

TEACHER'S BOOK



**Getting
through**

John Meredith-Parry and Lorraine Weller

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by John Meredith-Parry and Lorraine Weller



Edward Arnold

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First published 1980
by Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd
41 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3DQ

Reprinted 1985

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Meredith-Parry, John

Getting through.

Teacher's book

1. English language — Text-books for foreigners

I. Title II. Weller, Lorraine

428'.2'4 PE1128

ISBN 0-7131-8014-5

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Text set in Univers IBM by  Tek-Art,
Printed in Great Britain by Spottiswoode Ballantyne Printers Ltd.,
Colchester and London.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the following people:

Robert Smith and Peter Fredrickson for their help on the computer pages.

Dermot Flaherty for all the dedicated research that went into writing the 'Ordering a Drink' flowchart.

The Evemy family for re-arranging their lives on several occasions.

Dick Weist for 'Lost on the Moon' and 'DUTS'.

And Peter Weller for all kinds of help.

The publishers wish to thank British Rail for information adapted from '1979 Family Railcard Application Form' (page 37)

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Introduction

Whatever you do – read this first!

The most important and relevant aspects of short courses are these.

- The students are on holiday.
- Their motivation is often low and always varied.
- Teaching resources can be limited.
- Staff and premises are hired for a short period.
- The teaching and activity load is high, so there's little time for detailed planning.
- Some staff are new to English as a Foreign Language teaching.
- You never know the level of the students until they actually arrive.
- The range of language ability within classes is often wide.
- Attempting to teach the students a lot of new language is unrealistic; better to aim at giving them greater confidence to use what they already know.

Although these points may appear to be negative and somewhat daunting, don't be put off. Here's the positive side.

- The students are on holiday, so classes tend to be relaxed rather than formal.
- Resources are limited, so you have to generate and produce a lot of your own material with the class, which is very rewarding when it works well.
- You are often teaching two or more different nationalities in the same class, and can therefore exploit the fact that they can only communicate with each other in English.
- You can take advantage of a wide teaching brief, unrestricted by exam considerations or strict course limitations.

The result is that a fully planned course which follows a detailed course book is not really practical for five good reasons.

- The students often have different educational backgrounds. This means that their abilities to cope with the different skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing will vary widely. You may find, for example, that a

student who has been orally graded as intermediate, produces written work which is advanced. (This happens regularly with Japanese students.) Similarly, students who appear to be quite fluent orally are often unable to write a correct sentence.

- Your students will progress at different speeds and will arrive with different expectations.
- Most students study English the whole year round in their own countries, and are understandably reluctant to follow the same kind of book they use at home.
- Students in a holiday mood prefer to hop from one language point or topic to another, rather than follow the 'page a day' approach.
- Much of the success of short holiday courses depends on the ingenuity and flair of the teachers, who *have* to produce much of their own material to suit the needs of their students. A strict course book can work well for the experienced EFL teacher who knows exactly how and when to use it, but it can, unfortunately, undermine the inexperienced teacher who has neither the knowhow nor the confidence to use it in this way. If you are inexperienced in EFL teaching, don't be afraid to adapt your own skills and experience to the new situation. Some of the best lessons we've seen on short courses came from junior school teachers doing just that.

But teachers and organisers do need some guidelines and ideas to help with the actual teaching. None of us really like teaching in a vacuum or on a totally free, non-defined programme. It's also extremely hard work to *produce* a coherent course at the same time as trying to *teach* it. It was these considerations that led us to write this book, which isn't designed as a page by page, day by day course book. Rather, we hope that it will be an adaptable and stimulating supplement to existing materials.

The main features of *Getting Through* are:

- a flexible format, to enable you to work on similar topics in different ways with students

- of differing language ability, if necessary.
- the design, which makes the student's book look interesting in its own right rather than being an interesting-looking text book. Graphs, photos, cartoons and maps are used extensively at all levels, with an emphasis on written text in the advanced section.

The Teacher's Book.

The material is presented in a way which will be easy to use if you do have to cope with students of differing language ability. The different levels in the student's book have been grouped together. In other words, page one of the Elementary level is followed by page one of the Intermediate level and then page one of the Advanced level which is followed by page two Elementary etc. We hope that you won't have elementary and advanced students in the same class, but a mixture of elementary and intermediate, or intermediate and advanced is not unlikely, especially on smaller courses.

Symbols.

Five different symbols which give an overall view of the 'shape' of a lesson are used. You will find an explanation of them on Teacher's Book page 3.

Supplementary material.

