation and noticing
Drill	Any technique based on repetition or cueing
EAP	English for Academic Purposes (i.e., studying in the language)
Extensive	Reading or listening in quantity rather than to limited amounts of language
FLA	First Language Acquisition
Function	The social purpose for which language is produced
Grammar translation	An approach to teaching which focuses on accessing the culture and literature of the target language using translation and grammatical study
Humanism	A term referring to the importance of human values, self-awareness, sensitivity and cultural appropriateness in teaching methodologies
Inductive learning	A learning theory which assumes that people can arrive at a language rule by being given access to sufficient examples of it in action
Information gap	A communicative task based around a difference of information provided to the task doers
Interaction	The use of language to maintain social relationships
Interlanguage	A learner's current ability on a scale of knowing none of the language to full mastery
Lexicon	A learner's total knowledge of words in a language
Meaningful drill	A type of drilling in which it is necessary for the learner to understand the meaning of the cue to be able to respond
Mechanical drill (aka meaningless drill)	A type of drill in which it is possible for the learners to produce a correct response even if they do not understand the meaning of the cue
Method	A way of teaching based on principles and theory
Modelling	Providing an example to imitate
Motivation	The willingness to expend effort in doing something
Oral	Concerned with speaking
Pedagogic grammar	A grammar designed for learners and for teachers to use

Term	Gloss
Performance	What people actually say in a language. Cf. competence
Phonemics	The study of the sound units of a language
Phonetics	The study of all speech sounds
Pragmatics	The study of the use of language to communicate
Prefabricated language	Language learned and used as a single concept or chunk, e.g., <i>What's the matter?</i>
Prescriptive grammar	Grammar which sets out what is considered right and wrong rather than describing what people say
Process approach	An approach to teaching (especially of writing) which focuses on subskills such as drafting, proofing, expanding and so on rather than the product
Product approach	An approach to teaching (especially of writing) which focuses on producing a text based on a model provided
Redundancy	Describing the fact that a message will contain more information than is required for comprehension. For example, in <i>He says</i> , the -s ending is redundant because the pronoun already carries the third person singular information
Scanning	Looking through a text to locate specific information
Schema (pl. schemata)	A mental framework in which information is ordered and classified
Semantics	The study of meaning (cf. pragmatics)
Situational Language Teaching	An oral approach to teaching which sets language in a social context and focuses on function words in particular
Structural linguistics	The study of language from a structural point of view involving phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences and texts as a hierarchy
Style	Variation in formality
Topic sentence	The sentence in a paragraph, usually the first, which sets out the theme of the paragraph
Use / Usage	The former refers to an utterance's communicative value, the latter to its significance or form
Wait time	The amount of time a teacher waits after asking a question before moving on

# Language Systems Analysis for CELTA: a map of the territory

This section covers, **in outline only**, the areas which you will need to understand for CELTA.

There are two short courses on ELT Concourse which are designed to help you with the grammar of English.

**A basic training course:** This covers both methodology and language structure. Find it at:

<http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/courses/basic/introductionbasic.html>

**A language analysis course:** This only covers language structure and is more difficult and more complete.

Find it at:

<http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/courses/lacourse/languageanalysiscourseindex.html>

Try to do at least one of those before you start the CELTA course. It will prepare you well.



## Grammar books

If you are preparing to take a CELTA course, you will need to come to grips with some essential grammar.

There are two types of grammars, divisible into two subgroups:

Prescriptive grammars, which tell you what is correct and what is wrong

Descriptive grammars, which attempt to describe and analyse what native speakers say and write

The subgroups are:

Pedagogic grammars intended for learners which usually simplify somewhat

Reference grammars intended for teachers and other researchers

Author(s), publishers and dates	Title	Notes
Alexander, L. G, Longman, 1988	<i>Longman English Grammar</i>	Accessible and easy to understand
Carter, R, Cambridge University Press, 2006	<i>Cambridge Grammar of English</i>	A reference grammar that is more technical
Foley, M & Hall, D, Pearson, 1988	<i>Longman advanced learners' grammar</i>	Designed for learners but very helpful
Leech, G and Svartvik J, 3rd edition, Longman, 2003	<i>A Communicative Grammar of English</i>	A technical reference grammar for people who are serious
Parrott, M, Cambridge University Press, 2010	<i>Grammar for English Language Teachers (2nd Ed.)</i>	Clear and descriptive
Swan, M, Oxford University Press, 2005	<i>Practical English Usage (3rd Ed.)</i>	Intended for learners but very useful
Thornbury, S, Oxford University Press, 2004	<i>Natural Grammar</i>	Slightly more unusual but a good addition to your shelf

A fuller list which includes some texts on how to teach grammar is on [eltconcourse.com](http://www.eltconcourse.com) at

[www.eltconcourse.com/training/grammarreference.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/grammarreference.html) and you may have other resources to hand.



## Pronunciation

There is a short course on ELT Concourse to teach you how to transcribe the sounds of English. It's at:

[www.eltconcourse.com/training/courses/transcription1/transcription.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/courses/transcription1/transcription.html)

### *What is a phoneme?*

In what follows, you will see that certain letters appear between two diagonal lines, like this: /b/.

The diagonal lines are the conventional way to show that we are talking about the sound, not the letter itself. For example, the first letters of *cinema* and *cave* are the same, a 'c', but the sound they represent is different. In *cinema*, it is an /s/ and in *cave* it is a /k/ sound. Those are phonemes.

A phoneme is, essentially, a sound but the critical point is that it is a sound which carries meaning.

The first thing to be aware of is that we are talking about English sounds. The study of language sounds (phonemic analysis) is language specific. A phoneme in one language is not necessarily a phoneme in another.

### *Phonemes:*

In English, we make a difference between the words *pat* and *bat* simply by changing the 'p' to a 'b' sound. This is because the sounds /p/ and /b/ in English are phonemes. Selecting one sound or another will make a difference to the meaning of the noise you make when you say a word.

**If you change a single sound in a word and make a new word, the sound you have changed is a phoneme in that language.**

In other languages, Arabic, for example, these two sounds are not phonemes and changing one to the other will not change the meaning of a word (but it might sound odd).

### *Allophones:*

Allophones are slightly different pronunciations of certain phonemes which do not affect the meaning of what is said (although it may sound odd). We saw above that /p/ and /b/ are allophones in Arabic as are, incidentally, /f/ and /v/ in some varieties.

For example, in English the sound /t/ can be pronounced with and without a following /h/ sound. Compare the sounds in *track* and *tack*.

If you hold a thin piece of paper in front of your mouth and say *tack* loudly, the paper will move.

If you do the same with the word *track*, the paper won't (or shouldn't) move (unless you shout).

In English, these two ways to say the letter 't' are not phonemes because you can change from one to the other without changing the meaning of the word. In some languages, Mandarin, for example, the two ways to say 't' are separate phonemes and swapping them around will change the meaning of what you say.

### *Minimal pairs:*

Pairs of words which are distinguished only by a change in one phoneme are called minimal pairs. For example, *hit-hat*, *kick-sick*, *fit-bit*, *sheep-ship*, *jerk-dirk*, *hot-cot*, *love-live* etc. are all distinguished in meaning by a single change to one sound. That's in English, of course. It bears repeating that what is an allophone in English may be a phoneme in other languages and vice versa.

### *Consonants:*

Consonants are the hard sounds of English. If we only have the consonants in a phrase we can still understand the phrase because the consonant sounds carry the most meaning.

For example, try to understand this:

*r y cmng t th prty?*

If we put the other letters back, we get: *Are you coming to the party?*

In English, 21 letters of the alphabet represent consonants: B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, V, X, Z, and usually W and Y.

However, English spelling is not a good guide to English pronunciation and there are, in fact, 24 consonant sounds.

### Vowels:

Vowels are the soft sounds of English. If we only have the vowels in a phrase we cannot usually understand it because the vowels alone carry little meaning.

For example, try to understand this:

*ae ou oi o e ay*

If we put the consonants back, we get the more familiar: *Are you coming to the party?*

Vowels can, however, form minimal pairs as in, for example:

*hare* and *here*

*hot* and *hat*

*put* and *putt*

and so on so they are not without meaning in themselves.

### A sound chart

Here is a chart of all the sounds in English with examples and transcriptions:

/i:/	sleep sheep free	/æ/	sat hat flab	/ɪə/	here beer mere	/p/	pin pat pop	/f/	fan fear huff	/h/	hat hop hip
/ɪ/	kid slid blip	/ʌ/	blood cup shut	/ʊə/	sure pour poor	/b/	big bad dib	/v/	van veer cover	/m/	man came mix
/ʊ/	put foot suit	/ɑ:/	part large heart	/ɔɪ/	boy deploy toy	/t/	tip tap pot	/θ/	thin think path	/n/	know near pan
/u:/	goose loose spruce	/ɒ/	hot cot shod	/eə/	lair share prayer	/d/	dig dog pad	/ð/	this then breathe	/ŋ/	ring thing manure
/e/	set dead said	/i/	happy navvy sally	/eɪ/	lace day betray	/k/	cake kick cot	/s/	sit kiss some	/l/	love lull little
/ə/	about father across			/aɪ/	price wine shine	/g/	got bag hug	/z/	zoo houses maze	/r/	rear ran rob
/ɜ:/	verse hearse curse			/əʊ/	boat coat note	/tʃ/	chair batch choice	/ʃ/	shut push shave	/j/	yet yacht yell
/ɔ:/	fought caught brought			/aʊ/	south house louse	/dʒ/	judge badge jerk	/ʒ/	pleasure leisure measure	/w/	went win water

\*These sounds are aspirated when the only consonant at the beginning of the stressed syllable or the first, stressed or unstressed, syllable in a word: /t<sup>h</sup>//p<sup>h</sup>//k<sup>h</sup>/  
 'l/ has the allophones, 'light' [l] (leaf /'li: f/) and 'dark' [ɫ] (feel /fi:l/)



## Words

### Syllables

Many words in English have only one syllable – they are monosyllabic. For example, words like *house*, *good*, *live*, *out*, *and*, *soon* etc. all have only one syllable.

