

NST Teacher Handbook

Welcome to New Taipei City!

Your New Home

New Taipei City is the most populous city in Taiwan, with just under 4 million residents and 29 different districts. New Taipei City encircles Taipei city at its center, forming the Taipei City metro area, which you are now a part of.

Something for Everyone

New Taipei City offers an eclectic mix of old and new sights, urban and natural environments, quiet cafes and bustling night markets, as well as abundant Taiwanese and international culture. No matter what you're looking for, it's most likely waiting for you in one of our 29 distinct districts.

The City is brimming with historical attractions, temples, museums and galleries, natural wonders, hiking, biking, sports parks, night markets and karaoke (called KTV in Taiwan).

Emergency Service Phone Numbers

If you happen to need emergency assistance for any reason, police, ambulances and the fire department can be reached with the phone numbers provided below. You can receive help, as soon as you step off the plane, even before you have an ARC, work permit or health card.

Ambulance and Fire: 119

Police: 110

For other helpful telephone numbers, click link below.

<http://www.reachtoteachrecruiting.com/guide-to-taiwan-emergency-numbers.html>

Local Living

Living abroad presents as many challenges as it does rewards. The key to enjoying your time in a new place is understanding the local culture. Just like your home country, culture in Taiwan varies from region to region, city to city and even district to district.

Urban Adjustment

- **Urban Lifestyle:** If you're not used to a large urban environment, city life in New Taipei City, or any metropolis, may require adjusting your habits and expectations.
- **Population:** New Taipei, or *Xīnběi Shì* (新北市), as your neighbors might call it, is the largest city in Taiwan, with a population just under 4 million, about the

same as Los Angeles in America, but many urban neighborhoods here have a much higher population density than L.A., more similar to New York City.

- **Public Places:** This means Taipei residents are used to large crowds, long lines and some tight rides on public transportation. Personal space is smaller here, so a bit of unintentional bumping or nudging might happen in bustling public spaces.
- **Be Aware:** Take care when checking your phone or wearing headphones in public, as there are likely nearby pedestrians, scooters and cars.
- **Traffic:** Whether walking or driving in New Taipei City, you need to know...

1. **Crosswalks:** Cars, scooters and buses, can and will drive across crosswalks, even when you have the green symbol for *walk*. This is perfectly legal. Drivers *should* yield for pedestrians, but don't always do so.

2. **No Right on Red:** When driving or biking, right turns at red lights are prohibited.

3. **Passing on the Right:** Though not advisable, it is not uncommon to be passed on the right while commuting on local roads and expressways, especially by scooters.

4. **Taxis:** When exiting a taxi, always look behind you first, even if you're exiting from the passenger side. Some scooter drivers may try to squeeze through between you and the curb.

Getting Around the City

**To learn more about each of the transportation options, click on the section title to access a hyperlink.*

[Walking](#)

Make sure you can get home: When walking around the Taipei metro area, always keep a copy of your home address written in Chinese and enough cash for a taxi home, in case you get lost.

Tip: If you forget your written address, you can always use your phone or Chinese skills to point to an MRT stop you'd like to go to.

Using Landmarks: Unless you can read Chinese, many signs may appear deceptively similar, so it's best to take a few pictures for reference when exploring a new area, serving as a digital trail of breadcrumbs back home.

Winding Streets: While many city streets are arranged in an easy-to-follow grid structure, Taipei's are not. Many streets change direction, even during a short distance; you may have set off due north five minutes ago, but are now heading east, due to an unnoticeable curve in the road.

Dead Ends: In more modernized parts of town, like Xinyi Rd. near Taipei 101, pedestrians can enjoy long, straight stretches of road with plenty of landmarks. As you explore smaller neighborhoods, however, many streets that appear to connect two roads may actually be dead ends, especially in older residential neighborhoods.

[Taxis](#)

Rates: Starting rates vary by city, but usually start at about \$70NT for the first 1.25km, then add \$20NT for each additional 200m. Nighttime rides cost more, as do long distances, so check with your driver to make sure you're OK with the price.

