



# ENGLISH

## HELPING ENGLISH TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOUNDATION (ETF) OFFERS PRACTITIONERS A RANGE OF RESOURCES, COURSES AND RESEARCH TO HELP WITH ENGLISH TEACHING. TO WATCH A VIDEO OF HOW THE ETF WAS ABLE TO HELP LIAM ALDERTON, OF EAST COAST COLLEGE, GREAT YARMOUTH, DEVELOP DIGITAL APPROACHES TO TEACHING BOTH ENGLISH AND MATHS, SCAN THE QR CODE (RIGHT) OR SEARCH FOR MATHS AND ENGLISH SUPPORT AT [WWW.ET-FOUNDATION.CO.UK](http://WWW.ET-FOUNDATION.CO.UK)



## ETF SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH TEACHING

Support and courses are available from the Education and Training Foundation to help with effective teaching of English for teachers of GCSE, Functional Skills, apprenticeships and study programmes.

- A combined English GCSE and Functional Skills self-assessment tool enables you to identify areas for updating.
- A range of English modules is available from Foundation Online Learning.
- The English exhibition site on the Excellence Gateway also provides a portal to a range of tools, resources and case studies.
- Teachers and trainers can contact their regional specialist English lead for more advice, guidance and support.
- Practitioners are also invited to join the ETF's Professional Exchange Networks (PENs) to explore regional challenges and reflect on effective practice in the sector.
- Education and training providers can request a visit from the ETF's dedicated team of specialists to identify strategic support needs in English.

### Contact details:

For the self-assessment tools and links to courses, visit the ETF's website and select the options under the 'Supporting you' tab at the top of the page. Or visit [www.foundationonline.org.uk](http://www.foundationonline.org.uk)

To discuss a strategic visit, please contact the ETF's head of Maths and English, Imke Djouadj, at: [imke.djouadj@etfoundation.co.uk](mailto:imke.djouadj@etfoundation.co.uk)

## TEN TOP TIPS

There are no simple solutions to improving English provision and outcomes. However, there is a growing body of expertise that suggests some critical success factors for providers.

- 1 Have a clear vision of what is required to develop a whole organisational approach to English.
- 2 Actively promote the links between the skills on learners' main programme of study and discrete English lessons to help them see the relevance of English.
- 3 Ensure that effective teaching, learning and assessment underpin the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- 4 Address underpinning causes, not symptoms. For instance, if attendance is an issue, consider what might be the underlying cause and focus on this.
- 5 Ensure the English strategy, and associated policy, meet the needs of individual learners.
- 6 Train observers of English and vocational lessons to recognise and give feedback on the effective development of English.
- 7 Ensure that specialist English teachers have dedicated meetings with vocational teams to plan and contextualise the curriculum.
- 8 Develop a training needs analysis to inform a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme for all staff.
- 9 Ensure learners' starting points are accurately assessed and recorded by all tutors involved in programme delivery using effective Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies.
- 10 Use innovative approaches, including learning technologies, to engage learners with English.

To access these English tips in full, visit the Educational and Training Foundation website and search Maths and English.

## GET READING

The Quick Reads initiative, launched in 2006, is a great way to introduce adults, and 16 to 18s, who may lack confidence in reading, to books by well-known authors. Quick Reads are abridged versions of mainstream books. They are frequently shared in adult learning organisations, colleges, prisons and workplaces. More details at <https://readingagency.org.uk>

## FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ENGLISH

### The government is reforming maths Functional Skills in partnership with Ofqual and the ETF. Find out more about the ETF's dedicated support for FS on the ETF Online Booking site.

The ETF undertook research in support of the FS reforms. To read the reports and the

government's response, scan the QR code (left) or visit [www.et-foundation.co.uk](http://www.et-foundation.co.uk)



## EMBEDDING TECHNOLOGY

### The ETF has published a report that explores the barriers and enablers to embedding learning technology in the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment in further education colleges.

To access the report, scan the QR code or access it on the ETF website under the 'Research' tab.



## SET DISCOUNTS

### SET members are eligible for an exclusive 15 per cent discount on most English courses (and many others) run by the ETF.

For information on all member benefits visit the SET website and click on 'Membership'. <https://set.et-foundation.co.uk>

## NATIONAL BODIES

The National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE) provides additional support to teachers of English. RaPAL (Research and Practice in Adult Literacies) has a free online back catalogue of digital journals and stimulating ideas on teaching practice in English language and literacy.

