

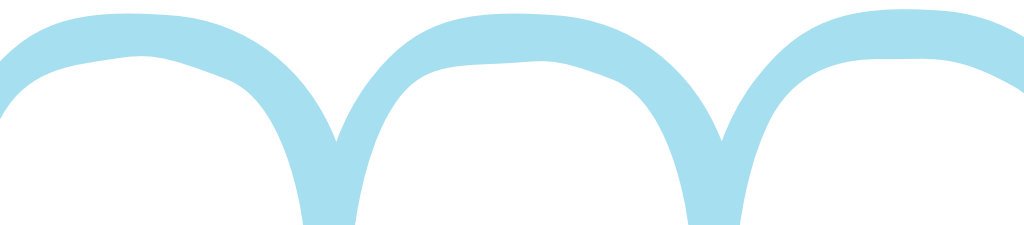
# Teacher Toolkit for Receptive Skills: Listening and Reading





# Welcome!

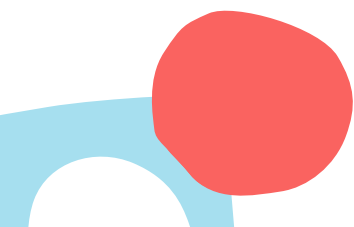
In this toolkit we are focusing on the receptive language skills. They are Oral Comprehension (listening) and Written Comprehension (reading). Receptive language skills refer to when information comes in; when it is received by the learner. Second language learners use their listening and reading skills much more frequently than their speaking and writing skills. Therefore, developing the learners' skills and abilities in listening and reading can greatly improve their language proficiency and open up new opportunities and areas of enjoyment. We hope that you will find this toolkit useful as you are planning instruction and searching for creative ways to maximize student learning. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to continuous improvement.



# Listening Skills

According to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) *Companion Volume* (2018), there are four types of listening activities that we must keep in mind when we plan instruction. It's important to provide opportunities for developing proficiency in all four different types of listening.

Listening Activity	Teaching considerations
<b>Understanding conversations and dialogues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: frequently changing topics, include incomplete sentences, include slang and/or idioms</li><li>• Value added: cultural content, real-world language, body language, learn words/phrases that sustain conversations</li></ul>
<b>Understanding a speaker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: topic specific vocabulary, more formal speech style, fewer non-verbal clues</li><li>• Value added: frequently include visual aids, transition and linking words to guide understanding, just one speaker, varying speed doesn't take away from the content</li></ul>
<b>Understanding instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: topic specific vocabulary, use of data</li><li>• Value added: real-world listening experiences, listen only for key information</li></ul>
<b>Understanding audio and video/TV</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: wide variety in pronunciation and vocabulary</li><li>• Value added: Include visual support, real-world language, include written captions, ability to replay content</li></ul>



# What are some listening activities that teachers should include to help develop proficiency?

## 1.Pre-listening activities

- **Create a context** for the listening task, give a purpose for listening, make predictions about the listening (using pictures, titles, learning goals, etc.).
- **Activate student interest** and **background knowledge** for the listening task. Connect the topic to student knowledge or if necessary, pre-teach a concept.
- **Pre-teach vocabulary.** Focus on the few words or phrases that are essential to be successful with the listening task.

## 2.Listening activities

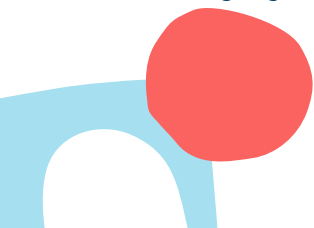
- Listen for **task completion.** Usually, tasks move from general to specific, from just the gist, to specific details.
- Listen for **“sign posts”.** These are linking words, clarifying words, emotions, etc. that aid comprehension.
- Listen for **details** of the learning goal. This might be a grammatical structure, functional words, or elements like compare/contrast language, etc.

