

# Introduction

Welcome to your Course in **Everyday English!**

This Course is designed for people who are familiar with English but who would like to improve their knowledge of it. This may be because you have an examination, for example GCSE or the Cambridge First Certificate in English, that you need to pass, or possibly because you are looking for a job requiring good spoken and written English. It may even be you just want to improve your English so you can speak and write more easily. Possibly you are interested in Creative Writing. To improve your English will be the best way to write the stories and poems you can only dream of now...

Speaking and writing well are becoming increasingly difficult these days, as more and more we are encouraged to depend on listening in a passive state. Television is on most of the day in some shape or form which certainly does not encourage reading, and books especially those that are popular will automatically go onto audio tape or CD on publication. So it is all too easy for one to exist without talking or reading anything other than the basic minimum.

However there are times when to have a good knowledge of your language becomes important. You may have to write a letter of application for a job, and even though your computer has spell checks, it cannot yet write your letter for you. You may have to face an interview where you have to present yourself in a clear and convincing manner. Good clear spoken English will be essential here, so you can appear to the best advantage. To write and speak good English can be very valuable assets at times, even though in everyday life we are not encouraged in these skills at all.



Oxford Open Learning

## The Value of English

You can take pride in your language English, which is spoken by more people in the world than any other. Even Chinese with its amazing 1,125,000,000 native speakers is beaten by English, because although *only* 350,000,000 people have English as their native language, for countless millions, including the Chinese, English will be the second or official language!

But English is by no means easy! Its spelling defies description, and its pronunciation often appears to have neither rhyme nor reason. It is quite puzzling how many people speak English when you consider how difficult and contradictory it is.

This Course is intended to deal with these problems. We will look at the basic shape and meaning of English, studying everyday words, and seeing how they sound and are spelt and what they mean. We will show that although English spelling is in some ways a nightmare, there *are* patterns than can be learnt. So that words are not just unexplained mysteries, but with an overall sense and meaning.

Soon writing and spelling will improve, and English instead of being a problem will become a real pleasure. The greatest delight you will get from improving your English will be to speak and write with real confidence.

## The Course

This Course has 25 lessons, 2 Progress Tests (self-assessment) and 6 Tutor Marked Assignments. Within each lesson there are a number of Activities, that is to say, Exercises practising what has been taught; at the end of each lesson is a Key, the solution to the Activities. There are always problems, so if you don't understand any of the solutions, or wish to have more information on a particular point, you can get in touch with your Tutor or consult your Student Adviser; they will be very happy to answer any queries.

This course is designed for a broad range of students with different expectations and backgrounds. There is enough here for you to skip over the sections which do not correspond to your own personal needs and focus on those which are better suited to enhancing your own language skills.

# Programme of Lessons

## Module One: An Introduction to English

Module One is a set of (mostly) short lessons to get you started. More advanced students may be able to skip some or all of this section.

### Lesson One: Spelling

The spelling of regular and irregular words:

This is shown and explained by means of the Course's *CD* which gives you examples of the regular and irregular sounds of English words, these arranged in groups so you can see why there are particular spellings and particular sounds.

To assist with getting used to English spelling, there is an invaluable little book you can easily order from any good bookshop:

*Handling Spelling* by John Davis (Stanley Thornes).

### Lesson Two: What Makes English Tick...

In this Lesson, you will be shown how sentences are formed, and the different *parts of speech*, the name given to the words that make up our language.

The first *part of speech* we shall deal with is the *noun*, or *name* one of the most important of all the *parts of speech*, as without *nouns*, you cannot say anything...

After that, we shall talk about the equally important *part of speech*, the *verb*, which is often taught as a *doing word*... It is the verb that expresses what the *noun* does, and without *verbs* existence would be very still indeed, as none of the unfortunate *nouns* could do anything...

*Nouns*, on the whole are pretty straightforward in English, as they are straightforward names; the only difficulty about them as with all English is the spelling. But one can get used to that... *Verbs* however are very awkward as they are always changing, according to *who* is doing the action, and of course *when*... You will be given sentences showing you different examples of *verbs regular* and *irregular*.

