

Success with English The Penguin Course



Teachers' Handbook 3

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and Thomas Greenwood



Penguin Education

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Preface

Stage 3 of *Success with English* is designed to be used in sequence after Stages 1 and 2, and is constructed on the same principles. For detailed discussion of those principles – notably the structural approach, audio-visual language practice and the crucial role of contextualization – teachers should refer to *Teachers' Handbook 1*.

Teachers using *Coursebook 3* with classes who have not used the earlier books should refer to the Index of Grammar Topics (p. 81) to find information about the language areas which are assumed from the earlier stages.

The writers of this course do not believe that there is only one way of teaching from *Success with English* or even a right or wrong way. Without doubt it will be used differently in many parts of the world, and the General Editor will always be happy to have teachers' comments and suggestions.

Outline of Success with English, Stage 3

Coursebook 3

The units

Coursebook 3 is divided into twenty-four teaching Units. As in the two earlier coursebooks, these are larger than teaching lessons, and not necessarily the same as one week's work. How long a teacher takes over a Unit depends on local conditions: length and frequency of lessons, age and abilities of students, how much time can be given to the tape material and how much work can be given for home study. The Units of *Coursebook 3* are rather more demanding than those in the earlier stages and more reading is expected of students: as a general guide, however, on the basis of some six teaching hours per week and the use of a language laboratory, this stage of the course may be regarded as one academic year's work. Clearly, it may be covered in a shorter time by those classes who do not use the laboratory material, but teachers are reminded that the recorded material can be used on a classroom tape recorder, or the drill texts may be used 'live' for additional practice.

Not all teachers have as much as six hours available per week, and the study need not be less effective because it is spread over a longer period of time. *Success with English* is a flexible course and the classroom teacher must know best at what pace he can use it.

New language items are headlined, as before, in the Units where they are introduced, but the wise teacher will supplement their introduction as well as the exercises. Some ways of doing this are suggested in the teaching notes on pages 17-80.

Old and new exercises

The emphasis in *Coursebook 3* is on the written word, as opposed to the spoken which was stressed in Stage 1 and to some extent in Stage 2. Nevertheless, a large number of exercises lend themselves to oral preparation and discussion and teachers are encouraged to exploit the material of the book in a variety of ways. The actual balance between oral and written work is something that only the teacher can decide.

Teachers' Handbook 1 discusses at some length (pages 26-34) the common types of exercise which are found in all three coursebooks. Briefly, the advice suggests how such exercise material should be exploited. Controlled answer exercises may be operated between teacher and selected students, between teacher and class in chorus, and between student and student using questioning chains or working in pairs. Free answer and completion exercises may be

developed in similar ways, except for choral replies. Exercises where students are involved in dialogues are best worked in pairs to give the maximum practice, but comprehension work should always be directed by the teacher.

The familiar device of the substitution table, having been introduced in its simplest, fool-proof, form should develop into pattern practice. This involves the building up of blackboard tables, generated from students' answers and suggestions, later to be used for drill.

Teachers' Handbook 2 discusses the controlled composition work provided in Stage 2 and other types of exercise designed to give meaningful conversation practice, more involved comprehension and training in concept development (pages 12–18). Since several of the exercise types of the two earlier coursebooks are carried over and developed in *Coursebook 3*, teachers are advised to follow the same techniques and continue the earlier teaching strategy.

Coursebook 3, however, is marked by a change of emphasis. Apart from the greater importance given to the written word mentioned above, there is more time given to morphology – the study of word formation – more freedom allowed in both oral and written composition, and training in the understanding of unrestricted English.

Word families and collocation

Teachers and students will immediately notice how *Coursebook 3* increases the vocabulary of the course to some 3600 lexical items (this term, covering compound verbs and other phrases is more useful than the term 'word'). Whilst, at first glance, this may seem to be a heavy load, the learning problem is considerably relieved by the morphological approach.

This gives rise to two related types of exercise: that which studies an affix and the set of words which result from joining that affix to a group of familiar items, and that which works from a common root to give a family of cognates. The affixation principle is seen at work in Exercise 5 of Unit 2. Having been introduced to the verbs *to shorten*, *to lengthen*, *to tighten* and *to slacken*, the learner is asked to think about other verbs formed from adjective + *-en*. But although he is introduced to new items like *to lighten*, *to darken*, *to deepen* and *to widen*, not only is the learning load relatively light because the adjectives *light*, *dark*, *deep* and *wide* are familiar, but his attention is more sharply directed at the morpheme *-en* since this is the only new item.