At the beginning and end of each section in the student's book there is material which is useful for the beginning and end of a course. If you wanted to work through the book page by page, this could certainly be done; but we think it is more likely that you will want to follow the book quite closely at first and then dip into different topics as the course progresses. The London section, for example, is obviously best used to precede a visit there.

The Symbols

Teachers' books are often hard to follow because it is difficult to get an idea of the overall *shape* of a lesson from text alone. We've devised some symbols which we hope will give this at a glance.

This is what the symbols mean.



You are the black circle in the middle, surrounded by your class. The semi-circle grouping is not essential but does have the advantage of letting the students see each other's faces rather than the backs of other students' heads! This part of the lesson is teacher-directed. You are taking the initiative, you are controlling the situation and the students are listening and responding to your questions and actions.



This represents work across the class from one student to another and a less dominating role for you. You are more of an adviser and prompter.



Students work on their own.



Students work in pairs. Think about pair arrangements in advance. Sometimes the best results come from putting a strong and a weak student together. At other times, strong with strong gets the best results. Change the pairs frequently.



Students work in small groups, numbers depending on your particular circumstances.

Grading

In order to grade students into the appropriate language levels, most organisations provide a written test and back this up with an oral interview. The main purpose of a short holiday course should be to activate what the students already know in terms of improving oral communicative skills. In view of this, the best that can be said of written tests is that they keep the students occupied while you get on with the more important job of assessing their oral abilities.

Here are some points you might like to consider before starting on a morning's grading session.

- Interview as many students as possible in one session because it becomes easier to get an overall view of the level once you have done five or six interviews.
- If you haven't got a local written test, use one of the 'Spot the Differences' on the Games, Jokes and Puzzles pages at Elementary and Intermediate levels. Or, ask the students to write down a description of their house and/or family at home.
- After setting this, look for students who are struggling in the first few minutes. These are most likely to be your low level ones, so extract them as soon as possible for their interview.

We suggest that the most likely divisions you will want to make are: Elementary, Intermediate, Fast Intermediate, Advanced. Our definitions of the levels are these.

Elementary

They can handle a simple structure, even if it is incorrect, e.g. 'They is sitting', and they can manage simple vocabulary: sit/stand/house/hand/head/watch.

Intermediate

They can handle simple structures correctly, e.g. 'He's talking', 'He's holding a telephone', 'I arrived in England yesterday'.

Fast Intermediate

They have a good knowledge of vocabulary and can handle several structures correctly,

e.g. 'I've been here since yesterday', 'I've never been to England before', 'I'd like to visit Stonehenge'. They are easy to understand and can ask you questions.

Advanced

They can handle most structures with confidence. They have a wide range of vocabulary and are clearly at ease using the language. They are likely to initiate questions themselves.

As a rough guide, the answers to the following general questions should give you an indication of their level.

Elementary

Where do you live?
Which city are you from?
What time is it?

Intermediate

Did you have a good journey?
How did you get here?
Have you been to England before?

Fast Intermediate

How long have you been learning English?
What would you most like to do/see while you're here?

Advanced

What would you do if you won £50,000?
Would you like to live here for a couple of years? Why?/Why not?

Remember that some of the students may be shy, nervous and tired. This obviously affects their language performance, and what often happens is that once they have settled down into the course, their performance improves dramatically. Because of this, it is always better to grade too low and put students up after a couple of days than grade too high and have to put them down.

You can, however, go some way to alleviating their anxieties by your own behaviour during the interview. Sit *next* to them, rather than opposite across a large imposing desk. Say 'hello' and ask for their name. Give your first name. If they have already done some written work, look at it.

Look at them when you ask questions and *listen* to their replies.

Don't spend too much time on the preliminary questions, but if you want more material, say for borderline cases, we suggest that you use the back cover of the book and ask the following questions.

Elementary

What can you see on the table?

Where are these people?

Intermediate

What are these people doing?

Who do you think they are?

Fast Intermediate

What do you think the woman is saying to the man?

Why is the man looking at his watch?

Advanced

What can you say about the man's room?

Have you any idea who the woman behind the door is?

Can you describe her expression?

What could've happened?

Projects and interviews

Projects are notoriously difficult to do well. Students and teachers alike tend to be suspicious of them because they often sound more impressive and interesting than they turn out to be.

There is a definite place for this type of work on summer courses. We hope that these notes, based on our own successes and disasters, will give you some tips and ideas.

Justification of projects

If you're not entirely convinced of their value yourself, this will quickly be picked up by your students, so here are four points in their favour.

