

Session Aims

By the end of the session, you will:

- ☐ Discuss what is special about teaching an exam class
- ☐ Identify qualities that make a successful exams teacher
- ☐ Explain how to pace the course
- ☐ Learn how to build students' exam skills
- ☐ Get advice how to balance teaching and testing in an exam class

What is special about teaching an exam class?

Task 1: What Teachers Need to Know

In this exercise, you will decide whether a teacher needs to know each of the following pieces of information when preparing to teach an exam class. Indicate "Yes" if the teacher needs to know it, and "No" if the teacher does not need to know it.

1. How long is the exam?
2. The price of students' textbooks.
3. What skills are tested in the exam?
4. The number of different parts in the exam.
5. The exam venue's seating capacity.
6. How much time is allowed for each part of the exam?
7. What are the assessment criteria for each question or task type?
8. The students' favourite study spots.
9. How the exam is marked.
10. How the results are presented.

Activity type: Short answer type

- ☐ Is this activity useful for you?
- ☐ How might you adapt it?
- ☐ What learning points can you take away with you?

Task 2: Qualities of a Successful Exams Teacher

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words or phrases from the text to complete the sentences about the qualities of a successful exams teacher.

1. A successful exams teacher thinks that exams are _____ and _____.
2. A successful exams teacher enjoys the _____ of teaching towards an exam and manages their own and their students' _____ effectively.
3. A successful exams teacher knows and understands the _____ that they are teaching, including the necessary _____ details.
4. A successful exams teacher listens to students' _____ and _____.
5. A successful exams teacher gives honest and direct _____ on student _____.
6. A successful exams teacher _____ students and fosters _____ learning.

Task 3: Following Instructions

Aim: Practise following instructions in a fun way. Consider the importance of enabling your students to follow instructions accurately

Please follow the instructions. Do this test in 90 seconds.

1. Read all the instructions from 1-15 before starting this test.
2. Write all your answers in the boxes A-J.
3. Write your full name in Box B.
4. In Box J, write the name of your IELTS centre.
5. Calculate 30×12 in Box E.
6. Draw 3 cats of different sizes in Box A.
7. Shade in Box I with diagonal lines.
8. Print the name of your friend in Box D.
9. Check to see how many seconds you have taken so far.
10. In Box C, write the word 'exam' twice.
11. Draw a circle around one of those words.
12. Do not write anything in Box F or G.

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13. In Box H, write “I can follow directions”.
14. Put your hand up when you have done all of these things.
15. Do only instructions 1, 2 and 3.

Answer Sheet

A	B
C	D
E	F
G	H
I	J

Activity type: Speed reading

- ☐ Is this activity useful for your students?
- ☐ How might you adapt it?
- ☐ What learning points can you take away with you?

Task 4: Following and Understanding Instructions in the IELTS Exam Rubric

In the following ten sentences, identify the key words and highlight or underline them.

1. Complete the diagram below by writing ONE or TWO words in each space.
2. You should spend about 20 minutes on this activity.
3. Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features and make comparisons where relevant.
4. You borrowed some books from a library. Unfortunately, you have to leave Chennai to visit a sick relative and cannot return the books on time. Write a letter to the library. Explain what has happened and tell them what you want to do about it.
5. Without capital punishment (the death penalty) our lives are less secure and crimes of violence increase. Capital punishment is essential to control violence in society. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?
6. You should write at least 250 words.
7. Give reasons for your answer and include relevant examples from your own knowledge and experience.
8. Read this prompt. You have one minute to prepare. Here is a pencil and a piece of paper. You may make notes if you wish.
9. Using no more than three words for each, identify two types of women that regularly experience discrimination when seeking private rental accommodation. Write the names of one group each in boxes 6 and 7 on your answer sheet.
10. Do the following statements reflect the claims of the writer in the reading passage? In boxes 14-17 on your answer sheet write: YES if the statement reflects the claims of the writer; NO if the statement contradicts the writer's claims and NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this.

Now discuss the meaning of the key words you have highlighted and analyse exactly what the rubric requires of the student.

What advice would you give your students when reading or listening to instructions?

What are the key learning points that have arisen from this session?

Evaluating Resources

Task Aims

By the end of this task you will have:

- ☐ considered how to evaluate resources
- ☐ thought about evaluation criteria from a teacher's as well as a student's perspective
- ☐ designed an evaluation checklist of your own
- ☐ practised using your checklist to evaluate one book
- ☐ identified what to do with a book you are not satisfied with but have to use

Before we start

We can evaluate resources in different ways. We can either step into the shoes of the student or we can choose to take the teacher's angle. In pairs, brainstorm as many criteria for evaluating resources as you can. You have 4 minutes for this exercise. Make some notes below.

Possible criteria		
Teacher	Student	Both
		Price

Task 1

In your group, look at the book your trainer gives you and spend no more than one minute looking through it. Give your gut reaction to the book.

Now look at the book again, using your evaluation checklist and do a detailed analysis of one unit in particular.

What strengths and weaknesses did your checklist reveal about the book?

strengths	weaknesses

How does your checklist evaluation of the book differ from your initial gut reaction to it?

Would you recommend this book for a class of learners at your institution? Why? Why not? Give three reasons for your answer.

Because each group of learners is different, course books are probably never able to meet all the needs of all learners and teachers. Brainstorm all the things that you can think of doing to improve a less than ideal course book.

Read the table below. Are your suggestions mentioned? Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- ☐ Which of the 4 types of action have you already had experience with, if any?
- ☐ Which requires the most work for the teacher? Why?
- ☐ Which requires the least? Why?

You Can't Always Get What You Want	
Change of some sort is inevitable, if you want a book to fit your aims, your setting, and most of all your learners. There are various actions you can take to tailor a selected course book to fit your teaching situation.	
Change Make small changes to the existing materials in the course book.	Remove Remove a course book activity from the lesson.
Replace Replace one activity with another related one which is more suitable.	Add Add an extra activity in an area not covered sufficiently in the book.

Top Take Away Tips for Adapting a Course Book

- Lead into a topic by personalising the subject matter.
- Use OHTs or PowerPoint to explain activities/go through answers.
- Bring in visuals and real objects.
- Get students predicting in reading tasks.
- Ask students to read aloud to each other.
- Review vocabulary at the end of a lesson by hot seating or Taboo.
- Think of more examples in grammar explanations and personalise them.
- Get students to categorise vocabulary or put onto a scale.
- Introduce a range of different activities (think back to some of the activity types we have demonstrated in this workshop.)
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Action Plan

I learned

When I get back to work, I am going to

I would like to know more about

I am going to find out this by

ANSWERS

Task 1

1. Yes - Teachers need to know the length of the exam to help students manage their time effectively.
2. No - While helpful, knowing the price of textbooks is not essential for teaching the exam content.
3. Yes - Knowing the skills tested is crucial for focused preparation.
4. Yes - Understanding the structure of the exam helps in organizing the study plan.
5. No - The seating capacity of the exam venue is not directly relevant to teaching the exam.
6. Yes - Knowing the time allowed for each part is essential for teaching time management skills.
7. Yes - Teachers must understand the assessment criteria to guide students on how to answer questions effectively.
8. No - While knowing where students prefer to study could be useful for advising, it is not essential.
9. Yes - Teachers need to understand how exams are marked to help students improve their performance.
10. Yes - Knowing how results are presented helps in setting clear expectations for students.

Task 2

1. useful, important
2. discipline, time
3. exam, administrative
4. concerns, anxieties
5. feedback, performance
6. motivates, autonomous