Most Drivers Don't Speak English: It's advisable to have your destination written in Chinese, as well as your home address, unless you're confident your Chinese is clear enough to give directions.

Carry Small Bills: Most drivers carry ample change, but some don't. To ensure a quick and easy transaction, it's best carry small bills.

Tipping: Tipping your taxi driver, similar to a server in a restaurant in Taiwan, is not usually done or expected, but if you're feeling generous for great service, it will most likely be appreciated.

[YouBikes](#)

- YouBike, or more officially the Taipei Bike Sharing System, is a large network of bicycle rental kiosks in [Taipei City](#). With a seemingly countless amount of bicycle parking stations located around the city, many of which are located within walking distance of MRT stations and tourist destinations, YouBike is an excellent way to get around the city, complementing the [MRT](#) and [public bus](#) systems, giving visitors the option of conveniently renting a bicycle to explore the city or one of Taipei's many bicycle paths.
- Advantages of the YouBike system include its multiple kiosk locations around the city, convenient payment and rental by simply using an [EasyCard](#), and **free usage for the first 30 minutes of rental** for trips originating in New Taipei City.
- **How to rent a bicycle in Taipei using YouBike**
If it is your first rental, use the kiosk terminal to register your [Easycard](#) and local phone number for verification. There is no deposit required. One-time users are allowed to use a credit card (with security chip) for rental, however, *we recommend using the [Easycard](#)*. One local phone number can register 5 Easycards for YouBike usage.
- *YouBike information source: [Guide to Taipei.com](#)*

Public Busses

- Taiwan's public transit system is extremely well developed, especially in Taipei where it covers practically every possible destination with relatively few transfers. Along with the [Taipei MRT](#), the bus system accepts [the EasyCard](#) and provides an excellent, convenient way to get around the city.
- Most buses are bilingual in Chinese and English, however, the bus system is not as standardised as the [MRT](#). The bus system operated under cooperation between 15 private agencies, so translation and romanisation is not always consistent. It is recommended to always keep a Chinese written version of your destination for comparison.
- Buses in Taiwan are commonly referred to as *gōngchē* (公車), compared to mainland China's *gōngjiāochē* (公交车).
- *Public Busses information source: Guide to Taipei.com*

The Taipei Metro (MRT)

- The Taipei Metro, often called the *MRT*, is the easiest way to see the Taipei and New Taipei City. It operates mostly underground as a subway, although some lines are elevated, providing lovely views of the surrounding area. For longer trips, TRA and HSR trains are both great options.

MRT Fare and Travel Time Inquiries Link:


<http://english.metro.taipei/ct.asp?xItem=1056377&CtNode=70243&mp=122036>

- **MRT Rules:** No food or drinks are allowed on the MRT or city buses, but this is how they stay so clean. Food and drinks *are* allowed on HSR and TRA, as long as they're not messy or smell strongly.
- Each MRT and train has English signs, maps and announcements so you know where to get on, off and transfer.
- While buses offer more destinations, English is not guaranteed on your ride.
- Although one-way tickets (tokens) are available, the easiest and least expensive way to use the MRT is with your Easy Card.

[Easy Card \(Questions and Answers\)](#)



Easy Card Website: <https://www.easycard.com.tw/english/easycard/index.asp>

- **Q:** What is an Easy Card?
A: A deposit-based “Touch-and-Go” ticketing system
- **Q:** What does it look like?
A: Easy Cards are the size of a credit card, but contain no personal information. Be sure it has the “compass” symbol, like this . Any card without this symbol, is likely just a gift card and can’t be used for the same.
- **Q:** How are they used?
A: After buying one, you can add money to your card at any convenience store or MRT station, then scan them to ride the MRT, bus, YouBikes (after setting up a U-Bike Account) some trains and even shop at 7-11 or Family Mart. To add money, just hand your card and some cash to the clerk. To use the money on it, place your Easy Card on a scanner and money will be deducted.
- **Q:** If my balance is low, can I still ride the MRT?
A: Yes, as long as your balance is positive, you can get on the MRT or bus. When you exit, if your trip cost more than the money on your card, your balance will be negative. After your trip, just add some more money and you’re ready to go.