Many other words have two or more syllables – they are polysyllabic. For example, *going* (two syllables), *internet* (three syllables), *national* (four syllables), *contextualise* (5 syllables) and so on.

In English, all words which have two or more syllables will be stressed on one of them. So, we say, for example: *going* not *going*, *economy* not *economy*, *control* not *control* and so on.

A simple rule for 2-syllable words is to stress the first syllable if they are nouns, adjectives or adverbs and the second syllable if they are verbs but that doesn't always work and getting words stress right is very difficult for learners.

### Morphemes

A morpheme is usually defined as the smallest meaningful unit of language. Morphemes are the building blocks from which we make words and some of the grammar.

For example, a word like *book* only has one morpheme and is it *book*. It is a free morpheme that can stand alone.

But in the word *bookish* we have two morphemes, *book* and *ish* and the second one cannot stand alone. It is a bound morpheme.

In *bookkeeper*, we have three morphemes, *book*, *keep* and *er*, the first two free morphemes and the last one a bound morpheme.

### Prefixes and suffixes

In English, we often make new words by adding to the beginning of a word (a prefix) or adding to the end (a suffix).

For example, if we add the morpheme *dis* to the word *please*, we get its opposite meaning: *displease*.

If we add *ed* to the word *finish* we get its past tense: *finished*.

If we add *ity* to the word *stupid* we change it from an adjective to a noun.

Adding suffixes usually changes the grammar or the type of word. Adding prefixes usually changes the meaning.

This is called word formation.

### Compounding

Often in English, we can put two words together to make a new meaning.

So, for example: *suit* + *case* makes a new word *suitcase* and *loud* + *speaker* makes *loudspeaker*. It is usually (but not always) possible to work out the meaning by knowing the meaning of the original words.

### Types of words

There are, by most reckonings, 10 or 11 different sorts of words. Here are two examples of all 10 word classes.



they	ah!	happily	an	enjoy
he	ouch!	fast	the	go
by	but	this	hopeful	ability
out	whereas	those	blue	flower

- they* and *he*  
these are pronouns. They function to stand for people or things so instead of  
*Mary worked in the garden*  
we can say  
*She worked in it*  
with *she* standing for Mary and *it* standing for the garden.
- ah!* and *ouch!*  
these are interjections. They carry little meaning in themselves but they show the speaker's attitude.  
For example:  
*Ah! I see* (showing dawning comprehension)  
*Ouch!* (expressing pain)
- happily* and *fast*  
these are adverbs, showing how something is done in, e.g.:  
*He agreed happily* (how he agreed)  
*Jane drove fast* (how she drove)  
they can also tell us more about an adjective. For example:  
*That's very beautiful* (emphasising the adjective)  
they can also tell us about another adverb. For example:  
*He came extremely reluctantly*
- an* and *the*  
these are articles (and the other one is *a*). They give us information about the noun. For example:  
*I saw a car* (**any** car)  
*I saw the car* (a **particular** car)
- enjoy* and *go*  
these are verbs which tell us about an action, state or event.  
*I enjoyed the party* (expressing a state of mind)  
*I go on Thursday* (expressing movement away)
- by* and *out*  
these are prepositions which tell us when or where a verb refers to.  
*I'll arrive by 6* (expressing the connection between an action and the time)  
*They went out the window* (expressing the connection between an action and a place)
- but* and *whereas*  
these are conjunctions which serve to connect ideas.  
*I rang but she was out* (expressing a negative result)  
*He lives in London whereas his sister lives in Paris* (expressing a contrast)
- this* and *those*  
these are demonstratives telling us about the number and position of something (there are only two others: *that* and *these*)  
*Those are nice* (more than one thing far from the speaker)  
*This is beautiful* (one thing near to the speaker)
- hopeful* and *blue*

these are adjectives telling us about a person, feeling or thing

*He's feeling hopeful* (telling us about *he*)

*The blue vase* (telling us about the *vase*)

#### 10. *ability* and *flower*

these are nouns for an abstract idea and an object and nouns can also be people, times, feelings and places

*The child has ability*

*The flowers are gorgeous in spring*

#### The 11<sup>th</sup> word class

In many grammars, you will see words described as **determiners**. These words all tell us about the noun in a sentence. The words in **bold** here are all determiners:

**The** man arrived

**Some** rain would be nice

We went to **that** cinema

**Two** people left

**All the** money has gone

**My** car has broken down

#### *Two varieties of words*

**lexical or content words**: these words carry meaning even when they stand alone and include:

- adjectives such as *blue, big, lonely, happy* etc.
- verbs such as *go, arrive, contemplate, type, think* etc.
- nouns such as *Monday, table, The President, army, fish, sugar* etc.
- adverbs such as *quickly, fast, slowly, alone, recently* etc.

**function or grammar words**: these words carry no intrinsic meaning but make the grammar of the language work and connect lexical words together. They include:

- pronouns such as *he, she, it, they, mine, yours, one, everyone, nobody* etc.
- conjunctions such as *because, so, if, when, and, as, although* etc.
- demonstratives: *this, that, these, those*
- articles: *a, an, the*
- determiners: including articles, demonstratives, quantifiers and possessives such as *the, those, five, your* etc.

#### *Word relationships*

This is a complicated area but we will look only at the key ideas here. For more, go to the site.

##### 1. **Homonymy**

The term homonymy comes from the Greek and means 'same name'. The reference is to words like these:

- *dear and deer*

These words are written differently but pronounced the same and have **different meanings**. They are **homophones**.

- *lead weight and lead an army*

These words are written the same but pronounced differently and have **different meanings**. They are **homographs**.

- Sometimes homographs are spelt and pronounced the same way but have **different meanings**. They are homographs and homophones and often simply called **homonyms**.

##### 2. **Synonymy**

This refers to words of the same meaning (but they don't always mean exactly the same to all people and often aren't interchangeable).

Examples are:

*unhappy-sad*

*angry-irritated*

*happy-contented*

*old-aged-elderly*

*inexperienced-green*

*war-conflict*

and so on.

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### 3. Antonymy

Antonymy refers to words which have opposite meanings. For example:

- tall – short
- male – female
- open – closed

and so on.

### 4. Collocation

Some words very often occur together so we have, for example:

- *torrential + rain*
- *bright + sunshine*
- *bitterly + cold*

and so on.

Some words do not collocate so we can have:

- *strong winds and heavy snow*

but not

- *strong snow and heavy winds*

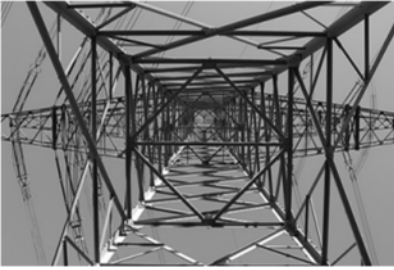
### 5. Idioms

Some groups of word act like a single word and cannot be understood by understanding the words in the group. These are called idioms.

For example: *that's a whole new can of worms* does not refer to cans or worms at all but means that something is new and very different. It is impossible to understand what is meant by knowing the meanings of *can* and *worms*. In the jargon, it is opaque.

Some idioms are less opaque so, with a knowledge of boxing conventions, we might be able to work out what is meant by *She threw in the towel*.

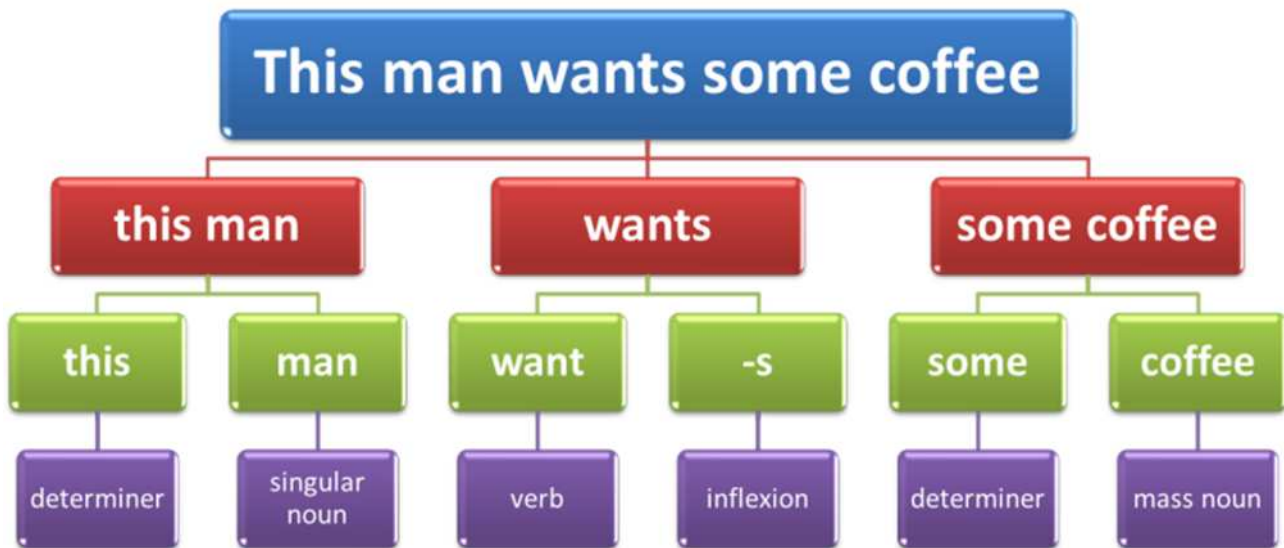
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## Syntax: phrases, clauses and sentences

The study of how well-formed sentences are made in languages is called syntax. It concerns the relationships between words (see above), phrases and clauses.

Here is an example of how a sentence in English may be broken down into its constituent parts. It is called parsing a sentence and you need to know how to do this.