Most *verbs* are *regular*, that is they go according to a fixed pattern that can be learnt. *Irregular verbs* are all laws unto themselves, some more so than others and these have to be approached one and a time... Fortunately there are not an endless number of *irregular verbs* or *verbs generally*, and as you are practising them all the time, this makes you used to them and learn them. In fact that is the secret of learning English; you are using the same words time after time, and it is this use that teaches you more than anything else. So really the secret of becoming accustomed to our contradictory and often confusing language, and one has to say it again, is *practice, practice, practice!*

### Lesson Three: Replacing and Describing Nouns

If language consisted only of *nouns* to name things, life would get pretty boring, as you would find yourself repeating yourself time and time again. To avoid this, we have words that replace *nouns*, called *pronouns*, like *he, she, it, they...* Once you have made clear what you are talking or writing about, you can replace the *noun* by a *pronoun*, and this will prevent your language from becoming monotonous. Examples of *pronouns* will be given in this Lesson.

And to add colour to *nouns* we have those *describing words* called *adjectives*. Without *adjectives* we would have only our imaginations to rely on to see what *nouns* looked like. *Adjectives* give us more information about what we are talking about.

### TMA A

After this Lesson you will have your first **Tutor Marked Assignment: TMA A**. This will contain exercises on all that has been covered so far, and there is no *Key*, as you will be sending your exercises to your Tutor... He or she will mark your work, and return it with comments and advice, and will contact you by phone to see if you have any problems that can be sorted out.

Part of this exercise will involve use of your CD especially for spelling in the form of dictation of words and sentences, and there will be other exercises too.

## Lesson Four: Negatives and Questions

The word 'do' means a lot in English. It can mean just the action of 'doing', but it can also be used in forming questions: e.g.

"What *do* you want?"

or *Negatives*: e.g.

"I *do* not want"

You will have examples of these in this Lesson.

You will also have what are called Possessive Adjectives; words showing Possession: *my, your, his, her, our, your* (plural) *their*.

There are also Possessive Pronouns: these words also show Possession but instead of describing nouns, replace nouns: i.e. *mine, yours, his, hers, ours, yours, theirs*.

## Lesson Five: Going On Doing and Where...

This lesson shows

- a) The Continuous Form of any *Action*. In English this ends: *ing*,
- b) Words to describe *where*; these are called *Prepositions*; you have such examples as: *in, on, under...*

## Lesson Six: This, That, These, Those

The above *demonstrate* or *show things*, but if you want to *replace* the words you are *showing* you have to say: *this one, that one, but these, those*

**Progress Test 1: (self-assessment): consolidates what has been done in this Module so far.**

## Lesson Seven: Shall; Will; Who? What?

The *Future* is shown by *shall* and *will*

The *Question words*: *whose? what?* (adjective)  
*who?what?* (pronoun)

## Lesson Eight: What Would You Do?

The *Conditional* is the tense you use when you want to say what *you would do if...*

## Lesson Nine: The Past

How you express *what you did*. In English there is a vast range of forms, but in this Lesson, we have a look at how you express *single actions in the past*; that is to say, how you describe what only happened *once!*

We also study: *more than; less than, most, least....*

## Lesson Ten: What Was Happening?

We look at how you say *what was happening...* This is also a *Revision Lesson* of the whole Module.

## TMA B

**This consolidates what has been done in this Module.**

## Module Two: More Advanced Language

### Lesson Eleven: What Had Happened?

If you want say what *had* happened, you use the *Pluperfect tense*. This describes what effectively had happened *earlier*. There is also the *continuous form*, where you will say: *what had **been** happening...*

Also in this Lesson, we see how you turn an action on *yourself*:

e.g. he gave **himself** a big pay rise...

There is also *each other, one another*, and we will look at how these are used.

### Lesson Twelve: I Ought To Have Done It...

Here we shall be looking, firstly, at *ought*; then at: *could, would, and should*. The problem with these is that they have *many meanings*, and you will see examples showing how to recognize which is which...

We also have a look at *who, which, and that*, all *linking words*.

