

Introduction

What is the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT)?

The Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) is a test developed by Cambridge ESOL for teachers of English to speakers of other languages. TKT tests candidates' knowledge of concepts related to language, language use and the background to and practice of language teaching and learning. It is not a test of the practical skills teachers need to use in their own classrooms or of English language proficiency.

TKT consists of three modules which can be taken together, or separately, in any order. The content of TKT is tested by means of objective tasks, such as matching and multiple choice. The test for each module consists of 80 questions.

There are no entry requirements for TKT, such as previous teaching experience and/or teaching or language qualifications, but candidates should have at least an intermediate level of English, e.g. PET, IELTS 4, CEF / ALTE B1. They are also expected to understand a range of about 400 terms describing the practice of English Language Teaching (ELT). A selection of these terms appears in each TKT module. A list of the terms that may occur in TKT is provided in the *TKT Glossary* which is on the Cambridge ESOL website: <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/TKT>.

Candidates are encouraged to keep a teaching portfolio to help them reflect on their teaching practice, but this portfolio is not assessed.

What is *The TKT Course*?

The TKT Course has four main aims:

- 1 To introduce readers to the concepts and terms about teaching and learning that are central to TKT, and to give them opportunities to do exam practice with TKT sample test tasks and exam papers.
- 2 To introduce readers to the main current theories, approaches and activities in ELT and assess their usefulness for the classroom.
- 3 To share with readers some of the many resources available to English language teachers.
- 4 To provide materials and activities that give teachers opportunities for professional development by exploring the concepts which have been introduced.

Who is *The TKT Course* written for?

The TKT Course is written for the following readers:

- Readers intending to take TKT. They may be studying for it on a course, or alone as self-access students.
- Readers following introductory teacher development courses in teaching English, or retraining to become English language teachers.
- Readers working by themselves to improve their knowledge of ELT.
- Readers who have not started teaching yet, and readers who are already teaching in primary or secondary schools.
- Both first and second language speakers of English.

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The language used in *The TKT Course* is at the same level as the language used in TKT, i.e. intermediate level English at approximately IELTS band 4 or CEF (Common European Framework) B1.

The material in the book is designed to provide approximately 60–90 hours of study.

What are the contents of *The TKT Course*?

The contents of *The TKT Course* follow the contents and order of the TKT specifications. The book contains:

- three modules, each focusing on one module of TKT. Each module is divided into units covering the contents of the TKT specifications for that module. The units focus on topics from the module, and then provide tasks and activities exploring the topics and preparing the reader for TKT.
- ELT terms from the *TKT Glossary*. These occur in each unit and are shown in **bold** the first time they appear in a unit. They are defined the first time they appear in the book and some are defined again later, if they have another meaning.
- three TKT practice tests, one for each module.
- exam tips for taking TKT.
- answer keys for the Follow-up activities, TKT practice tasks and TKT practice tests.
- two lists of the ELT terms from the *TKT Glossary* that are used in the book. The first list gives the terms for the whole book in alphabetical order, and the second gives the terms for each unit. The first list gives the page where each term is defined.

The units build on one another, so that the ideas introduced in one unit provide the foundation for the ideas introduced in the next unit. Similarly, each module provides a foundation for the next module, as in the design of TKT.

- Module 1 focuses on terms and concepts commonly used to describe language and language skills; the background to language learning; activities and approaches in ELT and assessment.
- Module 2 focuses on lesson planning and the use of resources and materials.
- Module 3 focuses on the language that teachers and learners use in the classroom and on techniques for classroom management.

How is each unit organised and how can it be used?

The advice in the table opposite is intended for those using the book on a taught course or for self-access readers. It can also be adapted for use by trainers.