To explain a little:

### *Subjects, verbs and objects*

*this man* is the subject of the sentence. It tells us who wants.

*wants* is the verb which tells us what is happening and it has an s at the end to show that it is singular and refers to *he*, *she* or *it*. In English that is the only change we make in the present tense and it's called an inflexion. Other languages are much more sophisticated and complicated.

*some coffee* is the object of the sentence and tells us what the man wants. Not all verbs have objects but they all have subjects. In this example, it's classified as a mass noun. That means it does not, in this meaning, take a plural form. Other examples include *water*, *money*, *sugar*, *furniture*, *information* etc. all of which take no plural and use a singular verb (*the furniture etc. is*, not *are*).

In English, we almost always put the subject first, then the verb and then the object (if there is one). Other languages may do things differently.

### *Complements*

What sometimes looks like an object of a verb is, in fact something called a complement. For example, in the sentence

*The water came in through the roof*

You could be forgiven for thinking that *the roof* is the object of the verb. It isn't, it forms part of the complement of the verb. The whole complement is *in through the roof*.

In the same way, in the sentence:

*She is getting angrier*

the word *angrier* is the complement of the verb (*be*).

but in:

*She is getting the money*

The money **is** the object of the verb *get*.

Some verbs in English usually connect the subject with a complement and these are called copular or linking verbs. For example, all the **verbs** in these sentences are copular verbs:

*He **looks** upset*

*She **appeared** at the door*

*John **is** the manager*

*His aim **was making** lots of money*

*He **looks like** his brother*

In all these cases, we have subject + copular verb + complement (not object).

## Phrases

Phrases work like single words.

For example, we can say:

*He wants coffee*

and we can say

*This man obviously wants some coffee*

In both cases, *he* and *this man* are doing the same thing – telling us **who** wants. *this man* is called a noun phrase – it is a group of words acting as a single grammatical element.

In both cases, *wants* and *obviously wants* are doing the same thing – telling us what is **happening**. *obviously wants* is called a verb phrase – it is a group of words acting as a single grammatical element.

In both cases, *coffee* and *some coffee* are doing the same thing – telling us **what** the man wants. *some coffee* is another noun phrase – it is a group of words acting as a single grammatical element.

## Clauses

Clauses are independent units of meaning and may be whole sentences or parts of sentences. They are phrases which contain at least one verb.

For example, a sentence like:

*He saw me and ran away*

contains two independent clauses:

*he saw me*

*[he] ran away*

joined by the simple conjunction *and*. (We don't need to repeat *he* because that's the subject of both the verbs.)

Sometimes one of the clauses is not independent and cannot stand alone **with the same meaning**. For example, in the sentence:

*She saw me when I came to the door*

We have a main clause

*she saw me*

and a subordinate clause

*I came to the door*

joined by the conjunction *when*. (This time, the subject of the two verbs is different (*she* and *I*) so we make it clear.)

Conjunctions come in two sorts:

1. Coordinating conjunction (like *and* in the example) which join two clauses of equal importance.

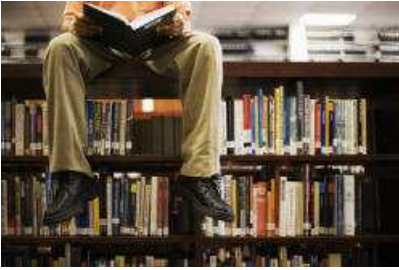
2. Subordinating conjunction (like *when* in the example) which join two clauses but the meaning of one clause depends on the meaning of the other.

## Sentences

Sentences have four fundamental functions in language.

Sentence	Function	Comment
John saw a unicorn	Simple statement	This is sometimes called a positive sentence or clause
Did John see a unicorn?	Interrogative	A question form which can also be formed with <i>who</i> , <i>what</i> , <i>why</i> etc.
Look at the unicorn	Imperative	Used for commands and suggestions etc.
What an odd-looking unicorn!	Exclamation	Usually introduced with <i>What</i> or <i>How</i>

Statements are sometimes called declaratives and they can also be negative, e.g., *John didn't see a unicorn.*



## Verbs

I was reading a book

### Main and auxiliary verbs

**Main verbs** can stand alone in a sentence and carry meaning. In these sentences, all the verbs in bold are main verbs (often called lexical verbs):

He **went** to the shops

Peter **owns** three houses

I **arrive** about 6

I **smoke** too much

The house **is** on fire

She **drove** the car

**Auxiliary verbs** are of two kinds.

**Primary auxiliary verbs** make tenses. In these example, all the verbs in bold are primary auxiliary verbs:

I **have** read that

I **will** finish soon

**Do** you need me?

I **got** my house painted

I **was** making breakfast

She **had been** driving for hours

**Modal auxiliary verbs** tell us how the speaker or writer feels about the main verb. In these example, all the verbs in bold are modal auxiliary verbs:

I **must** go home

**Can** you be quiet, please?

This **must** be the right house

She **should** not do that

**Would** you like some coffee?

I **might** enjoy it

### Transitive and intransitive verbs

As you know, the subject is who or what did the action, the verb is the action and the object is the thing or person the action happened to.

All verbs have subjects (even if we don't say or write them) but some verbs cannot have objects. They are intransitive.

For example, we can say:

*She broke the vase*

and

*She stood*

but we can't say

*She stood the vase*

or

*She broke*

Because *break* always takes an object and *stand* never takes an object. *Break* is a transitive verb and *stand* is intransitive.

Some verbs can take two objects and they are called ditransitive. For example:

*He asked the teacher a question*

*She sold me the car*

In the first sentence, we have *the teacher* (**who** she asked) and *a question* (**what** she asked). The first of these is the indirect object and the second is the direct object.

In the second sentence, we have *me* (**who** she sold the car to) and *the car* (**what** she sold). The first of these is the indirect object and the second is the direct object.

In English, we normally put the indirect object before the direct object. Other languages may do things differently.

Some verbs can be transitive or intransitive (and this is also variable across languages). For example, we can say:

*She wrote* (with no object)

and

*She wrote me a letter* (with two objects)

### Person and number

Verbs can change their form depending on two elements in most language, including English.

A Person: there are three

- 1) 1<sup>st</sup> person: *I* or *we*
- 2) 2<sup>nd</sup> person *he, she, it, they*
- 3) 3<sup>rd</sup> person: *you*

B Number: singular or plural

- 1) Singular: *I, he, she, it, you* [one person]
- 2) Plural: *we, they, you* [more than one person]

In English, the forms are quite simple except for the verb *be* and verbs do not change very much to show these differences but other languages are much more complicated.

### Tense

Tenses are the ways that languages show the time of an action. This is a complicated area but here is the outline diagram showing all the main tenses in English with their names and examples.

← Past		Present	Future →	
I used to smoke <i>'used to' structure</i> (a discontinued habit)	I smoke <i>present simple</i> (a habit starting in the past and (probably) continuing into the future)			
I had smoked <i>past perfect simple</i> (an action before another)	I smoked <i>past simple</i> (an action in the past)	I am smoking <i>present progressive</i> (a current action)	I am meeting John <i>present progressive</i> (an arranged future)	I'll have got it <i>future perfect</i> (an action seen from the past in the future)
I had been smoking <i>past perfect progressive</i> (a progressive action)	I was smoking <i>past progressive</i> (a progressive past action)		I'm going to meet John <i>going to structure</i> (an intentional future)	I'll have been smoking <i>future perfect progressive</i> (a progressive action seen from the past in the future)
I have smoked for 10 years <i>present perfect simple</i> (an action beginning in the past and continuing into or having an effect in the present)			It's going to rain (a prediction based on evidence)	
I have been running <i>present perfect progressive</i> (a progressive action beginning in the past and continuing into or having an effect in the present)			I'll get it! <i>future simple</i> (an offer)	
			I will go in the summer (a fixed or predicted future)	
			I will be meeting John <i>future progressive</i> (a progressive event)	



English tense types and their meanings are quite complicated but the forms are generally quite simple when compared, e.g., to other European languages. In French and German, for example, the past tenses of verbs change depending on the subject (plural, singular, first or second person etc.).

You can learn more about tense forms in English at:

[www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/grammar12/tenses.html](http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/grammar12/tenses.html)

which has the same diagram as above on which you can click to go to guides to each tense form.

## Aspect

Aspect refers to how we see an action in time. There are usually considered to be two aspects in English although there are, in fact, several more than that.

1. progressive or continuous aspect which tells us that the action is continuing (although it may not be happening right now). We don't know when it started or how long it will go on:

*I am living in London*

*He is washing the car*

*The professor is giving a series of lectures*

2. simple aspect which tells us that an action or even has or had a limited time span or is sudden. In this form, tenses are described as absolute:

*I lived in London*

*She came in and spoke to me*

*It started to rain*

*I will help you tomorrow*

3. perfect aspect which tells us something about event or action **in relation to** another time so the tenses can be described as relative:

*I have lived in London for twenty years* (and am still here now, relating the past to the present)

*She had already eaten when I came home* (relating the fact that her eating came before the speaker's return)

*I will have finished the work by six* (relating the event in relation to a time in the future)

There is often no one-to-one relationship between the form of the tense and the aspect of the verb.

## Voice

Voice refers to how we see an action, too, but in this case, it tells how we see the roles of the subject and the object not how we see the verb. For example:

*He broke the window*

is active voice and we emphasise **who** did something

*The window was broken*

is passive voice and we emphasise what happened **to the window**.

We use a passive form for several reasons:

1. Because both speaker and hearer / writer and reader know the subject of the verb as in, e.g.,

*She was arrested*

where we would assume that *the police* is the subject.

2. Because we don't know the subject as in, e.g.,

*The house was built in 1963*

and we don't know (or much care) who the builder was

3. Because we want to emphasise the subject as in, e.g.,

*The meal was cooked by the children (not the parents)*

in which we are emphasising the doers of the action.



