

TKT: Module 1 – Teaching techniques

Overview: These practice materials by Russell Whitehead are designed to help with the Module 1 exam, in particular the 'Background to language teaching' section. In these materials you will think about different approaches to teaching and the effect these approaches have on the techniques you use in your teaching.

Part of Exam: Module 1 (Background to language teaching): Types of activities and tasks for language skills development

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student

Time: 30–60 mins



Think about:

What teaching approaches do you know about? What difference do you think a particular teaching approach makes to how teachers do things in the classroom?

Notes for teacher trainers

If possible, provide some short demonstration lessons, as a way of highlighting the significance of the difference between teaching approaches.

If you can provide a mix of coursebooks and other learning materials, then groups can discuss them in terms of the teaching approaches they seem to represent.

Give the same teaching point to different groups, with each group being appointed a different teaching approach. They should plan, and then demonstrate, a mini-lesson according to that approach.

Teacher's notes

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Stage 1: Considering

- a)
 - 1. e
 - 2. f
 - 3. d
 - 4. g
 - 5. c
 - 6. a
 - 7. h
 - 8. b
- b) *Trainee's own answers*
- c) *Trainee's own answers*

Stage 2: Experimenting

- d)
 - 1. A – *The three main phases of PPP are listed here.*
 - 2. C – *The 'collocations and chunks' are the lexical groupings that this approach is based on.*
 - 3. B – *This process of the students devising the rules from the evidence provided is typical of the Guided Discovery Approach.*

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**Think about:**

Think about one of your classes. Which factors influence the approach(es) you use with this class? (For example, their level/age/how much time is available/number of students in the class, etc.)

Stage 1: Considering**a) Match the names of these teaching approaches (1–8) with their descriptions (a–h).**

1. Guided Discovery
 2. Test-Teach-Test
 3. Grammar Translation
 4. Lexical Approach
 5. Total Physical Response (TPR)
 6. Task-based Learning (TBL)
 7. Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP)
 8. Communicative Approach
- a) This approach focuses on getting students to perform activities that are tasks with outcomes of their own, and then afterwards the teacher and the students explore aspects of language use that have come up during the activities.
 - b) This is a way of teaching that concentrates on the idea of communicating through language rather than learning rules and forms. It overlaps with other approaches on the list.
 - c) This approach, often used more with beginners, is based on the teacher presenting language as instructions for things the students have to do physically.
 - d) This way of teaching is based on getting students to translate words and verb forms into their L1 and often focuses particularly on reading and writing activities.
 - e) This approach for teaching means that the teacher provides students with examples – texts, recordings, etc – of the target language and gets students to work out the rules together for themselves.
 - f) This approach to teaching usually focuses on new language. There is a first assessment, which establishes some kind of gap or need in the students' knowledge. Then the teacher presents new language, and finally gives a second assessment, which measures the success of the learning of the new language.
 - g) This way of teaching is focused on the way words and phrases (rather than verb tenses, etc) are grouped together and encourages students to build their knowledge of the language in this way.
 - h) An approach mainly used for teaching new language. The teacher provides input of new language and then gets students to practice this language, first in a controlled way and then more freely.

Now check your answers.

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- b) Looking through the list in a) above, how many of the approaches seem familiar to you? Do any of them seem strange? If possible, ask colleagues or friends what experience they have of any of the approaches, not only in language learning, but in other subjects too.
- c) Look at the common classroom activities below. They can all be used in more than one way. What approaches could they be included in? How would they be used? Try to think of several different uses for each one.
- designing an advertisement
 - checking the key in pairs
 - talking about plans for the weekend
 - planning a new sports centre
 - answering multiple questions about a reading text
 - completing a crossword
 - performing tasks such as opening and closing books, standing up and sitting down
 - comparing answers to a grammar exercise
 - looking up new words in a dictionary
- d) Now try this part of a sample TKT exam task. For questions 1–3, match the class activities with the teaching approaches listed A–D. There is one extra option that you do not need to use.

Teaching approaches:

- A Presentation, Practice and Production
- B Guided Discovery
- C Lexical Approach
- D Test-Teach-Test

Class activities:

- 1 I introduced a new verb pattern to the students by saying sentences containing the pattern and showing them a series of photographs. Then I got them to work in pairs and complete written sentences containing the pattern. Finally, I got them to discuss similar photographs in groups and I monitored how accurately they used the pattern.
- 2 Firstly, students read a text about gap year travelling, which I took from an English Sunday newspaper's website. We identified and discussed a number of typical collocations and chunks, and I gave them various practice activities based on this new language.
- 3 I gave the students some short texts containing lots of examples of relative pronouns. They worked in pairs to develop sets of rules about the form and meaning of relative pronouns and clauses.

Now check your answers.



Don't forget:

The best approach is probably an intelligent 'pick and mix'.

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Stage 3: Reflecting

In these materials you have looked, briefly, at a number of different teaching approaches. In the TKT exam, you may have questions similar to the one here in d). The important thing for your work as a teacher is not the names of the teaching approaches, but the ideas and the actions.

Everything you do as a teacher has a reason. Part of the reason is the teaching approach you use. You probably use a mixture of approaches – some TPR with low levels, for example, a little Grammar Translation with complex texts for high level students, and a combination of PPP and TBL quite a lot of the time.

The reason for using a technique depends on the approach being applied. For example: during groupwork, you monitor your students. Now, if this is part of a PPP lesson, then you will be checking for accuracy in a freer practice phase. However, if this is a TBL lesson, then your monitoring might be more diagnostic – you are checking to see what teaching you will need to provide.

**Think about:**

There are different approaches to many activities – cookery, dance, football, architecture, for example. The way of preparing lunch and what that lunch contains may be different for different people around the world – or even in next door houses.

Set yourself a target

Learn more about some teaching approaches. Choose two which seem most interesting to you.

Suggestion for independent learning

Research these teaching methods carefully. Start with onestopenglish – the Methodology section includes an area on teaching techniques, where you can find informative articles. Use a search engine to find other web-based information. Use the library at your school or college if possible. Ask your trainer for suggestions. Talk to colleagues about what they know.

Read more on the topic. For example, here are some general articles on teaching approaches on onestopenglish:

www.onestopenglish.com/children/games-and-topics/topic-bank/general-topics/general-topics-teaching-approaches/153710.article

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/teaching-approaches/teaching-approaches-functional-approaches-in-efl/-esl/146492.article

Here are some articles on specific teaching approaches on onestopenglish:

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-tips/ask-the-experts/methodology-questions/methodology-the-grammar-translation-method/146406.article

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/teaching-approaches/teaching-approaches-the-grammar-translation-method/146493.article

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/teaching-approaches/teaching-approaches-translation-as-a-language-learning-tool/146504.article

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www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/grammar-vocabulary-and-skills/towards-a-new-methodology/155666.article

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/teaching-approaches/teaching-approaches-total-physical-response/146503.article

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-tips/ask-the-experts/methodology-questions/methodology-task-based-learning/146376.article

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/teaching-approaches/teaching-approaches-task-based-learning/146502.article

www.onestopenglish.com/grammar/grammar-teaching/the-discovery-technique/

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-articles/teaching-approaches/teaching-approaches-the-communicative-classroom/146489.article

www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/teaching-tips/ask-the-experts/methodology-questions/methodology-feedback-in-communicative-classrooms/146398.article