### Lesson Thirteen: What May Have Happened

If you want to describe what may have happened, you use what we call the *subjunctive*. *Definite* statements, *past*, *present*, and *future*, are known as the *indicative*.

We will also look at how you do something, as opposed to: *how you have it done to you*;

e.g. *I wash the clothes; the clothes are washed (by me)*

### Lesson Fourteen: Different Kinds of Verbs

In this Lesson, we look at some of the many kinds of verbs. These can range from those describing clear action (*I speak*) to those describing ideas (*I think*).

### Lesson Fifteen: Revision

Here the Activities will practise what has been shown up to now in this *Module* and *Module One*; (with Key as usual).

### TMA C

**This Assignment is one of general Revision of what has been covered so far in this Course.**

### Module Three: Practical English

This *Module* consists of exercises in the use of English, to include *sentence construction*, *comprehension*, *paraphrase*, and *composition*.

### Lesson Sixteen: Two Ways of Saying Things

We look at words that can be replaced by others with the *same* meaning; passages to be changed to ones with *opposite* meanings; and words to be given your own definitions. The Answers will be given in the Key. You will have pronunciation practice with your CD.

### Lesson Seventeen: Comprehension

Here you have three passages for comprehension; a Key is provided as usual.

### Lesson Eighteen: Composition

Hints are given on composition on particular topics likely to appear on a *GCSE Paper* or *First Certificate in English*. Two topics are set which you should attempt. (*A Key is given but you may need to consult your Tutor for extra guidance*).

**TMA D**                    **A Composition is set on alternative topics to be marked by your Tutor.**

### Lesson Nineteen: Listening/Writing Practice with your CD

- a) You listen to spoken passages on the CD, and answer written questions presented by the Course: *(a Key is provided but again you might like to consult your Tutor for extra guidance)*.
- b) You take part in an interview/discussion as presented on your CD and your written Course. You can answer aloud if you like for practice, but you should also write your own answers, and then check the Key to see if you are on the right lines. Again your Tutor will help you with any particular problems.

### Lesson Twenty: Listening/Writing Practice with your CD

- a) You hear a story told on your CD and you should answer questions presented by your Course.
- b) You hear another description, and you are expected to answer the Course's questions in your own words. Again the Key is available, but you may refer to your Tutor if you need help or advice.
- c) Various poems are presented and discussed.

**TMA E**                    **After you listen to the material on your CD, you write the answers down to questions presented by your Course, and send them to your Tutor.**

## Module Four: More Advanced Language (CD)

### Lesson 21: Two Interviews

You are interviewed for two jobs and have to answer questions, presented on your CD; you write down your personal details. A job description is given and you are asked why you want the job, and why you think you are suited to it. Again you check your Key to see you are answering correctly, and if there are any problems, you can consult your Tutor. You may invent your answers if you wish.

## Lesson 22: Written Language

You are presented with a written Passage that you must rewrite in a shorter form (*précis*). You answer questions on the Passage; you may look at your Key.

### Progress Test 2 (self-assessment) You have two questions:

- a) A Comprehension on the lines above
- b) A Composition on a set group of topics.

## Lesson 23: Revision

Here you will have a number of questions on what you have studied during the Course. You will have six Activities, some using your CD.

## Lesson 24: Use of your Dictionary

The dictionary is very difficult to use, and this Lesson gives you guidance especially on the particular terms.

## Lesson 25 TMA (F) Revision (with CD)

This final Lesson is intended to bring together everything you have covered in the Course; it is in three parts.

- a) *Comprehension* and *précis*; you have to answer set questions.
- b) *Composition*: a choice of topics of not more than 300 words.
- c) *Audio situation*: this will be based on your CD. You are presented with questions on the CD which you should answer of paper.
- d) *Phone*: interview/discussion. You will have a phone discussion with your Tutor on a set topic in your Course. Your Tutor will ask you questions on the phone, you answer, and later you will get a full assessment.

## Suggested Answers to Progress Tests

## Suggested Answers to Tutor-marked Assignments (not included)

Keith Minton

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