## 3.Post-listening activities – a reaction to the content or an analysis of language

- Include **higher order thinking skills** like making connections, making inferences, and predicting.
- Follow up with a **discussion, game** or another **extension** of learning.
- Extend an **aspect of the language** that’s related to the learning goal. This might be a grammatical structure, functional words, or elements like compare/contrast language, etc

When planning your listening activities follow this process:

- **Pre-listening** (motivating, contextualizing, explaining task goal)
- **Listening for the first time** (general understanding)
- **Pair/group feedback** (interact to exchange ideas about the audio)
- **Listening for the second time** (more detailed understanding)
- **Post-listening** (for reacting to the content or focusing on features /language forms/ promotes spoken and written fluency)



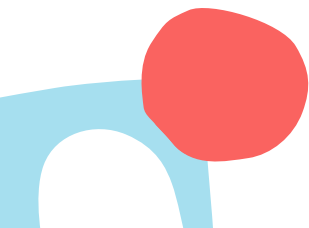
# Teaching Techniques to Develop Listening Skills

- 1. Dictation:** Read aloud a passage or a series of sentences, and have students write down what they hear. This activity helps students focus on listening carefully to accurately capture the words and sentence structures.
- 2. Gap Fill:** Provide students with a text or a dialogue with certain words or phrases missing. As they listen, students fill in the gaps with the missing information. This activity promotes listening for specific details and reinforces vocabulary and grammar structures.
- 3. Information Transfer:** Give students a diagram, chart, or map with incomplete information. Then, play an audio recording where the missing details are mentioned. Students listen and complete the diagram or chart accordingly. This activity enhances students' ability to listen for specific information and transfer it to a visual representation.
- 4. Picture Prompts:** Show students a series of pictures or images without providing any context. This can be used in a variety of ways, sequencing the events, prompting a story summary, or identifying the picture that was described. This activity improves listening comprehension and the ability to visualize and make connections.
- 5. News Summaries:** Select a news article or a news segment in the target language. Play the audio recording and ask students to summarize the main points or write a short summary of the news story. This activity develops listening skills while also fostering critical thinking and summarizing abilities.
- 6. Role-plays:** Conduct role-plays where students listen to a conversation or a dialogue and then take on the roles of the speakers to reenact the conversation. This activity allows students to practice listening comprehension, speaking, and contextual understanding.
- 7. Authentic Materials:** Use authentic audio or video materials, such as interviews, TED Talks, podcasts, or news clips. This activity exposes students to real-world language use and helps them become familiar with different accents, speeds, and registers.
- 8. Song Lyrics:** Choose songs in the target language and provide students with the lyrics. Play the song and ask students to listen and fill in the missing words in the lyrics. This activity improves listening skills while incorporating cultural aspects and promoting language rhythm and pronunciation.
- 9. Jigsaw Listening:** Divide a listening passage into several parts and give each group or student a different section. Students listen to their assigned part and then work together to reconstruct the whole passage in the correct order. This activity encourages active listening, collaboration, and the ability to piece together information.
- 10. Listening to Authentic Conversations:** Organize opportunities for students to engage in real-life conversations with native speakers or other learners of the target language. This could be through language exchange programs, conversation partners, or language cafes.



# eLearning Listening Resources (free)

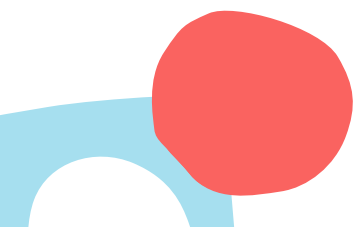
- 1. YouTube** <https://www.youtube.com> YouTube has a vast collection of videos on various topics, including language learning. You can find channels dedicated to English lessons, listening practice, podcasts, interviews, and more.
- 2. TED ED** <https://ed.ted.com> TED ED Talks feature engaging speeches by experts in different fields and suitable for the classroom.  
**TEDxTEEN** <https://tedxteen.com> Independently organized events with teen speakers. These talks are available with subtitles and cover a wide range of topics, making them excellent for improving listening comprehension.
- 3. ESL Lab** <https://www.esl-lab.com> ESL Lab offers a collection of listening activities and quizzes. You can listen to conversations, interviews, and short lectures, followed by comprehension questions to test your understanding.
- 4. British Council LearnEnglish Teens**  
<https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening> British Council's LearnEnglish Teens website has a dedicated section for listening skills development geared towards teens. It provides audio recordings, practice exercises, and quizzes at different levels to enhance listening comprehension.
- 5. Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab** <https://www.esl-lab.com> This website offers a wide range of listening exercises with accompanying comprehension questions. You can find audio recordings on various topics, including conversations, interviews, and academic lectures.
- 6. Voice of America Learning English** <https://learningenglish.voanews.com> Voice of America Learning English provides news articles and audio recordings specifically designed for English learners. The site offers slow-paced news broadcasts and pronunciation exercises.
- 7. Breaking News English** <https://breakingnewsenglish.com> Breaking News English offers news articles with accompanying audio recordings and comprehension exercises. It's a great resource for practicing listening skills while staying updated on current events.
- 8. Podcasts** (e.g., ESLPodcast, BBC Learning English Podcasts, TED Talks Audio): There are numerous free podcasts available for English learners. You can listen to podcasts focused on language learning, interviews, storytelling, news, and more, depending on your interests. Access these for free on your favorite podcast streaming service.
- 9. ELLLO** <http://www.ello.org> ELLLO provides a collection of audio recordings with transcripts and comprehension exercises. It covers a wide range of topics and includes interviews, conversations, and monologues to improve listening skills.