Exercise 9 of Unit 7 does the same kind of thing by generating nouns from verbs + *-ion*. By bringing together in this way some pairs which are already known (*describe/description*), some in which the verb is familiar (*collect/collection*) and some in which the noun is familiar (*inspect/inspection*) the exercise focuses attention on the relationship between the members of each pair and the function of the morpheme *-ion*.

Such affixation exercises are a regular feature of the earlier Units of the book and the teacher should note that they are presented in such a way that

the learner is given the new words and never put into the position of generating a wrong or non-existent form.

In the later Units the word family type of exercise takes over, studying sets of words with common roots. An early example is Exercise 8 of Unit 15. Here the set *punctual*, *unpunctual*, *punctuality* and *unpunctuality*, all recently introduced in the reading passage, are brought together. Similarly the words *tolerate*, *intolerant*, *intolerance* and *intolerable*, which appear in the passage, are grouped together and the set completed by the addition of *tolerant*, *tolerable* and *tolerance*.

Later examples of this type of exercise combine it with the study of collocation. (Items are said to collocate if they are regularly found together and associated with each other.) An example of this kind of exercise is Exercise 5 in Unit 18. Here, the use of the word *colourful* in the reading passage prompts the bringing together of *colour*, *coloured*, *colourless*, *discoloured* and *discoloration*. But it is not enough to present a new lexical item to the foreign learner, even when it is in context. Ask a native English speaker what nouns he thinks of when you say *colourless* and the chances are that he will include *liquid* and *personality* high on his list. (These nouns collocate with *colourless*.) At this advanced stage of language teaching we need to be concerned with collocation, and a regular number of exercises have been supplied to help this particular kind of insight into the language. But it can be achieved only through experience of the language; collocation is not something that can be learnt by analogy. Therefore in exercises in this area we need to supply the collocation and give the student the opportunity to 'learn' the association by handling it. Such an exercise is Exercise 8 of Unit 14. Here the group of verbs with similar meanings – *destroy*, *demolish*, *lay waste to* and *damage* – are associated with typical grammatical objects. Having been encountered in context in the reading passage (*destroy a city*, *demolish buildings*, *lay waste to a city*, *damage a bridge*) their collocational range is extended in the exercise by being associated with other objects and agents. The intention is to give the learner a double insight into these verbs: namely that we *destroy* cars and books rather than *demolishing* them etc., and that we *lay waste to* a place or area by using massive weapons of war, whereas we may *damage* something by using a range of agents.

The insight into collocation which the native speaker has lies behind the device in later Units where we tell the learner what Jillian thinks of when she has a certain lexical item in mind. In Exercise 7 of Unit 21, for example, the cognates *agitate*, *agitation* and *agitator* are studied, but in association with typical concepts – physical, mental and political. It is perhaps more important at this stage of language learning for a number of lexical items to be mastered in depth than for a larger number to be superficially acquired. And when the study of collocation is harnessed to the family of words as it is here, the learner is being prepared for making the right kind of inferences when he encounters

a new, but recognizably related, word – *agitatedly*, for instance. This kind of work is the goal towards which the exercises in concept formation in *Coursebook 2* were moving.

Comprehension

Not only is it desirable for the learner to make the right responses to individual lexical items, but he must react correctly to larger pieces of language. To this end, the comprehension work of *Coursebook 2* has been developed and extended. One new feature is the suggestion in the Teaching Notes of oral comprehension exercises from the recorded passages. By asking the student to answer questions on what he has only heard, we are exercising a most important language skill, though teachers should beware of putting a premium on pure memory.

A disguised type of comprehension exercise is that in which the learner is asked to identify the major information points of a passage. Such an exercise is Exercise 7 of Unit 4, in which the student is being asked to examine the meaning of a piece of language in some depth. The particular device used here, that of multiple choice, has all the advantages which the out-moded *précis* had, without its drawbacks of clouding understanding with difficulties of expression.

The earlier Units of *Coursebook 3* contain varied forms of comprehension work which culminate in the textual study of the last four Units. Here the skill of reading with full understanding is pursued at a number of levels.