Each unit in *The TKT Course* follows the same structure:

Section	Purpose	Suggestions for use
Starter question and answer	To provide a definition of the key terms in the title of the unit.	Try to answer the question before reading the answer.
Key concepts	To introduce the main ideas of the topic of the unit and to explain the key ELT terms.	There is a short question at the beginning of this section. Try answering it before reading the text that follows. This section could be read outside class.
Key concepts and the language teaching classroom	To discuss how the key concepts influence English language teaching and learning.	It would be useful to think about how each point might influence what you do in the classroom.
Follow-up activities	To allow the reader to work with the key concepts in order to understand them more fully. N.B. These activities do not use the same question formats as those used in TKT.	These activities are designed for use in or outside the classroom. Completing them leads to a much fuller understanding of the unit's key concepts. There is an answer key for these activities on pages 171–5.
Reflection	To encourage the reader to develop his/her opinions on the key concepts by considering questions or comments from teachers and learners.	Discuss these points with others if possible. As this section is about opinions, it does not have answers.
Discovery activities	To help the reader to find out more about the key concepts, to experiment with them in the classroom and to assess their usefulness.	These activities involve doing things outside the classroom, e.g. reading chapters from books, finding websites, seeing how key concepts are applied in coursebooks, trying out ideas in the classroom and writing comments in the TKT portfolio. N.B. Decide if it is more useful to write the TKT portfolio in English or your own language.
TKT practice task	To review the unit's content and to help readers become familiar with the TKT task formats and level. N.B. These tasks use the same question formats as those used in TKT.	Do this task to familiarise yourself with the formats of TKT and to test yourself on the contents of the unit. You can check your answers in the answer key on page 176.

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We suggest that readers using this book by themselves choose a coursebook to use for the Discovery activities and think of a specific group of learners for the Reflection and Discovery activities.

We also recommend readers to look at the *TKT Glossary* (<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/TKT>) as they work through the book, to help consolidate and extend understanding of ELT terms. It may also be useful to have a good dictionary near you, e.g. *Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary*, Cambridge University Press 2003.

Enjoy your teaching and your reflection on your teaching, and good luck to those who take TKT.

Module 1

Language and background to language learning and teaching

Part 1 Describing language and language skills

Unit 1 Grammar

■ What is grammar?

Grammar describes how we combine, organise and change words and parts of words to make meaning. We use rules for this description.

■ Key concepts

What are parts of speech, grammatical structures and word formation?

We can use grammar to describe parts of speech, grammatical structures and how words are formed.

There are nine parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, determiners, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions and exclamations. A **part of speech** or word class describes the function a word or phrase has in a sentence. This controls how the word or phrase can operate and combine grammatically with other words. For example, in English:

- a noun can act as the subject of a verb but an adjective cannot
e.g. *The tall girl ran very fast* (✓) but not *Tall ran very fast* (✗)
- an adverb can combine with an adjective but an adjective cannot combine with another adjective
e.g. *well organised* (✓), *good organised* (✗)
- a noun can combine with another noun
e.g. *a car park*.

The table below shows the functions of the different parts of speech:

Part of speech	Examples	Function(s)
Nouns (e.g. countable, uncountable)	<i>children</i> <i>sugar</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to name people, places, things, qualities, ideas, or activities• to act as the subject/object of the verb
Verbs (e.g. transitive, intransitive)	<i>see</i> <i>run</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to show an action, state or experience

<i>Part of speech</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Function</i>
Adjectives (e.g. comparative)	<i>easier</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to describe or give more information about a noun, pronoun or part of a sentence
Adverbs (e.g. of degree, manner, time)	<i>completely</i> <i>quickly</i> <i>yesterday</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to describe or give more information about how, when or where something happens to add information to adjectives, verbs, other adverbs or sentences
Determiners (e.g. possessive adjectives, articles, demonstrative adjectives, quantifiers)	<i>my</i> <i>the</i> <i>this</i> <i>both</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to make clear which noun is referred to or to give information about quantity
Prepositions (e.g. of time, place, direction)	<i>after</i> <i>at</i> <i>towards</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to connect a noun, noun phrase or pronoun to another word or phrase
Pronouns (e.g. personal, possessive, relative, reflexive)	<i>she</i> <i>mine</i> <i>who</i> <i>myself</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to replace or refer to a noun or noun phrase just mentioned
Conjunctions (e.g. of reason, addition, contrast)	<i>as</i> <i>and</i> <i>but</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to join words, sentences or parts of sentences
Exclamations (e.g. of doubt, pain)	<i>Er</i> <i>Ow</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to show a (strong) feeling – especially in informal spoken language

We can divide the parts of speech i..to further categories, e.g. countable and uncountable nouns and transitive and intransitive verbs.

