

BEGINNER READING AND WRITING

WHAT WILL WE DO?

Beginner Steppingstone to Ultimate Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking Goals:

Grammar Foundations: Students will delve into essential grammar structures, beginning with the verb "be" and its diverse uses. For instance, the initial Beginner module emphasizes "Singular Pronouns + Be." Our selection and sequencing of grammar topics are grounded in our primary reference, the Azar-Hagen Grammar Series. Grammar serves as the cornerstone of our intensive program, from which the four skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—radiate. These skills align with the current grammar topic and follow a spiral approach. This means that as students advance through each lesson, they integrate new grammar concepts with previously learned ones.

Initial Module on Grammar: Each learning day will commence with a concise grammar session, taught in an explicit manner. In the inaugural module to be covered, learners will delve into the foundational aspects of English singular pronouns, particularly their correct association with the verb "be." The emphasis will be on forming fundamental affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentences utilizing these pronouns. Acting as a cornerstone, this segment readies learners for subsequent topics that encompass plural pronouns, both singular and plural nouns, contractions, negatives, and more nuanced sentence constructions using the verb "be." For a deeper insight, you can refer to the sample lessons linked to this module in the "learning activities" section below. In terms of the volume of content addressed weekly, it's critical to recognize that the Beginner level encompasses the initial nine chapters of the *Basic English Grammar* book, part of the Azar-Hagen Grammar Series. The nature of this expedited schedule necessitates a fast-paced learning approach. To facilitate this, students are provided a dedicated one-hour 'Review and Practice' session every Thursday, focusing on the week's material, in addition to access to designated tutoring hours. Further embedding the learning process, a 20-minute quiz is conducted each Sunday to assess students' grasp of the grammar topics covered the previous week, ensuring continuous tracking of their progress. This systematic approach significantly encourages regular, thorough revision. Before enrollment, students are informed of the rigorous demands of the program, underscoring the substantial commitment and personal responsibility essential for achieving success.

The Four Skills: Following the initial, explicitly taught grammar session, the day's lessons will split into two distinct class sessions: one centered on Reading and Writing, and the other on Listening and Speaking. These sessions will organically build upon the foundational grammar covered, integrating all four skills. While the material in each session will primarily align with the day's grammatical focus and concepts from previous lessons, embedding them within pertinent scenarios, the scope will extend beyond mere grammatical frameworks. In this context, learners will deepen their grasp of syntax and enhance their reading skills, laying emphasis on comprehending basic texts and refining their ability to identify and build structured sentences in a more interactive manner.

Writing: Within the Beginner-level writing instruction, students will integrate both the target and previously learned grammar as they explore foundational writing components. This encompasses crafting basic sentences, filling out forms, penning brief messages or stories, and honing spelling and punctuation appropriate to their level. For students showcasing advanced capabilities within the Beginner spectrum, we will commence instruction on essential elements of paragraph composition, emphasizing topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentences.

Reading: Apart from identifying the target and previous grammar in their reading, Beginner students will progress in honing specific reading skills. These encompass recognizing common words and phrases, enhancing phonological awareness when reading aloud, understanding short and straightforward texts, and identifying specific details within them.

Listening: In honing their listening skills, students will leverage both the target and previously learned grammar to understand familiar contexts, capture the essence of brief conversations, and identify fundamental details.

Speaking: Learners will hone their abilities to introduce themselves, participate in elementary interactions, employ phrases previously taught, and articulate immediate necessities, all while integrating the target and previously covered grammar.

Additional (Vocabulary): Finally, to ensure holistic language development at the Beginner level, learners will broaden their vocabulary with a focus on key adjectives and locational terms.

Grammar Content (Reference):

1. Using the Verb BE
2. Using the Verbs BE and HAVE
3. Using the Simple Present
4. Using the Present Progressive and the Imperative
5. Nouns and Pronouns
6. Count and Noncount Nouns
7. More About the Present Tense
8. Expressing Past Time, Part 1
9. Expressing Past Time, Part 2

HOW WILL WE DO IT?

Learning Strategies:

General Learning Strategies

- **interactive dialogues:** engaging in role-plays or scripted conversations to simulate real-life situations.
- **peer teaching:** pairing students and having one explain or teach a concept to the other.
- **group discussions:** small groups discussing topics or questions to practice speaking and comprehension.
- **project-based learning:** completing small projects (e.g., creating a restaurant menu or a travel brochure) in the target language.
- **think-pair-share:** students first reflect individually, then discuss with a partner, and finally share with the class.
- **jigsaw activities:** dividing a text or audio clip into sections. Each student or group studies a part and then teaches it to the others.
- **task-based learning:** engaging in tasks that require communication and problem-solving in the target language.
- **reflection journals:** writing about personal experiences, challenges, and progress in the target language.
- **portfolio assessment:** collecting students' work over time to track progress and areas for improvement.
- **real-world assignments:** tasks like conducting interviews, creating shopping lists, or writing postcards in the target language.