## A CELTA grammar glossary

The following is brief but enough to start you off. For more, go to the site.

Term	Gloss	Example
a-adjective	A special kind of adjective beginning with <i>a-</i> . These adjectives are always used following the noun	<i>The dog is <u>asleep</u></i> <i>NOT</i> <i>The <u>asleep</u> dog</i>
Abstract noun	A noun referring to an intangible concept	<i>happiness</i>
Accent	Stress or a diacritic mark	<i>café</i> <i><u>coffee</u></i>
Adjective	A word which modifies a noun phrase	<i>The <u>large</u> dog</i>
Adjective phrase	A group of words doing the work of an adjective	<i>The <u>very large, black</u> dog</i>
Adverb	A word which modifies a verb, an adjective, another adverb or modifies a verb phrase	<i>She walked <u>quickly</u></i> <i>The book was <u>very</u> expensive</i> <i>He <u>usually</u> drives <u>too</u> slowly</i>
Adverb of degree	An adverb telling you to what extent	<i>I <u>really</u> enjoyed the book</i>
Adverb of frequency	An adverb telling you how often (often included into the adverb of time category)	<i>He <u>usually</u> goes home at 6</i>
Adverb of manner	An adverb telling you the way something happens	<i>It <u>quickly</u> became dark</i>
Adverb of place	An adverb telling you where an action or state exists	<i>I came <u>inside</u></i>
Adverb of time	An adverb telling you when something happens	<i>She left <u>then</u></i>
Adverb phrase	A group of words doing the job of an adverb	<i>They walked home <u>slowly and sadly</u></i>
Adverbial	Any word or phrase which modifies a verb phrase	<i>He went <u>into town</u></i> <i><u>Honestly</u>, I don't know</i>
Agent	In passive clauses, the causer or doer of the action	<i>The window was broken by <u>them</u></i>
Article	A class of determiners which modify noun phrases for number or reference	<i>She bought <u>a</u> house</i> <i>They have <u>an</u> idea</i> <i>I am <u>the</u> boss here</i>
Aspect	Descriptive of how an event or action is perceived relative to time, e.g., progressively, continuously, habitually or repeatedly	<i>She has arrived (perfect aspect)</i> <i>They left (simple aspect)</i> <i>She was cycling (progressive aspect)</i>

Term	Gloss	Example
Auxiliary verb	A verb which has no meaning alone but works with main verbs to express speaker perception or aspect. There are two types: primary auxiliary verbs which form tenses and aspects and modal auxiliary verbs	<i>I <u>have</u> finished</i> (primary) <i>He <u>was</u> cycling</i> (primary) <i>We <u>should</u> leave</i> (modal) <i>I <u>must</u> go home now</i> (modal)
Base form	The form of the verb from which other inflected forms are derived	The verb <u>spea</u> k is intransitive
Clause	A group of words containing a finite verb form	<i>He went because I <u>asked him to</u></i>
Collective noun	A noun which refers to a group of things or people	<i>The army</i> <i>A group</i>
Comparative	The form which is used to show a greater or lesser degree of a quality	<i>A <u>bigger</u> house</i> <i>A <u>more beautiful</u> cat</i>
Complement	A phrase which completes the meaning of a verb or other element	<i>The house <u>in the corner</u></i> (prepositional phrase complement) <i>He is <u>the boss</u></i> (noun complement of a copular verb)
Conditional	A clause whose truth is contingent on the truth of another	<i><u>Give me the money</u> and I'll buy it for you</i> <i><u>Come if you can</u></i>
Conjunction	A word to join two ideas (clauses, verbs, nouns etc.)	<i>She went home <u>because</u> she felt ill</i> <i>We ate bread <u>and</u> butter</i>
Content word	A word which has meaning when standing alone (compare function word)	<i>house, bring, pretty, usually, French</i>
Continuous	An aspect of a verb tense to describe something on-going	<i>She <u>thinks</u> I love her</i> <i>They <u>are working</u> in Italy</i>
Copular verb	A verb which joins two nouns together, a noun and an adjective or a noun and a prepositional phrase	<i>She <u>became</u> a teacher</i> <i>They <u>grew</u> tall</i> <i>She <u>was</u> in the garden</i>
Count noun	A noun which can have a plural and take a plural verb	<i>The <u>cats</u> are in the house</i>
Demonstrative	A class of determiner telling us what noun we are talking about	<i><u>This</u> house</i> <i><u>That</u> garden</i> <i><u>Those</u> cars</i> <i><u>These</u> people</i>
Dependent clause	A subordinate clause	<i>She had enough money <u>although she wasn't rich</u></i>
Determiner	A word which comes before a noun to say what we know about it	<i><u>Many</u> people</i> <i><u>The</u> car</i> <i><u>My</u> house</i> <i><u>Those</u> children</i>
Direct object	The first object of a verb	<i>He spent <u>the money</u></i>

Term	Gloss	Example
Direct speech	The actual words spoken	<i>He said, "Hello, Mary."</i>
Dynamic	Describing: Verb use Adjective use Type of passive clause	<i>Be quiet, I'm <u>thinking</u></i> <i>He's being <u>stupid</u></i> <i>The window <u>got broken</u></i>
Exclamation	A sentence expressing anger or surprise etc.	<i>How wonderful!</i>
Function word	Words which have no meaning when alone but make the grammar work	<i>prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, determiners etc.</i>
Genitive	The possessive case	<i>That's <u>my</u> pen</i>
Gerund	A noun formed from a verb with the suffix <i>-ing</i>	<i>I gave up <u>smoking</u></i>
Idiom	A phrase used as a single concept which usually cannot be understood by understanding the words in it	<i>It's <u>turned up its toes</u> (died / become useless)</i>
Imperative	The form of the verb used to tell someone what to do or make offers	<i><u>Go</u> home</i> <i><u>Don't</u> tell her</i> <i><u>Have</u> some cake</i>
Indirect object	The second object of a ditransitive verb (dative case)	<i>He gave <u>me</u> the money</i>
Indirect speech	A clause in which the words said are reported not <i>verbatim</i>	<i>He <u>greeted</u> Mary</i>
Infinitive	A non-finite verb form often preceded by <i>to</i>	<i>I came to <u>help</u></i> <i>We should <u>go</u></i>
Interjection	A word class signifying emotional state	<i>Wow!</i> <i>Really!</i> <i>Oh.</i>
Interrogative	A question form	<i>Do you know her?</i>
Intransitive	Describing a verb which cannot have an object	<i>She <u>stood</u> alone.</i>
Lexical verb (aka content or main verb)	A verb that is not an auxiliary but has meaning standing alone	<i>She <u>wept</u></i>
Lexical word	A word which carries significance rather than performing a grammatical function	<i>She <u>went</u> to the <u>post office</u></i>
Linking verb	See copular verb	
Mass noun	A noun which can have no plural and takes a singular verb	<i>The <u>milk</u> is in the fridge</i>
Modal auxiliary verb	A verb which tells us how the speaker feels about the main verb	<i>I <u>should</u> talk to her</i> <i>It <u>may</u> rain again</i>
Morpheme	The smallest meaningful unit of language	<i>He was protest-<u>ing</u> (4 morphemes)</i> <i>The house-<u>s</u> were paint-<u>ed</u> (6 morphemes)</i>

<b>Term</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Example</b>
Multi-word verb	A phrasal Prepositional or Phrasal prepositional verb	<i>He <u>worked out</u> the solution</i> <i>He <u>abstained from</u> voting</i> <i>He <u>put up with</u> the noise</i>
Negative / Negation	A sentence or verb form which refers to something not happening	<i>It <u>didn't</u> rain</i> <i>I <u>deny</u> taking any</i>
Noun	A word for a person, place, thing, feeling or characteristic	<i>John</i> <i>London</i> <i>hammer</i> <i>happiness</i>
Noun phrase	A group of words acting as a noun	<i><u>The old man</u> sailed the boat</i>
Object	The thing the verb acts on (accusative case)	<i>The old man sailed <u>the boat</u></i>
Passive	A clause in which the subject undergoes the action	<i>They <u>were arrested</u></i>
Past participle	See participle	
Perfect	An aspect of the verb describing its relationship to another time	<i>He <u>has arrived</u> (describing the relationship to the present)</i> <i>He <u>had arrived</u> (describing the relationship to the past)</i>
Person	A grammatical category which indicates who something is about	<i>I <u>gave</u> it away (zero inflection)</i> <i>She <u>gives</u> it to charity (-s inflection)</i> <i>I <u>spoke</u> to <u>them</u> (third-person plural pronoun)</i>
Personal pronoun	A pronoun for a person or persons	<i>Give it to <u>me</u></i>
Phrase	A group of words with one job in a sentence	<i>He went <u>to the shops</u> (prepositional phrase)</i> <i><u>The three boys</u> left (noun phrase)</i> <i>They <u>carefully opened</u> the box (verb phrase)</i>
Possessive case	The indicator of ownership, description or origin	<i><u>My</u> house</i> <i>The <u>government's</u> policy</i> <i><u>John's</u> letter</i> <i>The people <u>of</u> France</i>
Prefix	A morpheme (q.v.) which is affixed to the beginning of a word	<i><u>dis</u>courage</i>
Preposition	A word which links the verb to a noun or adverbial	<i>He walked <u>across</u> the park</i> <i>She arrived <u>at</u> six</i>
Prepositional phrase	A group of words which includes the preposition and its noun complement	<i><u>over the bridge</u></i> <i><u>under the river</u></i>
Primary auxiliary verb	An auxiliary verb which forms a tense, voice or aspect with a main verb	<i>It <u>was</u> destroyed</i> <i>I <u>got</u> my car cleaned</i> <i>I <u>have</u> been to London</i>
Progressive	The aspect of the verb which shows that something is ongoing	<i>I <u>am writing</u> this sentence</i>