Traveling by Train in Taiwan

The Big Picture

Traveling by train is one of the most convenient, affordable ways to see Taiwan. When choosing your train, you have two basic options:

TRA (Taiwan Railways Administration) operates all of the conventional passenger trains in Taiwan. When riding TRA, you have your choice of four trains, ranging from the inexpensive, but rather slow Local Train, up to the more expensive and much faster Limited Express.

TRA Train Selection

When traveling by TRA in Taiwan, you usually have multiple options for trains. When traveling short distances there’s not much difference in travel time, but for longer trips, the faster trains will save you time and provide you with more comfortable seats, but do cost a bit more.

Local Train (區間車) Qūjiān chē

Short to medium distance commuter train, stops at all stations. No assigned seating.

The local train goes places the MRT does not, but there are other options for travelers who prefer reserved (and more comfortable) seats.

Local Express (區間快車) Qūjiān kuàichē

Usually run on the Coast Line and Yilan Line. The local express doesn't stop at every stop, so is quicker than the local train, but still quite a bit slower than the other trains.

Tip: If you're traveling more than an hour, these faster trains offer less stops, larger, more comfortable seats and more space to store luggage.

Standing Room: Even if you can't find a seat, many trains offer "standing room" tickets. If you buy one of these, you can sit down (in certain, marked cars) and enjoy a seat until/unless another traveler has already reserved it.

Chu-Kuang (inaccurate pinyin) Express (莒光號) Jǔ guāng hào

More stops than Tzu-Chiang. Assigned seating. Non-reserved tickets are sold at 80% of original price.

Tzu-Chiang (inaccurate pinyin) Limited Express (自強號) Zìqiáng hào

The fastest (and most expensive) service. It stops at the fewest stations. It uses assigned seating while on-reserved (standing) tickets are also sold at full price. There are 6 train classes used for *Tzu-Chiang*: orange/yellow EMU, red/white EMU, orange/silver push-pull, yellow/silver DMU, white push-pull, and red/white push-pull. *Tickets for all 6 types of *Tzu-Chiang* are the same price.

Taroko Express (太魯閣號) Tài lǔ gé hào

A faster variant of the *Tzu-Chiang* which uses tilting trains. Launched in 2007.

Puyuma Express (普悠瑪號) Pǔ yōu mǎ hào

The fastest variant of the *Tzu-Chiang* operating between Shulin and Hualien. Also uses tilting trains. Launched in 2013.

Tip: The Puyuma Express is, by far, the nicest of the TRA trains and only slightly more expensive. If you have the opportunity and the means, treat yourself!

HSR (Taiwan High-Speed Rail) by far the fastest option and operates independently of TRA, although only on the west coast, from Taipei to Kaohsiung. While the HSR travels at a maximum speed of almost 300km/h, a roundtrip from Taipei to Kaohsiung will cost just under \$3,000NT.

Tip: If you buy your HSR tickets 5-28 days before the departure date, you may be able to snatch up an "Early Bird Discount". Although this discount is in limited quantity, travelers lucky enough to get it receive up to a 35% discount on their fare.

Online Schedules, Fares & Time Tables

TRA: http://163.29.3.92/twrail/EN_QuickSearch.aspx

HSR: <https://www.thsrc.com.tw/en/Home?force=1>

Traveling During Holidays: When planning a trip during a national holiday in Taiwan, you must plan well in advance. Because you live in the Taipei metro area, by the far the most densely populated area in the country, train tickets out of the city become scarce quickly, especially on the first and last days of a holiday, so make sure you reserve your ticket to *AND* from your travel destination. The more popular the destination, the more quickly the tickets will sell.