Grammar rules also describe **grammatical structures**, i.e. the arrangement of words into patterns which have meaning. The rules for grammatical structures use grammatical terms to describe forms and uses. 'Form' refers to the specific grammatical parts that make up the structure and the order they occur in. 'Use' refers to the meaning that the structure is used to express. Look at these examples:

<i>Term</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Use</i>
Past continuous tense	subject + past tense of verb <i>to be</i> + <i>-ing</i> form of verb e.g. <i>he was running</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to describe a temporary or background situation or action in the past
Passive voice	subject + <i>to be</i> + past participle (+ <i>by</i> + agent) e.g. <i>the road was built (by the company)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to show what happens to people or things
Comparative of 'long' adjectives	<i>more</i> + long adjective (+ <i>than</i>) e.g. <i>he was more embarrassed than his friend</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally used with adjectives of two syllables or more to compare separate things or people

We also use grammar to describe how words are formed. English uses **prefixes** (a group of letters added at the beginning of a word) and **suffixes** (a group of letters added at the end of a word) to create new words. The prefixes and suffixes are added to base words (e.g. *stop*, *book*) to make new grammatical units such as tenses, parts of verbs, the plural of nouns, possessives, e.g. *talked*, *goes*, *going*, *books*, *girl's*. Many other prefixes (e.g. *un-*, *il-*, *pre-*, *dis-*) and suffixes (e.g. *-tion*, *-est*, *-ly*, *-able*) are also used in English to make new words e.g. *disappear*, *careful*, *friendly*. Some languages, e.g. Turkish and German, make a lot of use of prefixes and suffixes to create new words. Other languages make little or no use of them.

Grammar includes a large number of terms, grammatical structures, uses and forms. This unit only introduces them generally. The *TKT Glossary* (<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/TKT>) and the grammar books and websites suggested in the Discovery activities on page 8 provide more information.

■ Key concepts and the language teaching classroom

- Grammar rules describe the way that language works, but language changes over time, so grammar rules are not fixed. They change too. Unfortunately, grammar rules and grammar books don't always change as quickly as the language, so they are not always up to date. For example, some grammar books say that we should use *whom* rather than *who* after prepositions, but, in fact, except in some situations, *who* is generally used, with a different word order, e.g. 'I've just met the girl who I talked to on Friday' is much more common and accepted than 'I've just met the girl to whom I talked on Friday'.
- Teachers need to keep up to date with what parts of the language are changing and how.
- Grammar rules traditionally describe written language rather than spoken language. For example, repetition, exclamations and **contractions** (two words that are pronounced or written as one, e.g. *don't* from *do not*, *isn't* from *is not*, *won't* from *will not*) are common features of spoken language, but they are not always described in grammar books. Some grammar books are now available which describe spoken language too.
- Very often, speakers of a language can speak and write it well without consciously knowing any grammatical rules or terms.
- Learning some grammatical rules and terms makes language learning easier for some learners. Other learners – e.g. young children – may not find them useful at all.
- Just learning grammatical rules and structures doesn't give learners enough help with learning how to communicate, which is the main purpose of language. So, much language teaching has moved away from teaching only grammar, and now teaches, e.g. functions, language skills and fluency as well as grammar.