- **total physical response (TPR):** incorporating physical movement in response to language commands.
- **gallery walk:** posting work or images around the room, allowing students to walk around, view, and comment.
- **scaffolded questions:** posing questions that are progressively more challenging, aiding comprehension and response abilities.
- **feedback circles (peer review):** students provide constructive feedback on each other's spoken or written language output.
- **interactive workshops:** learners participate in hands-on activities, discussions, or problem-solving exercises, fostering an active learning environment.
- **collaborative learning:** learners work together in groups to solve problems, complete tasks, or learn new concepts.
- **interactive storytelling:** a narrative method where learners actively participate, make decisions, or interact with the unfolding story, making learning engaging and experiential.
- **flipped classroom:** learners review content independently (often online) and then apply knowledge through activities facilitated during in-person sessions.
- **error-correction:** educational activities where learners identify and correct errors (e.g., grammatical or factual) in an engaging manner, enhancing learning through correction.

Learning Strategies Classified by Skill

Reading:

- **story mapping:** creating a visual representation of the events or main ideas from a text.
- **matching activities:** linking sentences to corresponding images or headlines to ensure comprehension.
- **scavenger hunt:** searching within a text to find specific items, words, or ideas.
- **fill in the blanks:** completing sentences or paragraphs by inserting the correct words from a provided list.

Writing:

- **sentence starters:** initiating sentences that students complete, aiding in idea generation.
- **interactive journals:** personal writing spaces where students and teachers engage in written dialogue.
- **picture description:** writing based on visual prompts, encouraging descriptive skills.
- **guided paragraphs:** developing content based on given topic sentences or prompts to structure the writing.

Listening:

- **total physical response (TPR):** physically acting out audio instructions to show comprehension.
- **listening bingo:** an activity where students mark off words/phrases on cards as they hear them, promoting attentive listening.
- **gap fill:** filling in missing words on a transcript while listening to the audio.
- **pair summaries:** discussing and summarizing a listened clip with a partner to ensure understanding.

Speaking:

- **role play:** acting out scenarios or dialogues, simulating real-life communication.
- **information gap:** exchanging information in pairs when each student has only part of the required data.
- **show and tell:** presenting and describing a personal object to the class to foster public speaking skills.
- **circle talks:** engaging in group discussions, using a token to signify speaking turns, promoting orderly and inclusive conversation.

Learning Activities

Examples:

Preceding Grammar Lesson – Collaborative Learning on “Singular Pronouns + BE”

Lesson Objective – Students will be able to use singular pronouns with the verb "be" accurately.

In this **collaborative learning** lesson on “**Singular Pronouns + BE**,” students start with a concise overview of singular pronouns and their use with "be." They dive into "Pronoun Charades," where they enact roles and craft relevant sentences, like “She is a teacher.” After an initial demonstration by the instructor, periodic reflections and corrections reinforce proper grammar usage. This progresses to pair-based sentence crafting, followed by group poster-making, focusing on pronouns and the verb “be” (e.g., In small groups, they will create a poster that includes sentences, drawings, and any creative content related to the pronoun and verb “be”. For example, “He is a doctor” - and they can draw a picture of a doctor.). Concluding with an interactive board correction and a quiz.

Reading and Writing Lesson – Interactive Storytelling and Flipped Classroom on "Using 'Be' with Singular Pronouns"

Lesson Objectives – Identify and comprehend the use of 'be' with singular pronouns in reading. | Apply knowledge of the target grammar in creating simple sentences. | Engage in interactive storytelling by incorporating learned grammar.

In this Beginner reading and writing lesson on **"Using 'Be' with Singular Pronouns,"** students utilize a **flipped classroom method**, pre-engaging with grammar through a video lecture (a worksheet accompanies the video, with activities allowing students to practice the target grammar) and reading assignment (which students need to read and identify instances of the pronouns and 'be' used together, follow-up questions and a vocabulary list are provided to ensure comprehension and preparation for the lesson). The in-class time revolves around reinforcing this pre-learned knowledge and practically applying it through **interactive storytelling**. Students, in small groups, weave and share short stories that actively employ the target grammar, fostering both individual application and peer collaboration. The intertwining of direct grammar application with interactive and collaborative activities ensures a succinct, yet deeply engaging, educational journey, embedding singular pronoun usage effectively within contextual storytelling and peer review.