[Healthcare \(National Health Insurance Administration\)](#)

According to a 2017 article from *Business Insider*, "[The 21 Countries with the Best Quality of Life for Expats](#)," Taiwan ranked #1 because, "The country rose right to the top of the ranking for its quality of medical care and its affordability."

While many westerners are accustomed to soaring medical costs, extremely long waits and inefficient medical industry bureaucracy, Taiwan residents enjoy some of the best healthcare in the world at extremely reasonable prices.

Before you get your healthcare card: If you need healthcare, even for non-emergencies, before you receive your healthcare card, hospitals and clinics will still treat you and give you any necessary prescriptions; you'll just be charged the uninsured price, but may be eligible to return after your visit, with your healthcare card and receipt, and be reimbursed the difference between the two prices. Just check beforehand to make sure.

- **No Chinese, No Problem:** If the front desk worker doesn't speak English, don't worry, the doctor will. Just follow these steps...

How to See a Doctor When You Can't Speak Chinese

1. Give the worker your ARC and Health Insurance card, then pay a small fee, usually less than \$150NT.
2. Take your numbered ticket and go to the proper waiting area. Usually, it's nearby, but may sometimes be located around a corner or down the hall.
3. Listen for your *Chinese Name* and/or number.
4. If you don't know which room to enter, show your ticket to the front desk worker and they'll point you in the right direction.
5. Your doctor will speak English. If he's not the right doctor for you, he/she will help you get to the doctor you need.

Clinics vs. Hospitals: What's the Difference?

- Health care facilities in Taiwan are divided mainly into clinics and hospitals.
- Clinics are generally smaller, quicker and more specialized (Ex: Eyes, Ears, Nose, Throat, dental, etc.).
- Hospitals are larger, take longer, but offer more care options, including some 24-hour emergency rooms.
- If you need a note from your doctor to your school, it's best to ask during your visit.
- **Tip:** More popular hospitals, like NTU Hospital, fill up quickly, so plan your visit ahead, whenever possible.

Local Culture

Is Everyone Looking at Me?

- *Everyone?* No. Lots of people? Probably.
- Because Taiwan's population is mostly Taiwanese, it's easy to stand out in a crowd, especially if your appearance is obviously not Taiwanese.
- The truth is, your appearance will attract attention, especially from people that seldom see someone who looks like you.
- **The good news:** a smile is universal and communicates your good nature and intentions across any cultural divide.
- "A warm smile is the universal language of kindness." –William Arthur Ward

I Can't Speak Chinese!

- While Chinese can be an intimidating language for a westerner to learn, remember this: Every little bit helps!
- Just learning simple greetings, a little food and directions in Chinese will vastly increase your enjoyment of Taiwan.
- **Get a tutor:** The fastest way to increase your Chinese is to hire a qualified tutor. If money is an issue, there are plenty of locals looking for language exchange partners, trading their knowledge of Chinese for your knowledge of English, rather than money.
- If you haven't met a new friend interested in language exchange or tutoring you, check out the classified ads on Teal.it.com, a popular site for foreign English teachers in Taiwan.

I Can't Read!

- While some languages, like English and Spanish, allow learners to read new words phonetically, Chinese is based on symbols, not the Roman alphabet.
- This language barrier can make even simple tasks, like ordering take-out, more than challenging.
- To make it easier for yourself, make a cheat sheet. Ask your favorite restaurateurs for a menu to take home, or take a picture, then get help from a new Taiwanese friend to help you translate a few of your favorite dishes into English.
- You can thank them by taking them to your favorite restaurant for lunch!

What about trash and recycling?

