

Progress and achievement

by Adrian Doff

Level: Intermediate and above

Time: 20 minutes

Aim: – To use common expressions for talking about progress, stages and schedules.
– To say what progress you and other people are making.
– To say what you have achieved.

There are three ways of using this worksheet:

- Give the worksheet to students to work through independently. Then in the next lesson go through the exercises and deal with any points that arise.
- Use the worksheet for an active classroom lesson. The notes below give ideas for doing this.
- Do not give the worksheet out in class but use it as the basis for your own lesson, getting ideas and phrases from the students and presenting language on the board (use the notes below to help you). Then give out the worksheet at the end and ask students to do the exercises for homework.

Warm-up

Warm-up: Establishing the concept

Give out the worksheet.

Read the texts at the top of the worksheet. Establish that they are extracts from mining company reports:

1. an oil exploration company, probably drilling for oil in Russia.
2. a diamond mining company in Africa.

Worksheet

Language focus

1. **progress.** Read the examples and focus on the difference between the noun *progress* and the verb *progress*. Point out that in informal contexts we usually use the phrase *make progress* rather than the verb *progress*.

Read through the tables. Think of an example (real or invented), e.g. pay negotiations between workers and management. Use this to make it clear what the adjectives mean, e.g.:

- *They're making good progress* = everything is going well
- *They're making rapid (= quick) progress* = they will probably reach agreement very soon
- *They're making steady progress* = they are moving forward but not very fast

Ask students to tell you about a project or a piece of work they are involved in at the moment. Ask them what kind of progress they are making.

2. **stages and schedules.** Look again at the texts at the top of the worksheet. Establish the meaning of:

- *exploration is in its final stage* (= they've nearly finished, so they hope to find diamonds soon).
- *talks are in their early stages* (= they have only just started).

Point out that:

- we usually use *stage* in the singular, except in the fixed expression *in its / their early stages*.
- we say *in its / their early stages* not *in the early stages*.

Look at the text at the top of the worksheet again and establish the meaning of *is on schedule* (= on time, progressing as planned). Read the table to establish that work can be *on schedule*, *ahead of schedule* or *behind schedule*.

Ask about work that students are doing at the moment. Ask if it is on, ahead of or behind schedule.

3. **achievement.** Read through the examples and establish that *to achieve something* means to do what you planned to do.

Give a few examples of things people in the news want or aim to do (e.g. the US wants to bring peace to the Middle East; ambulance workers want 10% more pay). Discuss whether or not they will achieve these aims.

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4. **Present continuous and present perfect tenses.** Read the examples and point out the form of the two tenses:

- Present continuous: *is / are + -ing*
- Present perfect: *have / has + past participle*

Establish that:

- we use the present continuous to say what is *going on at the moment* (= what progress we are making);
- we use the present perfect to say what is now *finished or complete* (= what we have or haven't achieved up to now).

To reinforce this idea, look at the examples on the worksheet:

- *Talks between the two companies are progressing well.* (= The talks are continuing at the moment.)
- *Are you still working on your monthly report?* (= Is this still going on? Is it your work at the moment?)
- *The two companies have reached agreement.* (= The talks have now finished, they have achieved what they wanted.)
- *Have you written your monthly report yet?* (= Is it finished? Have you achieved what you planned to do?)

Practice

1. Talk or write:

Students write sentences about their work or projects they are involved in. Then ask them to read out what they have written.

Alternative: Ask students to think about current work or projects. Give them a few moments to think what to say and possibly make a few notes. Then ask them in turn to tell you about it.

2. Exercises:

Let students do the exercise in pairs. Then go through it together.

Expected answers:

- At the moment, the new airport building is just at the planning stage.
 - Negotiations with Intel are still in their early stages.
 - Work on the engine is progressing well / making good progress.
 - Unfortunately, work on the new factory is behind schedule.
 - Her English still isn't very fluent, but she's making steady progress.
 - We've opened ten new outlets this year, so we've achieved [*or met*] our objectives.

Other language areas you could explore:

1. aims and objectives

- *aim to, plan to, intend to*
- *aims, objectives, plans, intentions*
- *with the aim of ..., with the intention of ..., in order to ...*

2. schedules

- *work to a strict / tight / loose schedule*
- *be on / ahead of schedule; fall behind schedule*
- *schedule an event for (+ time / date)*

3. success

- *succeed in ... -ing, manage to*
- *be successful (in ...), successfully achieve ...*
- *a (complete / total / partial) success*

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BUSINESS & ESP WORKSHEET

<p>A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have completed exploration of the Arkhovsk oilfield. Drilling at Kishinov is progressing well, and is on schedule. 	<p>excerpts from company reports</p>	<p>B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploration of the Dimbi diamond field is now in its final stage. Talks with the Angolan government are still in their early stages, but are making good progress. 
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progress

Progress as noun and a verb looks the same but is pronounced differently:

Noun: progress	Talks with the government are making good progress .
Verb: progress	Talks with the government are progressing well .

make	steady good rapid excellent	progress	make	limited slow no	progress
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We often say *make progress with* something:

I'm **making good progress with** my report, so it should be ready by Friday.

stages and schedules

The project is:

in its	initial final	stage	at the	planning design development	stage	on ahead of behind	schedule
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We can also say:

The project is still **in its early stages**. (= It has just begun)

achievement

These verbs express the idea of *achievement*:

- finish** I need to **finish** my report by the weekend.
- complete** They have **completed** their survey of the city centre. (= it is complete, finished)
- achieve** We hope to **achieve our objectives** for 2007. (= do what we planned to do)
- reach** We have now **reached agreement** with the Angolan government. (= we have got so far)
- meet** They easily **met their target** of five million customers in the first year.

present continuous and present perfect tenses

To talk about progress, we often use the *present continuous tense* (to say what is happening at the moment):


Talks between the two companies **are progressing well**.

Are you still working on your monthly report?

To talk about achievements, we often use the present perfect tense (to say what we have done so far):

The two companies **have reached** agreement.

Have you written your monthly report yet?

Talk or write 

Think about your own work. Are you making good progress? What stage are you at? What have you achieved? Write a few sentences, using expressions from this worksheet.

Exercise

Rewrite each sentence, using the word in brackets. Make any necessary changes.

- At the moment, the new airport building is still being planned. (**stage**)
- Negotiations with Intel have only just started. (**early stages**)
- Work on the engine is going very well. (**progress**)
- Unfortunately, work on the new factory is slower than we expected. (**schedule**)
- Her English still isn't very fluent, but she's getting better all the time. (**steady progress**)
- We've opened ten new outlets this year, so we've done what we wanted to do. (**objectives**)