

The ETC Program

**A Competency-Based
Reading/Writing Book**

5: Language and Culture in Depth

the ETC program

Language and Culture in Depth

A Competency-Based Reading/Writing Book

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Preface

Language is me.
Language is you.
Language is people.
Language is what people do.
Language is loving and hurting.
Language is clothes, faces, gestures, responses.
Language is imagining, designing, creating, destroying.
Language is control and persuasion.
Language is communication.
Language is laughter.
Language is growth.
Language is me.
The limits of my language are the limits of my world.

And you can't package *that* up in a book, can you?

—New Zealand Curriculum Development

No, you can't package language in a book or even a whole program of books, but you have to start somewhere.

About the *ETC* Program

ETC is a six-level ESL (English as a second language) program for adults who are learning English to improve their lives and work skills. The material of each level is divided into two or three books, carefully coordinated, chapter by chapter, in theme, competency goals, grammar, and vocabulary. For a visual representation of the scope and sequence of the program, see the back cover of any volume.

ETC has been designed for maximum efficiency and flexibility. To choose the materials most suitable for your particular teaching situation, decide on the appropriate level by assessing the ability and needs of the students you expect to be teaching. The competency descriptions included in each instructor's manual ("About This Level") will aid you in your assessment.

About This Book

ETC Language and Culture in Depth: A Competency-Based Reading/Writing Book offers two kinds of reading material: first, there are background readings in story form about practical situations, such as getting a loan, applying for a promotion, opening a business, visiting a travel agency, and so on; the comprehension exercises that follow focus on getting the main ideas, recognizing time order, relevant points, reasons, steps in a process, and organization; and other comprehension skills related to "rhetorical forms." Second, there are scanning exercises based on unsimplified realia, such as calendars of events, school information, credit statements, legal agreements, and the like.

The vocabulary sections begin with skills taught at lower levels, such as recognizing synonyms and parts of speech and guessing meaning from context, and gradually progress to more sophisticated topics of interest to upper-level students—recognizing the connotations of words, "shades of meaning," the precise meaning of specialized language, idioms, and the like.

The writing sections, closely correlated with the “rhetorical forms” (narration, argument, comparison, etc.) presented in the reading, give students the opportunity to combine their ideas and language skills in a variety of forms; these concentrate on businesses and personal letters but also include personal journals, autobiographies, simple “legal” agreements, and flyers. Students learn to organize their thoughts in a first draft and to follow suggested steps to edit their own grammar and to improve their writing style.

Organization

Like most other books in the *ETC* program, *ETC Language and Culture in Depth: A Competency-Based Reading/Writing Book* consists of an introduction and ten chapters, each divided into four parts with specific purposes.

- *Part One: Reading for Meaning* offers an illustrated “warm-up” activity for the purpose of previewing the reading, a background reading that often includes a “writing model” for later reference, and comprehension and discussion activities.
- *Part Two: Vocabulary Building* presents vocabulary exercises in various forms, including dictionary activities.
- *Part Three: Scanning for Information* consists of various kinds of realia with questions along with suggestions for “beyond the text” reading activities.
- *Part Four: Expressing Yourself in Writing* includes ideas to help students organize their thoughts, grammar correction exercises, and steps to follow in the process of learning to compose in English.

Symbols

The following symbol appears throughout the text:

- * a challenging beyond-the-text activity designed for more advanced students

Available Ancillaries

The instructor’s manual for this text includes:

- a general introduction to the *ETC* program, this level, and this book
- general suggestions for teaching techniques to use in presenting the various kinds of activities
- an answer key for all text exercises with definite answers
- progress tests, one to accompany each chapter of the text, which can be duplicated and distributed to all students
- an answer key to all progress tests

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To Etcetera, ETC, ETC, because we finally did it.

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Introduction

About Reading and Writing

READING SKILLS: Previewing
Getting the main ideas
Building vocabulary
Scanning for information

WRITING SKILLS: Understanding the writing process

Fluent Reading

Reading is a basic tool in adult life. Every day most people need to read signs, labels, instructions, forms, schedules, rules and regulations, and so forth. At work there may also be necessary paperwork: letters, reports, agreements, announcements, and other forms of written communication. In addition, many people get the current news not only from T.V. and radio but also from daily or weekly newspapers. Some also read magazines, while others enjoy novels or other fiction. And of course, students are required to read textbooks and assignment instructions.

Good readers read a lot and enjoy the process, but adults who have not acquired the skills necessary for fluency, especially in a language other than their native one, may not like to read. Yet most of these readers can improve their skills if they use a few simple techniques.