- New Taipei City is home to a large population in a small area, which means everyone must do their part in keeping our city as clean as possible.
- **Use the [Pink Trash Bags](#)!** In Taiwan, any trash that is not recycled or composted must be put into an official pink trash bag. You can buy them at most convenience stores and will know they're the right ones because of their hologram stickers. These bags are more expensive than regular trash bags, but their purpose is to encourage waste reduction.
- **[Find the Trucks](#):** If your building doesn't do it for you, you need to bring your trash and recycling to the trucks that pass through your area. You'll know when they're coming, as you'll hear their familiar electronic music throughout your neighborhood. The yellow truck is for your official pink trash bags and the white one is for your recyclables and compost (usually a sealed barrel). In Taipei, the trucks are usually playing Beethoven's classic, "[Für Elise](#)".
- **Separating Waste:** At home or outside, always make sure your waste goes into the right container. Not only is recycling separated by material, but your trash is too. Many locations have a separate bin for compost waste (basically any food waste that's not meat, shell or bone), as well as a bin for light bulbs, batteries, etc. If you're not sure, just make sure what you're adding to a bin matches the contents already there.
- **Public Trash Cans:** In Taiwan, public trash and recycling cans are much less common than in the west. Throwing away a candy wrapper or recycling a water bottle is okay, but bringing waste from home can result in a ticket or fine, so it's best to wait for the trucks.
- **Meet Your Neighbors!** While trash and recycling pick-up can be a chore, it's also an opportunity to meet your neighbors and practice a bit of your Chinese. If you're waiting for the trucks to come after normal working hours, you'll likely see a good portion of your neighbors chatting and socializing a bit while the wait for the trucks to arrive.

How much and when should I tip?

- Unlike many countries in the west, tipping is neither customary or expected in most situations in Taiwan, including taxis, restaurants, coffee shops, bell hops, etc.
- If you want to tip, however, it will most likely be appreciated, especially when it's accompanied by a genuine smile.

How can I be culturally sensitive?

- Even though you can't speak or read Chinese, you can still read people.
- Simply be aware, observant and sensitive will go a long way.
- Beyond that, finding a Taiwanese friend for a cultural exchange is one of the best ways to *safely* ask all the questions you might have.
- Taiwanese culture, while distinct from many western cultures, offers more similarities than it does differences.
- A few differences include...
- **Handshakes/New People:** In most cases, waving hello is a safer bet than offering your hand to shake. If the person you're meeting hasn't had much contact with western culture, they may not be expecting a handshake, especially from someone they just met. Get to know them first, then offer a parting handshake, if it feels appropriate.
- **Taking off Shoes:** When entering a new home, office, classroom or sometimes small shop, it's a good idea to ask if you should take off your shoes. While this isn't standard everywhere, there are plenty of instances where house slippers or even just your socks, would be more preferable than shoes.
- When outside of your own home, never lounge with your feet up on a chair, table or anything besides the floor.
- **Volume:** Most local residents usually refrain from using a loud voice. When in doubt as to the proper volume for a certain situation, observe what volume your company is using and follow their example.
- **Smile:** As with learning any new culture, you're bound to make at least a few mistakes. When you do, a gracious smile and sincere apology will likely be all you need. Even though you may not have the necessary Chinese to explain your intentions were good, your smile can usually communicate the message just fine.

International Assistance

These organizations function in place of an embassy and can be used for citizen services, like passports, voting, visa, notary services, obtaining tax/legal help, or other international assistance you might need from your home country.