Students are asked in the first exercises of Units 21–4 for a relatively superficial interpretation of the passages, without consulting a dictionary and without undue concern for new items. In the second exercise they are asked to make a guided response to these unfamiliar words, using the evidence of context, their general reading experience and their training in word formation. This kind of interpretation, without the aid of a dictionary, is very similar to the way we respond to unfamiliar items in our mother tongue and an essential aspect of the student's approach to interpreting uncontrolled reading matter. The third exercise of each Unit presses home a deeper interpretation by making the learner think about the passage. As a final stage of comprehension, the fourth exercise of Units 21–4 attempts to put the learner in the same position as the native speaker. By using the device of stating Jillian's reactions to significant parts of the passage, we extract from it those overtones and implications to which the educated native speaker is sensitive. This kind of identification helps the foreign learner to make the deepest and subtlest kind of response to the language. Ideally, as teachers of a foreign language, we are aiming at training our students to respond to language in the same way that the native speaker can, and this type of advanced comprehension work is designed with that end in view. If it is successful, it is a valuable and necessary preparation for further wider reading.

A new type of comprehension exercise is that found as the last one in Units 18–24. Here the student is presented with a number of snippets of either spoken or written English. On the basis of his knowledge of style, register and lexical items, the student is invited to identify the pieces of language. This is quite a searching problem, and if – after the help given in the first two exercises – students are not able to make intelligent suggestions, the teacher should lead them towards an accurate identification by pointing to the features which have been deliberately built into the passages.

Guided and free composition

On the theory that free written composition in the earlier stages of language learning is an invitation to make and practise errors, the first two stages of *Success with English* have put great emphasis on controlled writing. *Coursebook 3* continues to use guided composition techniques, but gradually withdraws the guidance and encourages, particularly in the later Units, free writing.

The early device of substitution within a framework, familiar to students of *Coursebook 2*, is continued in work like Exercise 6 of Unit 2, where a standard letter form lends itself to a range of situations. Similarly Exercise 5 of Unit 3 uses the slot-and-filler technique for tightly controlled composition.

But at this level of learning, it is necessary to move away from such rigid control and the long-established device of the model is used as a compromise form of guided, rather than controlled composition.

One early, and rather specialized, kind of model is used to practise the writing of definitions. This is a very restricting kind of guided composition, but important training in narrowing down areas of meaning, and a much more valuable exercise than translation. In Exercise 8 of Unit 2 this technique is harnessed to the study of one kind of affixation – verbs and their corresponding *-er* nouns. The definitions given are to be used as models from which other definitions are to be written.

More frequently the learner is invited to use a given piece of prose as a model on which to write a new one, as for example in Unit 4, Exercise 4, where the original sentence types should be paralleled in the new piece of writing. Similarly the guide-book description of a furnished room in Unit 7 is the model on which composition work is to be based in Exercise 6. The same kind of guidance is used, with decreasing degrees of help in writing profiles (Unit 8, Exercise 9), advertisements for posts (Unit 10, Exercise 4), life-stories and descriptions (Unit 14, Exercise 6) and even testimonials (Unit 16, Exercise 5).

One perhaps rather novel kind of guided composition is the expansion of notes – a much more purposeful exercise than the reverse process of *précis* writing. Starting from notes allied with pictures in Exercise 6 of Unit 6, the technique is applied to the writing-up of notes on imaginary news items (Unit 7, Exercise 7) and on the cash-card service in Unit 9, Exercise 6.

Later, for instance, in Exercise 6 of Unit 13, the student uses notes and a model for composition and then is launched on a description with little guidance other than the experience he has just gained.

The move into completely free composition can best be made at the point when the teacher judges his learners are sufficiently mature in their language work to be allowed to do so. For this reason the teaching notes suggest suitable topics in most Units, but these are not actually set out in the *Coursebook*. It need hardly be stated that at this level of language ability we are not training budding foreign novelists in English, but seeking to cultivate the skill of using English as a tool of written communication.

Role playing

Teachers familiar with *Coursebook 2* will recall those dialogues in which the learner was invited to play an imaginary role and for the sake of language practice to pretend for the moment to be a telephonist or a waiter or a weather forecaster. Usually the activity was extended by the use of substitution within the dialogues, and in later cases the substitution was of alternative styles. The last exercise in Units 1-12 continues to practise the stylistic differences between formal and informal kinds of spoken and written English. Then a new type of role-playing exercise is introduced with Exercise 10 of Unit 13. This is based on the fact that in a conversation we can take up a superior or inferior, or sometimes a neutral, position. (If you dispute this, consider the difference in the way you would answer (a) a younger sister and (b) your father, when they say, 'You're lazy.') The psychologist Eric Berne has written most engagingly about this kind of social role playing in *Games People Play* (Penguin). And for Stage 3 learners it is increasingly necessary to be able to recognize the kind of language used in a situation and also to respond appropriately to that situation. The final five exercises in Units 13 to 17 go some way towards training this particular insight into English usage, in however elementary a form.