Previewing

Fluent readers use their minds more than their eyes. They not only see the words and sentences, but they also think as they read. "Previewing" is a prereading activity that helps them to "anticipate" (to form predictions about what they are going to read). To preview, look at titles, subtitles, pictures, words in large or bold print, or anything else that catches your eye. From this information, you can make guesses about the contents of an article, a chapter, or a book.

A. To preview this textbook and this introductory chapter, find the answers to these questions as quickly as possible and write them on the lines.

- What is the title of the book? *ETC Language and Culture in Depth*
 What is the subtitle? _____
 From the title and subtitle, what do you think the book is about? _____

- Who are the authors of this book? _____
 _____ Who is the publisher? _____ In what
 year was the book last published? _____ Where did you get the information for
 Item 2? _____
- Is this book part of a larger program? _____ If so, how many books are there in the
 program? _____ How do you know this information? _____

4. How many chapters are there in this book? _____ Which chapter is about "Getting Help"? _____ About "The Media"? _____ What is Chapter 1 about? _____
 _____ Chapter 6? _____
 Which chapters interest you the most? _____ Why? _____
 _____ What is the name of the part of the book that gives you the information for Item 4? _____
5. What are two of the reading skills or techniques that this introduction discusses? _____
 _____ Where did you get the information for the last question? _____

Getting the Main Ideas

Whenever you read anything for more than enjoyment, you may want to skim it (read it quickly for general meaning) before you look at it more carefully. Even if you don't understand every word or sentence, you should try to understand the important ideas, especially on the first reading. You might want to reread something several times for extra practice, but it's not usually necessary to understand or remember all the details, especially if they are not important to the purpose of your reading.

B.

Do you remember the main ideas in this introduction so far? For each sentence, cross out the letter of the words that would not be correct in the sentence.

1. Some common kinds of reading material are _____.
 - a. signs, ads, instructions, and forms
 - ☒ b. T.V. and radio
 - c. newspapers, magazines, and textbooks
2. Adults who _____ may not enjoy the reading process.
 - a. read many novels and other fiction
 - b. have not acquired the skills necessary for fluency
 - c. don't know the techniques to use to improve their skills
3. Fluent readers use _____.
 - a. their minds more than their eyes
 - b. their eyes to see and understand every word
 - c. the technique of "previewing" to form predictions
4. To preview, a reader looks quickly at _____.
 - a. titles and pictures
 - b. words in large or bold print
 - c. the sentences that don't catch the eye right away
5. Whenever you read anything, you should _____.
 - a. skim or read quickly to get the general meaning
 - b. read every sentence twice before you start the next sentence
 - c. not try to understand or remember every unimportant detail

Building Vocabulary

There are many ways to learn new vocabulary. For example, you can learn synonyms (words with similar meanings) for words you already know and expressions with those words. To guess the approximate meaning of new vocabulary, you should pay attention to the part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, etc.), the meanings of the word parts (prefix, stem, and suffix), and the context clues (the other words in the same sentence or paragraph). Although you shouldn't rely on a dictionary when you are reading quickly for main ideas, you may want to use one later to look up new words. You can find out several things: the definition of the word, the shades of meaning (the slightly different uses of synonyms), examples of the word in context, and so on.

C. Follow these instructions to learn more about the vocabulary in the sections you just read.

On the line, write the part of speech (*n* = noun, *v* = verb, *adj* = adjective, *adv* = adverb) for each of these words.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. <u>n</u> paperwork | 4. ____ skim | 7. ____ fluent |
| 2. <u>adj</u> necessary | 5. ____ quickly | 8. ____ fluency |
| 3. ____ current | 6. ____ reread | 9. ____ carefully |

In the sections on "Fluent Reading" and "Previewing," find words that are related to these words but are different parts of speech. Write them on the lines.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 10. <i>v</i> : announce / <i>n</i> : _____ | 14. <i>adj</i> : special / <i>adv</i> : _____ |
| 11. <i>v</i> : agree / <i>n</i> : _____ | 15. <i>v</i> : read / <i>n</i> : _____ |
| 12. <i>n</i> : day / <i>adj</i> : _____ | 16. <i>adj</i> : active / <i>n</i> : _____ |
| 13. <i>n</i> : enjoyment / <i>v</i> : _____ | 17. <i>v</i> : contain / <i>n</i> : _____ |

Do the words or expressions in each of the following pairs have similar meanings? Write *yes* or *no* on the lines.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 18. <u>yes</u> novels / fiction | 22. ____ chapter / subtitle |
| 19. ____ native / language | 23. ____ discuss / talk about |
| 20. ____ be required to / have to | 24. ____ general / specific |
| 21. ____ preview / anticipate | 25. ____ get / acquire |

Scanning for Information

Most adults need to acquire a large amount of information from practical reading material, but they do not have the time or the interest to read every word. Most information gathering is scanning (finding information as quickly as possible for a specific purpose). To scan, you should move your eyes quickly to pick out appropriate clues.