De Facto Embassy	Information *Need to check all addresses for accuracy.
United States: American Institute in Taiwan (AIT)	Website: www.ait.org.tw/en/ Phone: +886 2 2162-2000 Fax: +886 2 2162-2251 Address: No. 7, Ln. 134, Sec. 3, Xinyi Rd., Da'an Dist., Taipei City 10659, Taiwan Address in Chinese: 106 台北市信義路三段 134 巷 7 號 Click here to view in Google Maps
Canada: The Canadian Trade Office in Taipei (CTOT)	Website: www.canada.org.tw/taiwan/index.aspx?lang=eng Phone: +886 2 8723-3000 Fax: +886 2 8723-3092 Address: 6F, Hua-Hsin Building, No. 1 SongZhi Road, Xinyi District, Taipei 11047, Taiwan Address in Chinese: 台北市 信義區 11047 松智路 1 號 6 樓 Click here to view in Google Maps
United Kingdom: British Office Taipei	Website: www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-office-taipei Phone: +886 2 8758-2088 Fax: +886 2 8758-2050 Address: 26F, President International Tower, No. 9-11, Song Gao Road, Xinyi District, Taipei, 11073, Taiwan Address in Chinese: 統一國際大樓 11073 臺北市松高路 9 號 26 樓 Click here to view in Google Maps
South Africa: Liaison Office of South Africa in Taipei, Taiwan (LOSA)	Website: www.southafrica.org.tw/ Phone: +886 2 8175-8588 Fax: +886 2 2712-5109 Address: Suite 1301, 13th FL., 205 Tun Hwa North Rd., Taipei 105, Taiwan Address in Chinese: 台北市敦化北路 205 號 13 樓 1301 室 Click here to view in Google Maps
New Zealand: New Zealand Commerce and Industry Office,	Website: https://www.nzcio.com/ Phone: +886 2 2720 5228 Fax: +886 2 2720 5255 Address: 9F, No. 1, Songzhi Rd, Xinyi District, Taipei 11047,

Taipei (NZCIO)	Taiwan Address in Chinese: 11047 台北市信義區松智路 1 號 9 樓 Click here to view in Google Maps
Australia: Australian Office, Taipei (AO)	Website: http://australia.org.tw/tpei/home.html Phone: +886 2 8735-4100 Fax: +886 2 8789-9599 Address: The President International Tower, 27-28 th Floors, No. 9-11, Songgao Rd., Xinyi District, Taipei, Taiwan, 11073 Address in Chinese: 統一國際大樓 11073 臺北市松高路 9 號 27-28 樓 Click here to view in Google Maps

Welcome to New Taipei City Public Elementary Schools!

As a native-speaking English teacher (NST), you'll provide our students with the valuable opportunity to practice English in a natural, meaningful way. Depending on your area, you may very well be the first westerner some of our students have direct interaction with, so their reactions will range from a bit shy to extremely excited. Either way, you're about to engage in a truly unique experience.

Teaching English: E.S.L. vs. E.F.L.

In English-speaking countries, foreigners have a multitude of opportunities to practice their English skills throughout daily life, but in Taiwan the vast majority of people speak mainly Chinese, which greatly limits our students' chances to use English in real-life situations.

E.S.L. (English as a Second Language) refers to English instruction where students are immersed in an English-speaking community, but likely use another language at home.

E.F.L. (English as a Foreign Language), what we teach in Taiwan, refers to English instruction where the classroom may very well be the only place many of your students read, write or speak English. For this reason, many E.F.L. students view English as an abstract, academic exercise, full of meaningless repetition and memorization, not a tool for communication or personal connection.

This is where you come in.

Making English Matter

A student who memorizes their English vocabulary and gets an "A" on a test might feel proud, but a student who uses their English skills for meaningful interaction with a teacher they enjoy, respect and admire helps them see E.F.L. for what it really is: the chance to use their knowledge to explore another culture, express their individuality and most importantly, make a real, human connection. When we carefully plan our

lessons to require students to use English in a meaningful way, we transform English class from an obligation into an opportunity.

Empowering Students

Enabling our students to use English in a natural way is no small feat. Many students will likely be a bit apprehensive to use English in class, for fear of embarrassment. Most of your highest-ability students attend additional English classes after school (Buxiban, pronounced “Bushi-bahn”), while many of your struggling students may not have access to the same opportunity, resulting in a vast range of ability levels in each class.

While we can’t level the playing field for everyone, we can create a supportive, safe classroom environment, where students understand even though they lack the precise words to say what they want, they do have enough English to make themselves understood, as well as acquire the English they need. Together, we can help students focus on what they *can* say with the English they *have*, as opposed to their limitations.