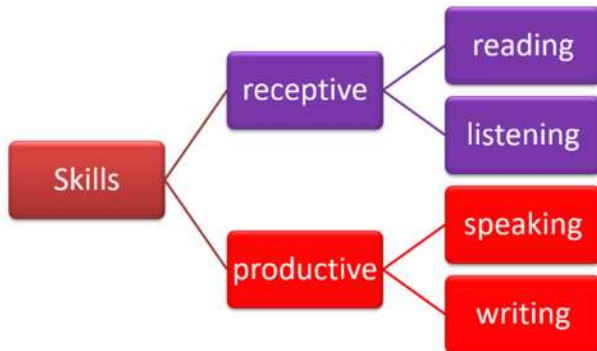
Term	Gloss	Example
Pronoun	A word which stands for a noun	Give <u>me</u> <u>it</u>
Proper noun	A noun for a person, place or job	<i>The President</i> <i>Mr Smith</i> <i>The Alps</i>
Question tag	A phrase attached to the end of a positive or negative sentence to make it a question	<i>You are coming, <u>aren't you</u>?</i> <i>You aren't going to eat that, <u>are you</u>?</i>
Singular	One. Mass nouns and one only of count nouns are singular	<i>A horse came across the road</i> <i>The milk is in the fridge</i>
Stative	Describing the state of: Adjectives Verbs Passive constructions	<i>He is <u>old</u></i> <i>He <u>imagines</u> it's true</i> <i>The door <u>is broken</u></i>
Structure words	See function words	
Style	The level of formality	<i>Gimme a light (informal)</i> <i>Would you please follow me? (formal)</i>
Subject	The doer of a verb (nominative case)	<i><u>The man</u> broke the glass.</i>
Suffix	A morpheme (q.v.) added to the end of a word	<i>resent<u>ment</u></i>
Superlative	The form of an adjective or adverb which means the most or least	<i>The <u>tallest</u> boy in the class</i> <i>The <u>most expensively</u> dressed man</i>
Tense	The form of the verb marked for time or aspect	<i>He <u>walked</u></i>
Transitive	Describing a verb which must (or can) take one or more objects	<i>She <u>smokes</u> (intransitive)</i> <i>She <u>smoked</u> a cigarette (transitive)</i>
Uncountable	See mass noun	
Verb	The action, state or event in a sentence	<i>She <u>came</u> late</i> <i>It <u>rained</u></i> <i>She <u>was</u> happy</i>
Verb phrase	A group of words acting as a verb	<i>She <u>slowly drove</u> the car home</i>
Voice	Showing the relationship between verbs and noun phrases	<i>He <u>spent</u> the money (active)</i> <i>The money <u>was spent</u> (passive)</i>
Wh- word	The words <i>what, who(m), when, where, why, how</i> and <i>which</i>	<i><u>Where</u> is your car?</i> <i><u>Who</u> told you?</i>

# Language Skills Analysis for CELTA: a map of the territory

This is not a skills book.

This section covers, **in outline only**, the areas which you need to understand for CELTA

Skills may be visualised this way:



This guide takes the two main categories in turn and summarises the key concepts. In the site, you will find longer guides to the skills in the teacher-training section.



## Receptive skills – reading and listening

### Text types

Here's a list of possible **text types** that anyone might read or listen to in a day or so.

(By the way, note here that we use the word **text** for any piece of language whether it is written or spoken.)

Reading	Listening
this page	a television news programme
a recipe	an announcement on a train
someone's newspaper headlines on the bus	someone talking at a meeting
a bill in a café	a radio music programme
a novel	a shop assistant explaining a product
the TV schedule	the person(s) you live with
a label on a tin	other people's conversation
a work e-mail	a television quiz game show

It is very difficult to predict what people will hear and read and why. That is one reason that teaching the area is quite difficult.

## Reasons for reading or listening

Here's a list of possible reasons for listening or reading certain text types.

Reading		Listening	
this guide	to learn something	a television news programme	to find out about an event
a recipe	to cook a meal	an announcement on a train	to get off at the right station
someone's newspaper headlines on the bus	to see what's in the news	someone talking at a meeting	to understand and respond
a bill in a café	to check the price	a radio music programme	for pleasure
a novel	to follow the story for pleasure	a shop assistant explaining a product	to find out what something does
the TV schedule	to choose what to watch at 8 o'clock	the person(s) you live with	to socialise
a label on a tin	to see what's in something	other people's conversation	to find out what is being talked about
a work e-mail	to understand and respond	a television quiz game show	for fun to answer questions if you can

Knowing **why** we are reading or listening to a text helps us to decide **how** to read or listen. To explain:

### 1. Listening:

- When we are dealing with some listening texts, for example, a set of instructions or a waiter explaining what's in a dish, it's important that we understand nearly everything. If miss something important we may make a serious mistake or get the wrong meal. This is called **intensive listening**.
- Typically, in a TV news programme, people will watch and listen quite casually until a key word or picture alerts them to an item of interest. Then they switch listening mode and pay more attention. This kind of listening is called **monitor listening**.
- A TV soap opera or an anecdote might require some attention but as long as we get the gist of what's going on, it isn't usually necessary (or possible) to catch every word and every nuance. This is known as extensive listening because we do not need to understand everything we hear.

### 2. Reading:

- When we are dealing with some written texts, for example, a recipe or a set of instructions, it's important that we understand nearly everything. If the book says *twist anti-clockwise* or *do not allow it to boil*, it's important that we get it right. Fortunately, when we read, we can usually take the time to re-read as often as we like and use a dictionary when we don't understand. This is **intensive reading**.
- Typically, on a news website, people will run their eyes across the links looking for a story that interests them and then access the text for a more detailed look at the information.



Even when we are quite interested in a story, we still often won't read every word, preferring to skip to the important (for us) bits of the story.

Similarly, other texts, such as a bus timetable require us just to look for what we need. We can't usually just read from top to bottom, left to right because we don't want the information from most of the text.

This is called **scanning or scan reading**.

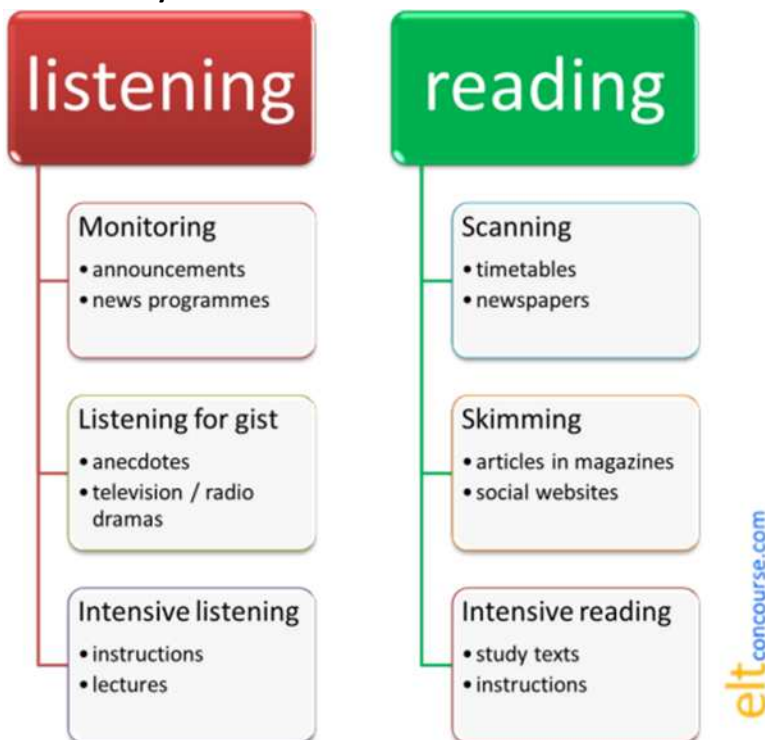
- Depending on how much we are engaged, reading a novel requires a different approach, too. We will usually read with some care and even back-track to re-read sections but we can ignore parts of the text and simply follow the story.

Ignoring whole parts and just getting the gist is called **skimming or skim reading**. This is also called **extensive reading** because it is not necessary to understand every word.

It's clear, then, that we use different skills depending on:

- the sorts of text we are accessing**
- our reasons for accessing it**

The summary of all this:



### *Top-down and Bottom-up processing*

These are two key ideas but good readers and good listeners **use them both at the same time**. They are not difficult to understand.

**Top-down processing** concerns:

- using your knowledge of the world in general to understand what you read or hear. For example, if you know that penguins live in the Antarctic, you know that a text about them will not mention North Africa but you will be alert to words like *snow*, *ice*, *Weddell Sea* and so on.
- using your knowledge of typical text layout and staging to locate specific information.
- using your knowledge of the topic to help you understand. For example, if you are an expert gardener, you will know how to do a lot of things with plants and can recognise words like

*dibber, wheelbarrow, shears, espalier* etc. so can focus on the new material in a text (spoken or written).

**Bottom-up processing** concerns using your formal linguistic knowledge of:

- the pronunciation of English to distinguish, e.g., between *pin* and *bin*.
- lexis and how it is pronounced to understand meaning in a written or spoken text.
- intonation to understand a speaker's emotional state and intention.
- the grammar of the language to distinguish, e.g., between *He arrived* and *He has arrived*
- discourse markers (like pronouns and conjunctions) and sequencers (like *firstly, lastly* etc.) to identify connections and relationships between ideas.



## Productive skills – speaking and writing

### Types of writing and speaking

Here's a list of possible types.

Writing	Speaking
a note to a friend / relation	to a close family member
a text message	to a stranger to ask for directions
a formal email	to arrange an appointment (doctor, lawyer etc.)
an informal email	to place an order in a café or restaurant
a memo at work	to ask for information in a shop
a set of instructions	to make your point at a meeting at work
an academic essay	to ask a question at the end of a lecture
a notice or advertisement	to explain your feelings to a friend

It is very difficult to predict what people will have to write and say. That is one reason that teaching the area is quite difficult.