Listening and Speaking Lesson – Role Playing on "Using 'Be' with Singular Pronouns"

Lesson Objective – By the end of the lesson, students will be able to recognize and use the singular pronouns (I, you, he, she, it) in conjunction with the verb "be" in the present simple tense.

In this Beginner listening and speaking lesson on "Using 'Be' with Singular Pronouns," students are introduced to singular pronouns (I, you, he, she, it) and the conjugation of the verb "be" in the present simple tense. The lesson begins with a warm-up session where students are familiarized with the pronouns using picture flashcards. Next, the instructor presents the pronouns and their corresponding 'be' forms, supplemented with a short video for contextual understanding. In the practice phase, students engage in listening activities to identify the target language from dialogues and then participate in paired speaking exercises to create their own sentences. The lesson culminates with a **role-play activity** for students to apply their learning in a simulated real-life context.

Assessment Methods:

- **interactive dialogues:**
 - Formative: Observing and providing feedback during role-plays. Short quizzes on key phrases or vocabulary used in the scripted conversations.
 - Summative: A graded (rubric) role-play scenario where students are assessed on their fluency, pronunciation, and use of vocabulary.
- **peer teaching:**
 - Formative: Observations and feedback while one student is teaching another.
 - Summative: Assessment (rubric) of a student's ability to teach a new concept to their peers using the target language.
- **group discussions:**
 - Formative: Teacher observes discussions and offers guidance or corrections as needed.
 - Summative: Groups present a summary of their discussions, and they're graded (rubric) on clarity, comprehension, and vocabulary use.
- **project-based learning:**
 - Formative: Ongoing feedback as students develop their projects.
 - Summative: Completed projects are presented and graded (rubric) based on criteria such as creativity, accuracy, and language usage.
- **think-pair-share:**
 - Formative: Observations during the pairing phase.
 - Summative: Evaluation (rubric) of the shared ideas with the class based on clarity and relevance.
- **jigsaw activities:**
 - Formative: Monitoring comprehension as groups study their assigned sections.
 - Summative: Each group presents their section and is graded (rubric) on their teaching ability and understanding of the content.
- **task-based learning:**
 - Formative: Ongoing feedback during task engagement.
 - Summative: Evaluation of task outcomes and the quality of communication during the task.

- **reflection journals:**
 - Formative: Periodic checks of journal entries with comments for improvement.
 - Summative: Grading a selected journal entry based on depth of reflection and language use.
- **portfolio assessment:**
 - Formative: Ongoing feedback on items added to the portfolio.
 - Summative: Comprehensive review of the portfolio at the end of a term or course.
- **real-world assignments:**
 - Formative: Observations and feedback during the assignment process.
 - Summative: Grading of the completed assignments (like the quality of interviews or the content of a shopping list).
- **total physical response (TPR):**
 - Formative: Immediate feedback during physical response activities.
 - Summative: A series of commands are given, and students are assessed on their accuracy and speed of response.
- **gallery walk:**
 - Formative: Observations as students interact with and comment on the posted work.
 - Summative: Evaluation of students' comments for depth, relevance, and language usage.
- **scaffolded questions:**
 - Formative: Immediate feedback on students' responses to initial questions.
 - Summative: Grading of students' responses to the more challenging questions.
- **feedback circles (peer review):**
 - Formative: Monitoring and guiding peer review sessions.
 - Summative: Assessment of the quality, relevance, and language of the feedback given.
- **interactive workshops:**
 - Formative: Observations and feedback during workshop activities.
 - Summative: Post-workshop assessments, such as quizzes or reflections, to gauge comprehension.

- **collaborative learning:**
 - Formative: Ongoing observations and guidance during group activities.
 - Summative: Graded presentations or reports on the results of group projects or tasks.
- **interactive storytelling:**
 - Formative: Immediate feedback as learners make decisions within the story.
 - Summative: Evaluation based on students' decisions, interactions, and understanding of the story.
- **flipped classroom:**
 - Formative: Monitoring online discussions or Q&A sessions related to the independent content review.
 - Summative: Assessing in-class activities and applications of the learned content.
- **error-correction:**
 - Formative: Immediate feedback on identified errors.
 - Summative: Tests or quizzes that include intentional errors to check students' correction abilities.

Summative Assessment Example:

Project-Based Summative Assessment for Beginner Level Reading and Writing

"My Life Storybook" Project

Objective:

To demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the grammar topics learned, students will create a "My Life Storybook". This project will combine personal narrative with the grammatical constructs learned.