# Reading Skills

According to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) *Companion Volume* (2018), there are five types of reading activities that we must keep in mind when we plan instruction. It's important to provide opportunities for developing proficiency in all five different types of reading.

Reading Activity	Teaching considerations
Reading emails and letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: learning the accepted format, may include abbreviations and emoticons</li><li>• Value added: include cultural content, generally shorter and recycle patterns</li></ul>
Reading for orientation: skimming and scanning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: dense content, graphics and layout, challenging vocabulary</li><li>• Value added: Real-world applications like searching for specific data or previewing for the gist</li></ul>
Reading for information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: topic specific vocabulary, academic language, formal language, use of tables, graphs, etc.</li><li>• Value added: preparation for academic study, transfer skills to other content areas</li></ul>
Reading instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: topic specific vocabulary, dense language, need for sequential comprehension</li><li>• Value added: real-world applications</li></ul>
Reading for fun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges include: difficulty in matching correct reading level, independent activity, difficulty in finding engaging content</li><li>• Value added: develops vocabulary, language fluency and natural sentence structures</li></ul>



# What are some reading activities that teachers should include to help develop proficiency?

## 1.Pre-reading activities

- **Build or Activate background knowledge.** Make associations with the topic and pre-teach any new cultural or thematic content.
- **Preview the reading.** Use pictures, titles, sub-topics and other text features to contextual the reading.
- **Pre-teach vocabulary.** Focus on the few words or phrases that are essential to be successful at the reading task.

## 2.Reading activities

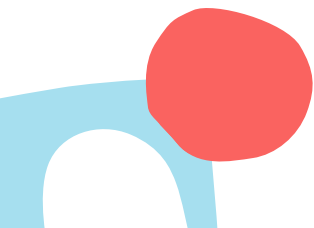
- Check **informally** for comprehension throughout the process.
- Check for **reading comprehension**. Include questions that show 3 levels of understanding: **literal, interpretive and applied**
- Include tasks that focus on **discourse markers and linguistic clues**. These are linking words, clarifying words, prefixes, word roots etc.

## 3.Post-reading activities – a reaction to the content or an analysis of language

- Include tasks that **extend the learning**. This might be summarizing, sequencing, making inferences, comparing/contrasting, problem-solving, etc.
- Follow up with a **discussion, game** or **reflection** on reading or learning.

When planning your reading activities follow the next process:

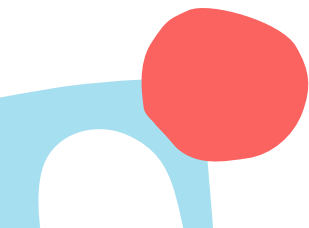
- **Pre-reading** (explaining task goal, use typographical clues, list difficulties and strategies on how to cope)
- **Reading for the first time** (to get the gist)
- **Pair/group feedback** (interact to exchange ideas about the reading)
- **Reading for the second time** (main ideas, specific information, drawing conclusions)
- **Post-reading** (for reacting to the content or focusing on features /language forms/ promotes spoken and written fluency)