### Purposes for speaking and writing

All writers and speakers write and speak for a reason. There are two essential types of purpose:

1. **To transact:**

This refers to getting things done in the language rather than just oiling the social wheels.

2. **To interact:**

This refers to making and maintaining social relationships rather than getting something you need or getting something done.

The types listed above can be roughly segregated into the types of speaking / writing they involve. Like this:

Writing	Type	Speaking	Type
a note to a friend / relation	transaction (but may also have elements of interaction such as <i>I hope you are OK</i> )	to a close family member	either: it depends on your purpose (most will have elements of both)
a text message	transaction usually (you want to get something done or arranged)	to a stranger to ask for directions	transaction
a formal email	transaction	to arrange an appointment (doctor, lawyer etc.)	transaction
an informal email	either: it depends on your purpose (most will have elements of both)	to place an order in a café or restaurant	transaction
a set of instructions	transaction	to make your point at a meeting at work	transaction and elements of interaction to keep people on your side, show respect etc.
a notice or advertisement	transaction	to explain your feelings to a friend	interaction (with elements of transaction if you need help or advice)

Knowing **why** we are speaking or writing a text helps us to decide **how** to speak and **how** to write.

Some important points:

### 1. Transactions

If we want to get something done, we need to focus on an outcome and make sure we emphasise it without making the water muddy with too much unnecessary information.

#### ■ Writing:

- If we want to ask a question about a computer printer in an email, we do not need to know how the receiver of the email is feeling and we don't need to say how we feel. All we want are data.
- If we want to write a text telling someone how to get to our address, we must make it clear in our writing, probably step by step, and separate it from any interactional content in the letter, email or note.

#### ■ Speaking:

- If we want to buy something in a shop, apart from saying please and thank you, we probably do not want to start a social relationship with the shop assistant.

### 2. Interactions

#### ■ Writing:

- When we are interacting with friends or relations in writing, we do not need to be complete or very clear and accurate. We will probably share a good deal of information with them so saying that Mary is your sister's name when writing to a

friend is not necessary. You just need to write *Mary* or *my sister* and your friend will know who you mean.

- In fact, purely interactional writing, except in emails and texts (occasionally) is quite unusual. When we want to interact, it's usually by speaking to people.
- Speaking:
  - A lot of speaking is interaction, even when we are also transacting. For example, in a shop we use a lot, we may have a conversation with the shopkeeper about the weather, her family, her health etc. before we get to asking for what we want.

**We use different kinds of language depending on what we are doing.**

## Skills – reading and resources

There are a number of fundamental books on skills listed below but a longer list is available on the site.

### *Listening skills*

Anderson, A. & Lynch, T, 1988, *Listening*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Brown, G, 1990, *Listening to Spoken English*, Harlow: Longman

Rost, M, 1990, *Listening in Language Learning*, Harlow: Longman

Wilson, J. J. & Wilson, J. J, 2008, *How to Teach Listening (1st Ed.)*, Harlow: Pearson Longman

### *Reading skills*

Grellet, F, 1981, *Developing Reading Skills*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Nuttall, C., 1996, *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*, Oxford: Heinemann English Language Teaching

Wallace, C, 1992, *Reading*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

### *Speaking skills*

Brown, G. & Yule, G, 1983, *Teaching the Spoken Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bygate, M, 1987, *Speaking*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

### *Writing skills*

Harmer, J, 2004, *How to Teach Writing*, Harlow: Longman

Hedge, T, 2005, *Writing*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Tribble C, 1997, *Writing*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

A fuller list is on the site at

[www.eltoncourse.com/training/skillsreference.html](http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/skillsreference.html) and you may have other resources to hand.

# CELTA written assignments

## *The mechanics*

### *Referencing*

You will need to make sure that the in-text referencing and the bibliography follow a standard convention.

Briefly:

#### **For in-text references**

##### ***Books and articles***

At every point in the text where there is a reference, include the author's surname and the year of publication with page numbers if you are quoting specific words – for example,

*In his survey of the social habits of CELTA tutors, Bloggs (1998) refuted that ...*

or

*In his survey of the social habits of CELTA tutors, Bloggs (1998: 19) states that, "I can assert without fear of successful contradiction that ..."*

Make sure that it is 100% clear where your writing stops and a quotation begins, either by using inverted commas or indenting the citation etc.

##### ***Websites***

You may not know the author's name or date (but give them as above if you do) so this is acceptable:

*It has been suggested (Wikipedia (2013)) that ...*

#### **For the bibliography**

For ease of access, you may like to divide your bibliography into Books and Articles, Teaching Materials and Electronic resources.

##### ***Books***

List references in alphabetical order by the surname of the first author. If the author is unknown you should use "Anon"

For up to three authors include all names; if there are more than three, give the first author's surname and initials followed by *et al.*

Provide, in this order and format:

Author surname/s and initial/s + ed. or eds. (if editor/s), Year of publication, *Title in italics*, Edition (if not the first edition) as ordinal number + ed., Place of publication: Publisher

For example:

*Jones, D., ed., 1995, My Teaching and Other Fiascos, 5th ed., London: Concourse publications*

##### ***Articles***

Include also: full journal title, volume number (issue number) and page numbers, for example,

*Bloggs, T., 1997, Developing fluency through ferret keeping, English Language Teaching Journal, 41, 3 pp. 18-83*

##### ***Electronic resources***

E-journals – include full URL and date of access, for example:

Bloggs T.A., Brown G.C., 2012, *Spoken English in Weston super Mare*, in The Wandering Linguist [online], p. 105. Available from: <http://www.wanderling.com/1111> [Accessed 23/08/2004]

##### ***Websites***

Supply author/s or corporate body, date of publication / last update or copyright date, available from: URL [Accessed date], for example:

*eltconcourse.com, How to write a CELTA Background Essay, available from: <http://www.eltconcourse.com/this page> [accessed 02/11/2014]*

or:

Bloggs, T., (no date), *Ideas for a Creating a Happy Classroom*, available from <http://eltconcourse.com/training/happiness.pdf> [Accessed 03/07/2014]

### Avoiding accusations of plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of fraud. It can be defined as presenting someone else's work, thoughts or words as if they were yours. Downloading and using unacknowledged material from the internet is included, of course.

- a. Never be afraid to show that you have accessed a range of other people's work – nobody is expecting you to originate all the ideas and information in your work.
- b. Read your assignments and check whether everything that is not **entirely** in your own words or from your own resources has been acknowledged.
- c. Make sure that you include in your bibliography anything you refer to in the text and exclude any reading to which you do not make explicit reference. This includes materials that you put in appendices and use in lessons and plans, by the way.
- d. Don't be tempted to think that if you have changed a few words from a source you have read that you don't need to acknowledge it – you do.
- e. If in any doubt – reference it.

### Latin abbreviations

Using the following is conventional but unimpressive if used wrongly.

- i.e.* means *that is*, being the English abbreviation of the Latin *id est*. It should not be confused with *e.g.*
- e.g.* means *for example*, and is the abbreviation of the Latin *exempli gratia*.
- cf.* means *compare with* or *consult*, being short for *conferre*. In Latin, it was an invitation to the reader to consult an alternative source to compare with what is being said. In English, it usually simply means *compare*.
- et al.* means *and others* and comes from the Latin *et alia oret alii*. Use it after the first author when there are more than three authors.
- viz.* is the usual abbreviation for *videlicet* which means *namely* or *that is to say*. It should not be confused with *i.e.*
- q.v.* stands for *quod vide*, which means *which see* and refers to a term that should be looked up elsewhere in a document. It is often used for cross referencing.
- ibid.* stands for *ibidem*, *in the same place* and is used in citations to refer to the immediately preceding citation.
- op. cit.* stands for *opere citato*, *in the work cited*. It is used to refer to any previously cited work, not just the last one.
- pace* means something like *With all due respect to* and is used by authors to show respect for the holder of a view with which they disagree (often disrespectfully).
- passim* means very approximately *throughout* or *frequently* and refers to an idea or concept that occurs in many places in a cited work so a page reference is inappropriate.

## Writing the assignments

There are four assignments on most CELTA courses although some centres may combine two assignments into one longer one. On [eltconcourse.com](http://eltconcourse.com), you will find much more detail about what to include and how to write each assignment. Here, the focus is on the structure and style of all the assignment in a rather general way.

### Style

This is academic writing so you need to maintain a certain formality.

- Avoid non-standard abbreviations, contractions and so on.
  - So, don't use *pron.* when you mean *pronunciation*, *vocab.* when you mean *vocabulary* (and may mean *lexis*), *aren't* when *are not* is better and so on.
- Do not use slang or overly colloquial language.
  - So, don't write *mess up* when *confuse* or *disorder* are preferable and so on.
- Avoid the use of meaningless adjectives such as *nice*, *lovely* and so on. They carry no sense so consider what you really mean: *enjoyable*, *helpful*, *effective* etc.
- Use the first person only when you are referring directly to your own experience. If you want to state your opinion, hedge it with something like, *It can, however be argued that ...*
- Use subheadings which relate explicitly to the following text.
- Use bullet points and tables sparingly and not as a substitute for connected prose. Lists and tables are helpful but you must discuss their content.

### Content

Each CELTA centre sets its own assignments so there's no attempt here to tell you what to write (sorry) but only how to set it out and make it clear and coherent.

Your assignment should be between 750 and 1000 words long.

#### Part 1: Introduction

The introduction needs to set out exactly what the title means to you.

Keep it short and to the point.

#### Part 2: The facts

This means what it says so it takes the form of an information report and follows this structure:

##### **Make a general statement identifying the topic**

Focus on the learner: *This class is at B1 level and hoping to take an IELTS examination*

Focus on systems: *English uses a range of forms to talk about the future. Here I focus only on ...*

Focus on skills: *Listening is a receptive skill, like reading, but requires specific subskills.*

Focus on lessons from the classroom: *I have identified four areas of my practice to focus on in this assignment.*

##### **Description**

Make sure in this section that you use proper subheadings and paragraphs or the assignment will be hard to follow.

