

## TEACHER'S CORNER – SEPTEMBER 2017

### TEACHING BEGINNERS

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Teaching English to beginner students can seem very challenging. You may wonder where to start and how to make content accessible when students have very limited or no knowledge of the language. However, beginner-level students can advance quite quickly, and therefore they can be very exciting and rewarding to teach.

There are several things to keep in mind when teaching a class for beginners. First, beginners need a classroom environment that gives frequent opportunities to acquire and practice everyday language. A daily routine that uses familiar, repeated language structures and procedures is an excellent way to establish this. Ideas for how to establish such a routine will be discussed in Week 1 of this month's Teacher's Corner.

Beginner-level students also need to grow their vocabularies significantly. These students need to be deliberately taught many new words as well as have multiple opportunities to practice these words. During week 2, we will provide an easy-to-use vocabulary chart and accompanying activities to help students review new words over several class periods.

Finally, teachers need to offer ways for beginners to access information and participate in the classroom in meaningful ways. In week 3, we will present different types of questions (or modifications to existing questions) that allow beginners to demonstrate their knowledge at an early stage in their language development. During that week, you will also be presented with several non-traditional ways of letting beginners respond to questions. We'll discuss how to use language supports such as words banks and sentence frames to help beginner-level students feel ready to communicate in English during week 4.

Beginners learn quickly when they feel comfortable and have the tools needed to take risks with language in the classroom. This month's Teacher's Corner will share strategies to help beginners gain vocabulary and language skills needed to succeed.