- Projects give *real* practice in asking questions, listening, reading and writing — something you can't get from books.
- Projects highlight the difference between written and spoken English — an area that is necessarily often neglected in the teaching of English in foreign countries.
- Projects emphasise the importance of correct intonation patterns. 'Can I ask you some questions?' said in an aggressive pattern is less likely to result in co-operation than a less grammatically correct question said with a polite intonation pattern.
- Projects, especially in their presentation stages, often encourage the less linguistically able students to come out of their shells because they get a chance to display other talents e.g. lovely handwriting, talent for drawing, background knowledge of the subject chosen etc.

Approach

A fairly firm, disciplined approach with specific guidelines and time limits works best. Give plenty of practice in the structures they will need if the project includes getting information from members of the public, for example:

'Could I ask you . . . ?'

'I'm trying to find out . . . '

'I'm doing a survey on . . . Could you help me?'

Discuss ideas for projects with your class. Having decided on the topic, make sure the students have a sense of purpose and a goal. This could be an end result consisting of a display or presentation to other classes, and/or at a social end-of-course evening which their host families attend. Don't rule out giving prizes for the best work and to the hardest working students.

Ideas

A class, or whole course, magazine.

This provides a definite goal to work towards, helps make a fair amount of writing practice more motivating and provides the students with a keepsake of the course which they can take home and show their parents. (Be careful though; on one holiday course in Tunbridge Wells, a pretty innocuous little magazine brought howls of protest from Spanish parents because there was a reference to 'kissing' at a disco' L.W.)

Topics which have worked well for us include:

- first/last impressions of their holiday
- 'What Do You Know?' (an International Quiz page)
- sightseeing trips and comments on them
- music — record and concert reviews
- opinions on food
- crosswords
- cartoons (especially of the teachers)
- 'quotes' about the course.

Try to hand over to the students as much as possible of the editing, correcting and artwork. Get them to design the cover, for instance. Give yourself enough time to type and photo-copy or print the sheets. Magazines are hard work but you should find that producing one is rewarding for both you and your students.

Town surveys.

These are best done from the students' point of view as tourists in the area. Get them thinking about the kind of advice they would have liked to receive when they first arrived:

best shops, best snack bars and restaurants, good pubs and discos, and where all these places are; system of public transport, fares, availability, convenience; places of interest in the area; sports facilities and so on.

The results of their survey along with their comments can be put together as a guide for students coming to the centre the following year.

Mini-projects using local and national radio broadcasts.

Listening activities. Listen to *short* news bulletins from different stations. (As a rough guide, a three-minute bulletin usually provides about twenty minutes of comprehension work.) Use them individually, and then comparatively to show students the differences in content and presentation between the various stations, e.g. formal versus informal styles of speaking - illustrated by speed of speech, choice of words (do they use phrasal verbs or the more formal Latin root words: 'The bomb exploded'/'The bomb went off'?), use of contractions ('Mrs Thatcher is going to visit Russia'/'Mrs Thatcher's going to visit Russia'). Does the station use jingles to introduce and end the news? If so, does this make it sound less serious?

Listen to a short extract from a phone-in or quiz programme. How do different people express themselves? What words and phrases does the presenter use to control them?

Listen to some ads. Note the amount of information given within the specific time slot, and the different ways which are used to get the message across.

Reading activities. Use copies of the Radio Times to find out more about the B.B.C's national service. Can the students work out the differences between Radios 1. 2. 3. 4?

Use local newspapers to find out programming on local stations. Look at the names of some of the programmes: do they reflect particular local interests or issues?

Collect publicity material from local stations. Use this as the basis of a fact-gathering activity, e.g. target audience, peak listening times, prices of ads at different times of the day, services available to listeners.

Writing activities. Students can write to the stations with specific questions they need information on, perhaps coming out of their reading work.

Or they could write to ask for a request to be played for the school.

Use this opportunity to teach or revise the layout of a letter in English.

Speaking activities. If possible, get the students to participate in a phone-in programme. This always works well and they find it very exciting.

Encourage them, if you have access to a cassette recorder, to make their own radio programme. Decide, with them, on the format and time limit. They should arrange themselves in small groups gathering news from the local paper, rewriting and finally recording. Some can work on writing ads, the weather forecast, a recipe for the day, traffic news etc. Include a main news item, two or three other items and one or two local short stories, which should include interviews with the characters involved. In this way, most people in the class should get the opportunity to participate actively. Choose one or two students to act as co-ordinators — this will allow you to take a back seat and act only in an advisory capacity, and it forces the students to take on the responsibility for the finished programme themselves.

Interviewing local people.

A potentially disastrous activity — think carefully before embarking on it and take into account that local residents often resent the annual invasion of foreign teenagers. Done well it can, in fact, prove a good public relations exercise for your organisation by going some way towards disproving what the locals think!