Components & Requirements:

1. **Introduction** (Using "Be" + Singular Pronouns + Introductions)
 - a. Start with a brief self-introduction using singular pronouns and the verb "be". E.g., "I am John."
2. **Family and Friends** (Using "Be" with Plural Pronouns + Singular/Plural Nouns)
 - a. Describe family members and friends. E.g., "They are my sisters." or "This is my friend."
3. **Personal Traits** (Be + Adjective)
 - a. Describe yourself using at least five adjectives. E.g., "I am tall and friendly."
4. **Favorite Places** (Be + a Place)
 - a. Discuss your favorite places or places you've visited. E.g., "My school is near the park."
5. **Challenging Times** (Negative with "Be" + Contractions with "Be")
 - a. Write about a challenging time or event, using negatives and contractions. E.g., "I wasn't ready for the test."
6. **Preferences** (Using "Be" and "Have")
 - a. Describe things you have and things you like/dislike. E.g., "I have a pet cat." or "I like ice cream."
7. **Daily Routine** (Using the Simple Present)
 - a. Describe a typical day using the simple present tense and frequency adverbs. E.g., "I always wake up at 7am."
8. **Hobbies and Activities** (Using the Present Progressive)
 - a. Talk about what you're currently learning or doing as a hobby. E.g., "I am learning to play the guitar."

9. **Commands for a Better World** (Using the Imperative)

- a. List down commands or requests you'd give to make the world a better place. E.g., "Recycle more." or "Plant more trees."

10. **My Dreams and Hopes** (Using Nouns and Pronouns)

- a. Describe your dreams and hopes using a variety of noun forms and pronouns learned. E.g., "My biggest hope is to travel the world."

Peer Review Process for "My Life Storybook":

Pairing Up:

Once students have a draft of their storybook, pair them up. Ideally, try to pair students with differing strengths or those who might provide unique perspectives.

Review Guidelines:

- Provide students with a peer review sheet or checklist. This should include specific grammar constructs they need to look for (based on the components of the storybook) and general feedback areas like clarity, coherence, and creativity.
- For example, under the section 'Family and Friends', the checklist might prompt: "Has the writer used plural pronouns correctly? Are there any instances where singular/plural nouns are misused?"

Feedback Session:

- Give pairs a set amount of time to exchange and review each other's drafts. They should note down feedback on the review sheet or directly on the storybook draft.
- Encourage constructive feedback. Instead of just noting something is wrong, they should provide suggestions or ask clarifying questions, e.g., "I think 'They is my friends' might be a typo. Did you mean 'They are my friends'?"

Reflection & Revision:

After the peer review, students should have some time to go through the feedback they received, reflect upon it, and make revisions to their storybook as needed.

Presentation:

Compile your storybook with illustrations, photos, or drawings. Organize the content neatly, ensuring that each component is distinctly represented.

Assessment Criteria:

- Accuracy in the use of grammar constructs.
- Clarity and coherence in written expressions.
- Creativity in presenting personal narratives.
- Completeness of all components (meaning items 1-10 in the Components & Requirements section above).
- Application of peer review feedback.

Listening and Speaking Summative Project-Based Assessment for Beginner Level Adults

Project Title: "Introducing My Imaginary Friend"

Objective:

To assess learners' comprehension and use of singular and plural pronouns, nouns, contractions, negatives with "be", and basic conversational phrases introduced in the course.

Description:

Students will create an imaginary friend and introduce this character to the class. This imaginary character will embody all the lessons learned during the week, allowing the student to demonstrate their understanding and application of the content covered.

Instructions:

Creation of the Imaginary Friend:

Students will develop a profile for their imaginary friend, including:

- Name
- Age
- Nationality
- Occupation
- Physical and personality descriptions using adjectives

Scripting the Introduction:

Students will write a short introduction script using the following guidelines:

- Use of singular and plural pronouns.
- Incorporation of singular and plural nouns.
- Use of contractions with "be."
- Incorporation of negative sentences with "be."
- Use of adjectives with "be" to describe their friend's personality and physical appearance.

Listening Component:

Before presenting their imaginary friend to the class, each student will listen to two of their classmates' drafts and provide feedback based on understanding and use of the constructs learned during the week.

Speaking Component:

Students will present their imaginary friend to the class, enacting both sides of the conversation: their own and their imaginary friend's.

Feedback:

After each presentation, the class will be prompted to ask the imaginary friend one question (e.g., "Where are you from?", "What is your job?", "Why are you sad?"). This will test the presenter's ability to think on their feet and answer in character using the structures learned.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Correct Use of Language Structures: Use of singular and plural pronouns, nouns, contractions, negatives with "be", and adjectives as per the lessons.
- Fluency and Pronunciation: Clarity in speech, correct pronunciation, and smooth transition in the conversation.
- Listening and Feedback Skills: Ability to understand peers' introductions and provide constructive feedback.
- Engagement in Q&A: Ability to respond accurately and appropriately to questions from classmates about their imaginary friend.