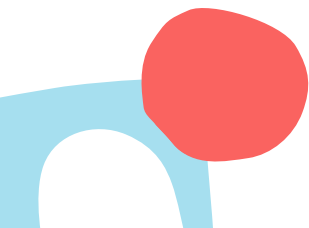
# Teaching Techniques to Develop Reading Skills

- 1. Reading Aloud:** Have students take turns reading aloud a passage or a short text. This activity helps improve pronunciation, intonation, and fluency while also developing word recognition and comprehension skills.
- 2. Shared Reading:** Read a text aloud together as a class or in small groups. Pause at regular intervals to discuss the content, ask comprehension questions, and clarify any challenging vocabulary or concepts. This activity promotes comprehension, vocabulary development, and critical thinking.
- 3. Text Annotation:** Teach students how to annotate texts by highlighting important information, underlining key points, or writing notes in the margins. This activity promotes active reading, helps students focus on important details, and improves comprehension and critical thinking skills.
- 4. Reading Response Journals:** Ask students to write short reflections or summaries of what they have read. They can also express their opinions, ask questions, or make connections to their own experiences. This activity encourages active engagement with the text and develops critical thinking and written expression skills.
- 5. Reading Circles or Book Clubs:** Divide students into small groups and assign them a specific reading passage or book. They read independently and then come together to discuss their thoughts, share insights, and ask questions. This activity promotes collaborative learning, fosters discussion skills, and encourages deeper analysis of the text.
- 6. Authentic Reading Materials:** Include authentic reading materials such as newspapers, magazines, blogs, or websites related to topics of interest to the students. Encourage independent reading outside of the classroom to expose students to different writing styles, genres, and perspectives.
- 7. Extensive Reading:** Set aside dedicated time for silent reading where students choose books, articles, or stories that match their reading level and interests. This activity improves reading fluency, vocabulary, and overall reading comprehension.
- 8. Text Reconstruction:** Provide students with a text that has been scrambled or cut into paragraphs or sentences. Students must work individually or in groups to put the text in the correct order. This activity promotes reading comprehension, sequencing skills, and understanding of cohesive devices.
- 9. Graphic Organizers:** Use graphic organizers, such as story maps, Venn diagrams, or concept maps, to help students visualize the main ideas, relationships, and connections within a text. This activity improves comprehension, organization of information, and critical thinking.



# eLearning Reading Resources (free)

1. **ReadWorks** <https://www.readworks.org> ReadWorks offers a vast collection of fiction and non-fiction articles, paired with comprehension questions and vocabulary activities. It's designed for students of all grade levels.
2. **ESL Reading** <http://www.eslreading.org> ESL Reading provides a range of reading materials with comprehension exercises. The texts cover various topics and difficulty levels, making it suitable for learners at different stages.
3. **Breaking News English** <https://breakingnewsenglish.com> This website offers news articles specifically designed for English learners. Each article comes with vocabulary exercises, comprehension questions, and discussion topics.
4. **EnglishClub** <https://www.englishclub.com/reading> EnglishClub provides a collection of reading materials with comprehension questions. The site offers different reading levels, ranging from beginner to advanced, to suit learners of all levels.
5. **Project Gutenberg** <https://www.gutenberg.org> Project Gutenberg offers over 60,000 free eBooks, including classic literature and non-fiction works. It's an excellent resource to practice reading longer texts in English.
6. **ManyThings.org** <http://www.manythings.org/e/reading.html> ManyThings.org offers reading activities and quizzes, including short stories, news articles, and dialogues. The website also provides audio recordings for enhanced listening practice.
7. **British Council LearnEnglish Teens** <https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading> British Council's LearnEnglish Teens website has a dedicated section for reading skills development. It offers articles, stories, and activities specifically designed for teenagers.
8. **Simple English Wikipedia** <https://simple.wikipedia.org> Simple English Wikipedia provides articles written in simpler language and vocabulary, making it easier for English learners to read and understand various topics.



## Credits:

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Y  
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Camille Campbell  
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Departamento de Tercer Ciclo y  
Educación Diversificada  
Asesoras nacionales de inglés**

**Validación y Revisión  
Mag. Marianella Granados Sirias  
Mag. Andrea Cruz Badilla  
07/2023**



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"Encendamos juntos la luz"