Preparation for interviews.

- Discuss the idea with your students and get them to suggest topics. Write them on the board. Let them decide among themselves which they would prefer to work on.
- Ask for possible general questions, select the most appropriate and write them up on the board. Work out a general interview outline with the whole class, then suggest

that, in pairs, they work out their own in more detail.

- Practise ways of stopping people in the street: 'Excuse me . . . ' 'Could I just ask you . . . ?' 'Would you mind answering . . . ?' Encourage them to practise the questions and possible replies in pairs, swapping roles so that they each get the opportunity to ask the questions. Point out that specific questions are better than general ones, e.g. 'Do you think there's an energy crisis?' is easier to deal with, for lower level groups, than 'What do you think of the energy crisis?'
- Teach them to recognise some of the negative responses they will undoubtedly receive in reply to their opening gambits, for example:
'No, I'm awfully sorry . . .'
'I'd love to but I've got to catch a bus.'
'I'm sorry, I can't right now, I'm in a hurry.'
- Remember to tell them not to stand too close to people – some nationalities have a disturbing (to the British) habit of standing on top of you when you're talking to them. This unnerves a lot of people and could ruin the interview.
- Ask the students to decide on the sample. How many people will they interview? Age and sex should be taken into account. Equal numbers of different groups should be interviewed.
- The pairs should work out the timing of their interviews and, helped by you, should cut out weak questions if necessary. They then go out into the street and complete the interview in the time which has been agreed.
- In class, they should collate results and present them in whatever form they think is best, e.g. graphs, text, some recorded material or a mixture of these.

Suggestions for interview topics.

- Visiting the local tourist office to find out numbers and nationalities of foreign visitors to the area.
- What English teenagers think of the entertainment and sports facilities in the area.
- Attitudes of English people to foreign visitors.
- Interviewing people about their jobs: vicar, postman, traffic warden, Mayor, newspaper/ local radio reporter, hospital worker, teacher etc.

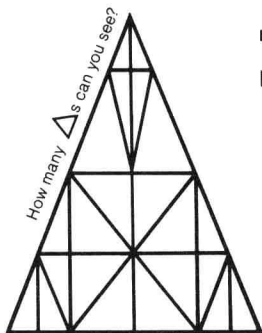
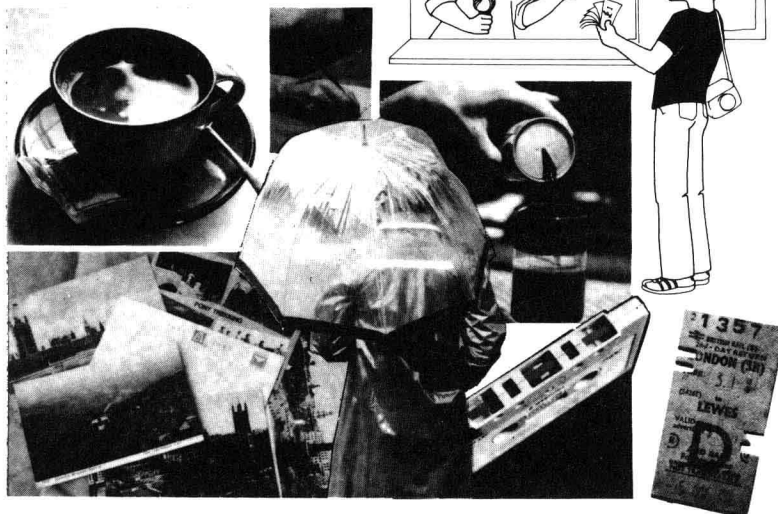
- Going to the local police station to find out what problems foreigners have in the area, and what crimes (if any!) they commit. Remember that if any of the projects involve interviewing specific people in specific places, two or three pairs of students all coming on the same day asking the same questions will be rather tedious. Avoid this by getting the students to do a variety of interviews. Also, a phone call from you, explaining the situation and asking for help from potential interviewees is not only considerate, but will smooth the way for your students.

LOOKING AROUND

Comparing costs.

Look at these things.

How much do you think they cost?



NAPIS = SPAIN

What are the other countries?

RENFAC RUPE ANHIC KERMAND

IYLAT RAIN PYGTE LAVIYAGSOU

PAANJ SWEYTGNEARM

MUIBLEG CREEGE DENEWS

RUTIAAS DNALEAZWEN ZIARBL

XEMOCI OAOCMN TWAUKI

Looking Around:

See note on phrasal verbs, **Extra 2**
Teacher's Book page 13.