Focus on the learner: Describe the learner(s) area by area

Focus on systems: Describe the form, meaning and use of the language structure

Focus on skills: Describe what people must be able to do to read, listen, write or speak in the topic area

Focus on lessons from the classroom: Describe (honestly) where your teaching is strong and weak and what you intend to do about the weaknesses

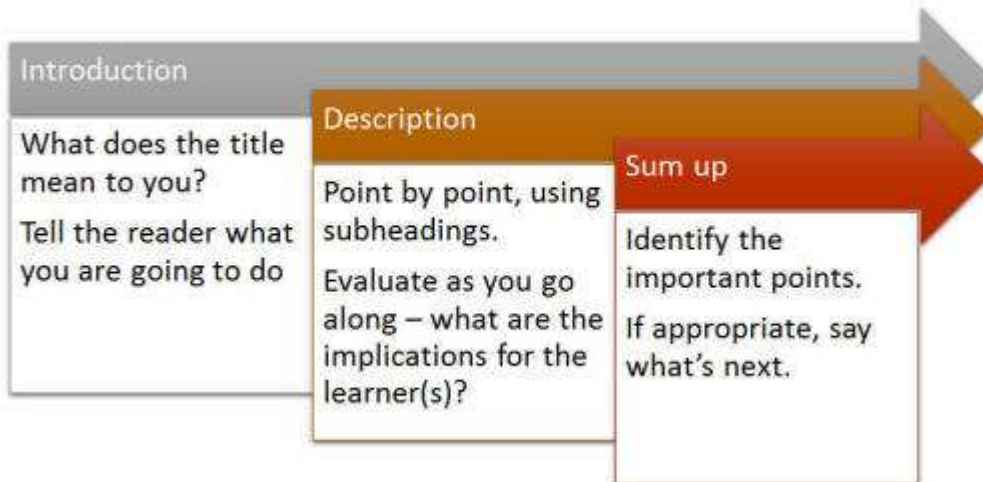
#### Part 3: Conclusion

If you need a conclusion, keep it short and to the point. Do not repeat what you have said – sum it up.

### *Proofreading*

Your assignment should be free from slips and errors. The syntax should be clear and the reader should be guided with subheadings. Make sure the subheadings accurately reflect the content of what follows.

Here's a diagrammatic way of seeing the structure of a good CELTA assignment with sections overlapping so it stays on topic. You could print a copy to have in front of you as you write.





# Teaching on CELTA

There is much more detail to be had on [eltconcourse.com](http://eltconcourse.com) with guides to many areas of teaching and behaving in the classroom.

Here the focus is on the most important areas.

Unless you are unusual and/or have a background in teaching, you are bound to be apprehensive when faced with teaching on the course, especially if it is your first lesson. That is entirely normal. It gets better but it never really goes away.

## Objectives

On most CELTA courses, especially at the beginning, you will be given the materials (or a choice of materials) that you will use in your first teaching slots. Usually, this will be a selection from a well-known course book or supplementary resource.

Later in the course, this support will be gradually withdrawn and you will be encouraged to select or design your own materials (probably both).

Now you need to ask two questions:

### What sort of lesson is this?

This is usually straightforward. The focus will be on a structure (i.e. a piece of grammar), lexis (i.e., some new vocabulary) or a skill (i.e., listening, speaking, reading or writing). Usually, for your first lesson, it will be grammar or lexis.

### What is / are the objective(s)?

This may already be given to you but the key idea is to decide what the learners will be able to do at the end of the teaching slot that they couldn't do at the beginning. If you haven't been given an objective, try to write it out in terms such as: *By the end of this, ...*

*... the learners will be better able to talk about actions or states in progress in the past using, e.g., It was raining when I arrived.*

*... the learners will be able to recognise that the topic of a paragraph is usually stated in the first sentence and know to read it with the most attention.*

*... the learners will be able to talk about a range of hobbies and say why they enjoy them.*

*... the learners will be able to carry out a simple transaction concerning booking a hotel room, a restaurant table and arranging a meeting with a colleague.*

and so on.

Make 100% sure that you focus on what the learners will be able to do, not on what you will teach. Keep this in front of you for the rest of this process and refer to it frequently.

## Planning 1: aims, objectives and background

On most CELTA courses, the tutors will provide you with an outline lesson plan in the form of a grid to fill in. Details will vary but the essentials do not.

There is a fuller guide to lesson planning on the site. Find it at:

[www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/teaching/planning.html](http://www.eltconcourse.com/training/initial/teaching/planning.html)

Here's an example, filled in for a lesson on the language of hobbies and pastimes.

Name and dates etc.	<i>Your name, the date of the lesson and the number of the teaching practice slot.</i>	
Level: A2	<i>Lesson length: 30 minutes</i>	<i>Type of lesson: Lexis (pastimes and hobbies)</i>
The learners:	<i>The class consists mostly of Spanish speakers with one Italian speaker (who also has good skills in Spanish).</i>	

	<i>The learners are mostly in their 20s (with one exception) and are cooperative and well motivated. They are particularly keen to increase their vocabulary and enjoy speaking practice so this lesson will appeal to them.</i> Add anything else you feel is relevant to the lesson and the materials here.
Lesson aims:	Main aim: <i>to increase the learners' knowledge of the lexis of pastimes and hobbies</i> Secondary aim: <i>to give speaking practice in asking for and giving information about favourite pastimes and hobbies</i>
Outcomes:	<i>By the end of the lesson, the learners will be able to talk about a range of hobbies and say why they enjoy them using acceptable pronunciation of the target items and verbs such as like, love, be fond of + -ing form (gerund).</i>
Materials:	List the materials you have been give and any others that you have prepared and attach copies to the plan you give to your tutor. Make sure you say where they come from.

Depending on your centre's idiosyncrasies, there may be other sections on the plan, such as personal aims and so on that you need to fill in.

### Analysing the targets

It is, or should be, fully obvious that you can't teach what you don't understand. This is true whether the target is a skill, a system of the language or a mixture of both.

Here are some ideas about where to look and what to look for.

### For a systems lesson

In a lesson of this sort, you will probably be looking at a grammar point and/or lexis. In the example we have used above, the lexis will include items referring to pastimes and hobbies such as *cinema, film, chess, crosswords, bird watching, reading, judo, sport* etc. and the grammar will focus on, e.g., the present simple tense followed by the *-ing* form (here a gerund, arguably) in sentences such as *I like going fishing, I enjoy windsurfing, I love playing tennis, I'm really fond of reading history* etc.

Grammar and structure: Make sure, if you are given a section of a course book to teach, that you have looked carefully at what it says in the teacher's book and have consulted a grammar book, or ELT Concourse, for an understanding of the language form.

Lexis: Consider how you will explain the lexis, its word class and its pronunciation. Look, too, at collocation (words which routinely occur together) and make sure you focus on, e.g., *go + fishing, do + judo, play + chess* etc.

### For a skills lesson

You need to understand the basics of the skill you are teaching in general as well as knowing what the subskill is. For more help here, go to the guides to understanding and teaching the skills in the initial plus training section of the site. It's at:

[www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/indexes/skillsindex\\_ip.html](http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/indexes/skillsindex_ip.html)

### Remember:

- you can neither plan nor teach a lesson on what you don't understand
- your students will quickly notice if you are unclear or unsure and respond negatively to your teaching

## Planning 2: procedures and lesson shape

Most CELTA courses will not provide you with a stage-by-stage set of procedures to follow, although many will suggest something, especially at the beginning.

How you get from the materials to the objectives is, therefore, mostly up to you.

At this stage in your training, you don't need to be too innovative and exciting in terms of the procedures but you do need an overall shape for your lesson.

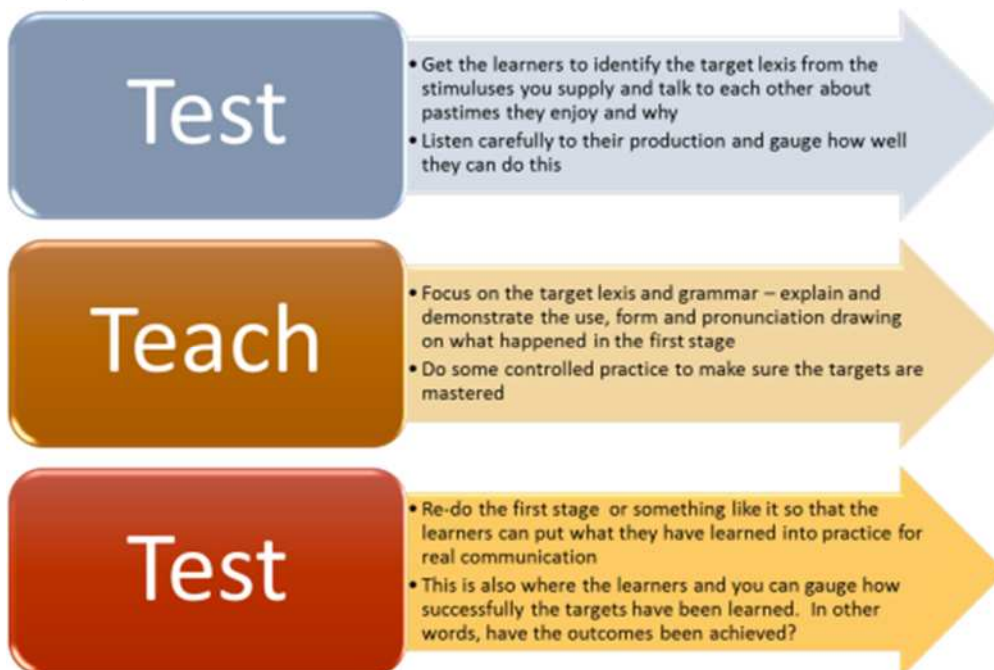
You can take two routes:

**Route 1: Present, Practise, Produce**

This is the most familiar and popular shape to a lesson so is probably the preferred option, particularly for your first teaching slot. It looks like this:

**Route 2: Test, Teach, Test**

This is slightly less common but useful especially when you are not sure of the learners' abilities in the target area(s). It looks like this:



There is a fuller guide to structuring lessons on the site that you might like to consult. It's at: [www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/structurelessons.html](http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/structurelessons.html)

### Planning 3: The nuts and bolts – tasks and activities

This is not the time to cover all the possible types of tasks and activities you can insert into the lesson to bridge the gap between the materials and the objectives they are used to achieve.