# THE ENGLISH CHALLENGE

The National Literacy Trust reckons just over five million adults in England (15 per cent) have literacy skills at or below those we would expect to see in an 11-year-old. And yet the need for communication is greater than ever before. We are bombarded by the written and spoken word in electronic communication and social media. Businesses and services increasingly require us to self-serve online, often requiring high levels of literacy and comprehension skills.

Sue Southwood, head of maths and English at the Education and Training Foundation, says that teachers, and education and training providers, need to adopt a whole organisation approach to teaching English and teaching it in context, not as a set of atomised skills. As English is essentially about communication, then, more than any subject, the teaching of English lends itself to social interaction.

1000  
WORDS

English is constantly evolving: around 1,000 new words are 'born' every year.

## ESOL TEACHERS

The ETF offers a wealth of useful information and advice, including teaching tips, for those teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

This is available via the Excellence Gateway at <https://esol.excellencegateway.org.uk/>

The National Association for Teaching English and Other Community Languages to Adults (NATECLA) also offers useful resources for ESOL teachers.

[www.natecla.org.uk](http://www.natecla.org.uk)

## OFFENDER LEARNING

57% of people entering prison have the reading skills of a typical 11-year-old, at best. 44% cent of adults reoffend within a year of release, as do 69% of young people. The number of English qualifications achieved at level 1 or 2 fell by 38% between 2011–12 and 2015–16. (Sources: The Prison Reform Trust and Prisoners' Education Trust)

## ENGLISH JARGON-BUSTER

**Antimetabole** = the repetition of words in reverse order for emphasis.

**Assonance** = Repetition of vowel sound (e.g. cold, told, bold).

**Connotation** = an idea or image which is suggested by a word, which is not its main dictionary meaning e.g. a snake=an untrustworthy person.

**Consonance** = repetition of similar consonant sound in closely associated words (pitter and patter).

**Dialogue** = the words said by a character in a story or play.

**Metanoia** = a fundamental change in character or outlook.

**Metaphor** = says one often unconnected thing is like another for dramatic effect, e.g. all the world is a stage, love is a battlefield.

**Narrative** = the sequence of events in a plot; a story.

**Parataxis** = use of very short, sharp sentences.

**Simile** = a comparison using 'like' or 'as' to create a vivid image, e.g. as big as a whale; float like a butterfly, sting like a bee.

**Split infinitive** = placing an adverb between to and a verb. Once frowned upon, most people today are more relaxed about the split infinitive e.g. to boldly go, to softly walk.

## VOCATIONAL TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

Embedding English can be a challenge for those teaching vocational skills.

Here are some tips:

- 1 Try getting your learners to plan a project or assignment. Get them to give feedback on each other's work.
- 2 Get to know your English tutors. You can support each other.
- 3 Get your learners reading. Learners on vocational courses will have to follow written instructions as part of their training. Use instructions as reading material. Get them to record new vocabulary, and discuss meaning, spelling and punctuation.

## Making sense

According to research we need to understand 98% of the words we read to comfortably comprehend the meaning of the text we are reading. On a typical book page of 300 words, that still means not knowing the meaning of six words.

AROUND  
17%

of the UK school and college population now speaks English as an additional language.



## SPEAKING AND LISTENING GAMES

1. Split the class into two teams. Give one student a speaking topic e.g. summer holidays. The student must then speak for a set time without hesitation, grammatical mistakes or vocabulary mistakes. If the other team identifies an error, they get a point.

2. Each learner has a piece of paper with "agree" written on one side and "disagree" on the other. Read aloud a controversial statement with which learners must hold up "agree" or "disagree". Choose a student from each side to explain and debate their positions.

## GRAMMAR

Grammar is the most important piece of equipment that learners of language need for success, says the eminent linguist and writer, Professor David Crystal.

But the teaching of grammar must be a dynamic process that is rooted in the language itself.

Words by themselves don't make sense. Sentences make sense of words. And grammar is the study of how they do this.

Teachers who want to convey the excitement of grammar to students should focus on the meanings that sentences express and the effects that they convey.

David suggests a couple of games. Adjective tennis, where students have to choose appropriate adjectives to go with the noun the teacher drops into the court. Or finding a good noun to go with some adjectives. "The ugly, smelly, ferocious INSERT NOUN came into the room."



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