Vocabulary and approximate costs:
(at time of going to press)

Cup of tea . . . 16p

Biro . . . 15p

Ice cream cornet . . . 30p

Postcard . . . 12p

Stamp to Europe . . . 13½p

Umbrella . . . £4.00

Plastic raincoat . . . £3.50

Can of Coke . . . 25p

Cassette tape . . . £5.50

Cheap day return

ticket (120kms) . . . £4.20

The countries are:

France Peru China Denmark Italy

Iran Egypt Yugoslavia Japan

West Germany Belgium Greece

Sweden Austria New Zealand Brazil

Mexico Monaco Kuwait

What about a quick quiz on the capitals of some of these countries?

Triangles:

We think there are at least fifty:

Other shapes that could be taught:

square, circle, rectangle.

Aims

To establish the costs of common articles and currency exchange rates.

To teach recognition of English coins and notes and their relative values.

To teach 'How much does it cost?'


To give the teacher an opportunity to assess further the students' oral competence.

To provide activities for the students to do without teacher supervision.

Background

As the first day of a holiday course is usually quite demanding, we have included the activities at the bottom of the student's page so that you can leave them to work on their own for a few minutes if necessary.

Approach



With your help, students identify coins from their pockets. Make sure you have all the coins yourself plus a one and a five pound note. Remember, we tend to say 'p' more than pence.

Students identify as many of the photos as possible. Put vocabulary list on board. Show use of 'a' and 'an', e.g. a cassette an umbrella


Ask: **How much does a cassette cost, do you think?**

... cup of tea ...

... postcard ...


... etc.

Match correct prices with list of articles on the board. (See opposite.) Recognition and pronunciation of prices needs attention, e.g. '15p', but 'one fifteen' for £1.15p.




Students, directed by you, ask each other the cost of articles: 'How much does a cassette cost?'

'About £5.50'.



Students compile a list of articles, showing their equivalent sterling prices in their own countries. They will need to know the *exchange rate*. Think about adding items like: films, L.Ps, glossy magazines, cinema tickets.



Put a list on the board, for example:

Article	Spain	Japan	Britain
a cassette	£2.60	£3.20	£5.50
an umbrella	£3.50	£5.30	£4.20

Students make comparative sentences using *cheaper/dearer*.

Extra

You may want to include a short interview session. See notes on Teacher's Book page 15.

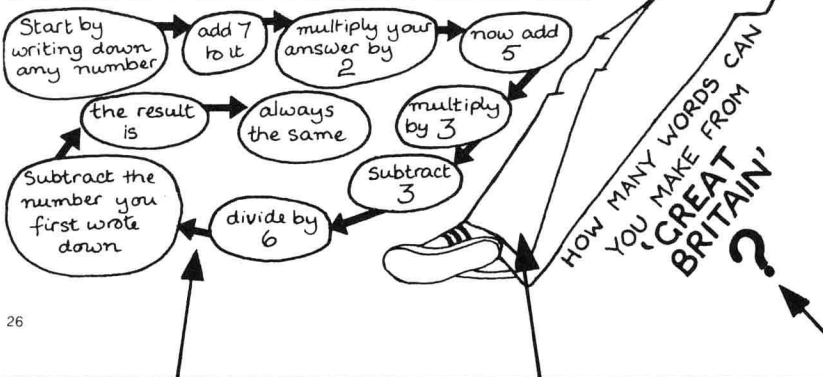
Teach and practise 'Could I have . . . please?' using a shopping context, plus the articles and prices on the blackboard.

Teach 'change' and practise getting the right change.

Ask: **A film costs £3.40; you give the shop assistant £5, how much change do you get?**

LOOKING AROUND

Comparing costs and services



26

Probably better to do this in pairs.

You could also ask for a list of parts of body and clothes shown here.

Vocabulary and approximate costs:
(at time of going to press)

Newspapers . . . 10-15p

Portable radio . . . £40

Portable black and white
t.v. set . . . £90

Portable colour set . . . £270

Second hand Renault 5 –

1977 model . . . £2,415

New Renault 5 . . . £3,800

Repairing heels on a pair
of shoes . . . £1.00

Key cutting service . . . 50p

Films, black and white
prints (36) . . . £1.30

and processing . . . £5.40

Colour transparencies . . . £4.60

Chimney sweep (each chimney)
. . . £3.00

Window cleaner (each window) . . . 30p

3 bedroom, terraced London
house . . . £35,000

(Give the price of a similar house in
your own area for comparison)

Ask:

WHICH OF THE ABOVE ARE *SERVICES*?

Words with four or more letters will
make this more difficult. Make a note
of your students' vocabulary level.