At the beginning, most CELTA courses will provide you with a stage-by-stage set of procedures to follow, but this support will gradually be withdrawn as you become more familiar with the possibilities and the purposes of tasks and activities.

There are two guides on the site that are particularly helpful in selecting and designing tasks and activities when planning a lesson.

1. The guide to activity types. This guide covers the concepts of three kinds of activity:
  - awareness-raising activities (to help learners notice language and be aware of skills)
  - skills-getting activities (when people learn to do something)
  - skills-using activities (when people apply what they have learned)

Find this guide at:

[www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/activitytypes.html](http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/activitytypes.html)

2. The guide to task types focuses on specific task types and covers, with examples:
  - matching tasks (definitions to words, times to tenses and so on)
  - gap-fill tasks (getting learners \_\_\_\_\_ fill in gaps \_\_\_\_\_ texts)
  - role-play tasks (where you simulate real-life language use)
  - skeleton tasks (where learners complete texts from clues)
  - listing and prioritising tasks (where learners activate what they know about something)
  - discussion and debate tasks (where learners apply their language skills)
  - transformation and transfer tasks (where learners change language from one form to another or convert a diagram to language or *vice versa*)
  - information and information-gap tasks (where learners are forced to communicate because they have different parts of a jigsaw of information)

Find this guide at:

<http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/tasktypes.html>

Following those two guides carefully at the start of a CELTA course will pay dividends because they help you to understand what classroom tasks are for and how to select and design them to meet objectives.

### Teaching the lesson

Here you are on your own. It's your lesson and yours to deliver in the most effective way you can. Good lessons are:

- Engaging: i.e., focus on something of interest and contain motivating tasks and activities
- Challenging: i.e., giving the learners a sense that they have achieved something they couldn't have done at the beginning
- Clear: i.e., the learners will know what they have learned, understood the points and have a record to take away

Keep these three points in mind as you plan and teach.

Whichever structure you have settled on for your lesson, the following will apply.

#### Don't be a stranger

Smile, be approachable and start with something about yourself. Make sure the learners know your name, where you come from and something personally relevant to the lesson. What are **your** favourite hobbies and pastimes?

#### Be clear

Make sure you use language which is comprehensible for these learners as well as being concise and clear when you explain and give instructions. Check that you have been understood.

Do not be tempted to think that pidgin English is easier to understand than natural (though suitably slower) production. It isn't:

*What do you enjoy doing at the weekends?*

is clearer and provides a better model than:

*What you like ... weekends ... what you do?*

For more, see the guide to being clear on the site at:

[www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/beingclear.html](http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/beingclear.html)

### Be orderly

All lessons need some form of introduction so that the learners are aware of the topic and what they will achieve. An introduction serves two purposes:

- a) it allows the students to engage with what will follow and use their own resources to help in achieving the objectives.
- b) it does something called **activating a schema** (plural *schemata*) which means that the learners are able to draw on their knowledge of the world to understand the language. In our example, all the learners will be aware of what things like *chess, judo, windsurfing* etc. are (but they may not know how to say them in English) and all the learners will be familiar with the idea of expressing to others what they like and don't like.

You planned carefully bearing in mind the need to be logical and purposeful in what you do. Don't suddenly depart from the plan and bring in confusing and unnecessary stages. Each stage should build on what came before.

Equally, if something is taking longer because the learners need a bit more time to get it right, do not be afraid to allow that time. If it's important, then the next stage will depend on it.

### Keep your eye on the clock

Nobody expects your timing to be perfect at this stage of the course (or, probably, ever) but don't allow the time to slip by when you should be getting on to the next stage.

Be firm, loud and assertive about stopping people or time limiting tasks by saying, e.g.:

*OK! That's fine. Please stop now.*

*Right! Stop and we'll move on now.*

### Group learners appropriately

There is a guide to how to do that on the site which you can access here:

[www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/grouping.html](http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/grouping.html)

Never be afraid to take the time to make sure that the way people are sitting or standing helps rather than hinders them. Sitting three or four in a row, for example, does not allow people to discuss anything or work together on a task.

### Forget the notes

There is a temptation for all teachers when they are being observed to rely on a blow-by-blow lesson plan to which they can refer as the lesson goes on.

Most people will have a set of brief notes (not the full plan) available as a reassurance. Try not to need it.

There are five good reasons for avoiding this:

1. It distracts you.
2. It encumbers you with a piece of paper in your hand or it means you have to keep returning to your desk / table to check the notes.
3. It gives the impression that you are reading from a script and that reduces your learners' confidence. Learners expect their teachers to be knowledgeable and constantly referring to notes creates a credibility gap.
4. It implies that you haven't properly prepared and thought through the plan.

5. While you are checking your lesson plan notes, you lose contact with the class and you can't see what's happening.

You need to learn to think of your lesson as a narrative and be able to remember exactly what to do and when to do it. Here's how to do that by visualising the lesson:

1. Sit down with your plan and read through the procedure. Then put it out of sight and see if you can recite the stages of the lesson and what happens at each stage. Think of it as a narrative rather than a set of stages and it'll be easier to recall the sequence of events.
2. If you can't, read and re-read the procedure until you can do this easily.
3. Now, shut your eyes and imagine what you will say. Think about:
  - how you will begin
  - how you will set the scene
  - how you will present your target
  - how you will start the first activity
  - how you will stop the activity
  - how you will get and give feedback
  - how you will signal that activities are finished and you are moving on
4. Now, find somewhere comfortable to sit or lie and, with your eyes closed, visualise the whole lesson from start to finish. In particular, focus on:
  - what you will say
  - where you will be in the room
  - what you will be doing
  - what the learners will be doing

### *Being observed and assessed and observing others*

In most jobs, people are observed all the time. If you go into a shop, you are observing the behaviour of the person who serves you, if you take a cab or a bus, you are observing the driver's skill, if you are reporting a crime or being arrested, you are observing the police officer's reactions and so on.

Teaching on a training course is slightly different in that you are being observed (by your students and peers) but are also being assessed (by the tutors).

It is easy to say this but the most important thing to remember is that your focus should be on the learners, not yourself or your observers. Try to ignore them and, when you are observing colleagues, make sure you are immobile, silent and fully ignorable yourself.

Avoid, whenever possible, making eye contact with anyone in the room except the learners. They are the most important people.

### *Dealing with feedback*

Feedback is, of course, valuable but some comments are more valuable than others. Don't simply believe what you hear, especially from your peers, but think critically about what has been said.

#### **Before the feedback**

Make sure you have thought carefully about the teaching you did considering both the good and the bad points and the reasons for them. **What effect did these issues have on the learning that took place?**

#### **During feedback**

Listen and take notes but, at this stage, do not focus on rebutting any criticisms. In other words, do not be thinking, *Yes, but ...*, but rather, *OK. That's a point worth thinking about.*

#### **After feedback and before you teach again**

Re-write your notes and prioritise what you see as the most important strengths and weaknesses. Address the weaknesses and build on the strengths.



## More help – the links from this handbook to [www.eltoncourse.com](http://www.eltoncourse.com)

Here are the links to all the guides mentioned in this handbook – where they go and what you will find when you get there.

Test yourself on this Handbook	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/celta/handbook_quiz.htm">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/celta/handbook_quiz.htm</a>
Activities in the classroom	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/activitytypes.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/activitytypes.html</a>
Basic training course in ELT	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/courses/basic/introductionbasic.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/courses/basic/introductionbasic.html</a>
Being clear	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/beingclear.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/beingclear.html</a>
CELTA index	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/celta/celtaindex.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/celta/celtaindex.html</a>
CELTA syllabus	<a href="http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/21816-celta-syllbus.pdf">www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/21816-celta-syllbus.pdf</a>
Grammar references	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/grammarreference.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/grammarreference.html</a>
Grouping learners	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/grouping.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/grouping.html</a>
Language analysis course	<a href="http://http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/courses/lacourse/language_analysis_course_index.html">http://http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/courses/lacourse/language_analysis_course_index.html</a>
Learning – how it happens	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/learning.html">http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/learning.html</a>
Materials index	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/teachers/materialsindex.html">www.eltoncourse.com/teachers/materialsindex.html</a>
Teaching on CELTA	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/celta/syllabuscelta/syllabustopic5.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/celta/syllabuscelta/syllabustopic5.html</a>
Methodology – an overview	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/methodology.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/methodology.html</a>
Methodology index	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/indexes_ip/backgroundandmethodologyindex_ip.html">http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/indexes_ip/backgroundandmethodologyindex_ip.html</a>
Planning help	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/planning.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/planning.html</a>
Skills index	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/indexes_ip/skillsindex_ip.html">http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/indexes_ip/skillsindex_ip.html</a>
Skills references	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/skillsreference.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/skillsreference.html</a>
Structuring lessons	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/structurelessons.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/structurelessons.html</a>
Tasks in the classroom	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/tasktypes.html">http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/teaching/tasktypes.html</a>
Training index – initial plus	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/initialindex.html">www.eltoncourse.com/training/initial/initialindex.html</a>
In-service training index	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/in-service/in-serviceindex.html">http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/in-service/in-serviceindex.html</a>
The Bridge	<a href="http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/bridge/bridge_index.html">http://www.eltoncourse.com/training/bridge/bridge_index.html</a>