D. Scan the chart to find out information about the book. Fill in the blanks in the sentences that follow.

	Organization of Skills			
	PART ONE Reading Skills	PART TWO Vocabulary	PART THREE Scanning	PART FOUR Writing Skills
Chapter 1	Previewing Getting the main ideas Understanding details	Synonyms Descriptive words Parts of speech	Calendars of events	Verb tenses Basic capitalization and punctuation Paragraph form
Chapter 2	Recognizing time order		School information	Autobiographies Time expressions Combining sentences
Chapter 3	Business letters	Business language Nouns used as adjectives	Credit statements	Phrases that introduce additional information
Chapter 4	Letters of application	"Impressive" vocabulary Related words	Employment ads	Writing concisely Resumes
Chapter 5	Legal agreements	Legal vocabulary	Legal agreements	Written agreements

1. This chart shows the skills introduced in ____ chapters of ____ parts each.
2. You will practice the skill of "recognizing time order" in Chapter _____. You will learn "business language" in Chapter _____ and "basic capitalization and punctuation" in Chapter _____.
3. In general, Part Two teaches _____, and Part Three teaches _____.
4. You'll learn to write an autobiography in Part _____ of Chapter _____. In Part Four of Chapter 5, you'll learn to write _____.

E. Ask one another questions about the information in the chart in Exercise D. Find the answers as fast as you can.

The Writing Process

Most adults write for practical purposes (memos, agreements, business letters, etc.), to communicate with others (postcards, personal letters, etc.), and to organize their ideas and thoughts or improve their language skills (journals, essays, etc.). The writing process can consist of several steps: gathering ideas, writing thoughts as they come to mind, organizing those thoughts into a first draft, rereading and correcting what you wrote, and making a final copy with your corrections and improvements.

F. You can follow these steps to get to know some of your classmates.

1. If you have a chance to tell your classmates about yourself, what will you say? On a piece of paper, write about yourself for five minutes. Don't worry about grammar and other writing rules at first. Just put down your ideas as they come to mind. **Example:**

I arrived in this country a short time ago. In my country, I have many relatives and friends. I miss them very much. I miss my house, my school, and the people I worked with at my job. Sometimes when I'm eating a hamburger, I think about the food in my country, and I get even more homesick. I'm living with my family in a large apartment complex on a busy street. There are many people there, but I'm too shy to meet them. Anyway, they don't seem friendly except to the people they already know.

2. Reread your writing to find the most important idea. On the other side of your paper, write a phrase for that idea (**Example:** meeting people in a new place).
3. In your writing, underline the sentences that are part of that one idea. List them in logical order and add other related thoughts and ideas that come to mind. **Examples:**
 - arrived a short time ago
 - miss my relatives and friends
 - miss people at my job
 - many people in our building
 - too shy to meet them
 - don't seem friendly
 - no feeling of community
4. Write the ideas in your list in paragraph form. Make corrections if you have time. **Example:**

I arrived in this country a short time ago. In my country, I have many relatives and friends—in the neighborhood, at school, and at work, and I miss them very much. Now I'm living with my family in a large apartment complex where there are many people, but I'm too shy to meet the neighbors. Maybe it's because I'm not used to the customs in this new culture, but my neighbors don't seem friendly except to the people they already know. There doesn't seem to be the same feeling of community that exists in my hometown.

5. Pass your paper to the classmate on your right. Read the paper you receive. Write down notes or try to remember the important information. Then pass that paper to the classmate on your right, read the information on the next paper you receive, and so on. Repeat this process until your teacher tells you to stop.
6. Your instructor will collect the papers and tell you facts from some of them. Try to identify the writers.

CHAPTER

1

Meeting People

READING AND WRITING FOCUS: Personal journals

**NEW READING AND
VOCABULARY SKILLS:**

Previewing*
Getting the main ideas*
Understanding important details
Recognizing synonyms, descriptive words, and parts of
speech
Scanning calendars of events

WRITING SKILLS: Choosing verb tenses
Using basic capitalization and punctuation
Using paragraph form

GRAMMAR FOCUS: Verb tenses (present and past—simple and continuous,
future)

*reinforced in all following chapters

PART ONE / READING FOR MEANING

• Finding New Friends

Previewing the Reading

A. Prepare to read by making up a story about the pictures. Answer these questions.

1. Who are the people? What are they doing? Why?
2. How are they probably feeling?