See Units 9–14 for how we learn grammar, Units 15 and 16 for teaching grammatical structures, Units 18, 19 and 20 for planning lessons on grammatical structures and Units 28 and 31 for approaches to and ways of correcting grammar.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES (See page 171 for answers)

- Which part of speech is each of these words? To help you, think of the words in sentences and look at the table on pages 5–6. (Some words are more than one part of speech.)
 box during walk because younger well wow
 all decide water we clever herself though
- Use prefixes and suffixes to make as many words as you can from these words:
 new possible run
- Find three grammatical structures in your coursebook and complete this table.

Term	Form	Use

REFLECTION

What do you think these learners' comments mean? Do you agree with them? Why?/Why not?

- Learning grammar doesn't help me to speak English with English-speaking people.
- Learning grammar rules is really useful, but learning grammatical terms isn't.
- I didn't need to learn grammar when I learnt my first language.

DISCOVERY ACTIVITIES

- Find out which reference materials are available in your school to help you with grammar. Which are most useful? Why?
- Compare any two of these books on grammar or the grammar information on these two websites. Which do you prefer? Why?

Practical English Usage (second edition) by Michael Swan, Oxford University Press 1995

Discover English by Rod Bolitho and Brian Tomlinson, Macmillan 1995

English Grammar In Use (third edition) by Raymond Murphy, Cambridge University Press 2004

Uncovering Grammar by Scott Thornbury, Macmillan 2001

<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk>

<http://www.englishclub.com>

- Use a grammar book or the *TKT Glossary* to find the meaning of these terms:
active/passive voice, clause, modal verb, phrase, question tag, tense.

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TKT practice task (See page 176 for answers)

For questions 1-6, match the underlined words in the text below with the parts of speech listed A-G. There is one extra option which you do not need to use.

Parts of speech

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| A | conjunction |
| B | preposition |
| C | noun |
| D | adverb |
| E | pronoun |
| F | verb |
| G | adjective |

I want you to write a (1) list of ten things which (2) you like. Do it (3) carefully. But don't talk to me or your sister. (4) Ask me about any (5) difficult words you can't spell. (6) When you have finished, you can watch television.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
-

■ What is lexis?

Lexis is individual words or sets of words, i.e. vocabulary items, that have a specific meaning, for example: *tree, get up, first of all*.

■ Key concepts

What meanings does the word *tree* have?

Vocabulary items have different kinds of meaning. Firstly, there is the meaning that describes the thing or idea behind the vocabulary item, e.g. a tree is a large plant with a wooden trunk, branches and leaves. This meaning is called 'denotation'. Then there is figurative meaning. We speak, for example, of 'the tree of life' or 'a family tree'. This imaginative meaning comes from, but is different from, denotation. There is also the meaning that a vocabulary item has in the **context** (situation) in which it is used, e.g. in the sentence 'We couldn't see the house because of the tall trees in front of it' we understand how tall the trees were partly from knowing the meaning of *tall* and partly from knowing how tall a house is, so the meaning of *tall* in this sentence is partly defined by the context.

The meaning of some vocabulary items is created by adding **prefixes** or **suffixes** to base words (e.g. *unsafe, nationality*), or by making **compound words** (two or more words together that have meaning as a set, e.g. *telephone number, bookshop*) or by **collocation** (words that often occur together, e.g. *to take a holiday, heavy rain*).

To help distinguish the meaning of words from other related words, vocabulary items can be grouped into **synonyms** (words with the same or similar meanings), **antonyms** (words with opposite meanings), and **lexical sets** (groups of words that belong to the same topic area, e.g. members of the family, furniture, types of food). The table below shows some examples.

Vocabulary items	clear (adjective)	paper (noun)
Denotations	1 easy to understand 2 not covered or blocked 3 having no doubt	1 material used to write on or wrap things in 2 a newspaper 3 a document containing information
Synonyms	<i>simple</i> (for meaning 1) <i>certain</i> (for meaning 3)	(none)
Antonyms/ Opposites	<i>confusing</i> (meaning 1) <i>untidy, covered</i> (meaning 2) <i>unsure</i> (meaning 3)	(none)
Lexical sets	(none)	<i>stone, plastic, cloth, etc.</i>