English vs. Chinese

To help our students reach the goal of conversational English, we need to consider their starting point. As EFL teachers, we must be aware of the significant differences in grammar, structure and usage between our two languages, so we can better help our students. You don’t need to be fluent in Chinese, but a basic understanding of some of the major differences between Chinese and English can greatly help us be more thoughtful in our lessons, classroom language and general interaction with our students, resulting in more and greater success throughout the year.

A Few Key Differences Between English and Chinese

In English, we vary our speaking tone for expression. Chinese has four different tones (*1st-high, 2nd-rising, 3rd-falling/rising, 4th-down and neutral*), which are not used for expression.

Then same Chinese word spoken in different tones changes its meaning completely.

In English, we use pronouns like *he, she* and *it*. In Chinese, *he, she* and *it* are all expressed using the universal pronoun, *tā* (他). Context defines each pronoun.

In Chinese, there are no plural nouns or past tense verbs.

*Although there are too many differences to list, it’s not necessary to know them all. Just being aware of them is a good place to start. For a much better understanding, there’s no substitute for regular study and tutoring. *See Appendix A for more details.*

English Wonderland Lesson & Unit Design: The Big Picture

Wonderland Environment: English Wonderland offers our students the opportunity for three days of immersive English learning in a camp setting. Each Wonderland Camp will offer a unique experience to our students, capitalizing on the diversity and expertise of its teaching staff, as well utilizing the unique environmental assets each camp location offers. When planning Wonderland lessons and units, it's important to keep a few things in mind.

First Night Alone: English Wonderland Camp, for many students, represents their first night away from home without family. This presents teachers with a challenge that is two-fold: some students will be a bit nervous or homesick, while others may feel emboldened by this newfound freedom. Taking this into consideration when planning your camp lessons is a great way to proactively avoid unnecessary rough spots in your classroom.

New Teachers...and lots of them: Most camp students will feel excited, anxious or both, when meeting a western teacher for the first time. At camp, they'll be repeating this process, class after class. Students will experience a range of emotions, from inhibitive shyness to exhilarating silliness. Either way, it's common for students to act in an uncommon way.

Student Ability Levels: Each week you students will travel from different districts around New Taipei City to attend your Wonderland Camp. As with any large city, some areas are more affluent and/or westernized than others, granting students within them more opportunities for English exposure. This means each class you teach will represent a wide range of students on the ability spectrum. You'll meet some students capable of a full English conversation and others who need to read their name tag to introduce themselves.

Differentiate Your Lesson: Each camp lesson should be accessible to your lowest-ability students, yet offer options challenging enough to engage your higher ability students in satisfying activities.

Higher-Ability Students: These students are easy to spot in any classroom, as their hands are enthusiastically thrust into the air before your question is complete. These students, if not properly motivated, can easily become bored and/or disruptive.

Lower-Ability Students: These students are similarly easy to spot in your classroom; they'll either look lost, distracted or disinterested. If the difficulty of the lesson is too far beyond a student's ability, they will also become bored and/or disruptive.

Comprehension Checks: So what do we do about our high and low ability students? We use comprehension checks to assess their ability, determine their needs, then adjust our lessons accordingly. Comprehension checks are short, easy prompts to check

for student understanding before moving on. A common mistake of newer EFL teachers is to ask, "Understand?" after giving a class information, because many students will simply repeat, "Understand" back to you, without actually understanding. An effective comprehension check asks for specific information that requires a basic level of understanding from the student.

Don't say: "First, write. Then, color the picture. Understand?"

Instead say: "First, write. Then, color the picture. *Now...What do we do *first*?"

*This question can't be "answered" through repetition

Short Unit Length: One of the most challenging aspects of planning a unit for Wonderland is the limited amount of time you see each class and student. While each camp's structure may vary, your students have, at most 2 full days of classes. Whether you see each class two, three or four times, connecting your lessons into a cohesive unit will certainly benefit your students.

Everyone is the new kid: Because each camp consists of students from different schools, it's likely each student will only see a few familiar faces in each class. Furthermore, just because students are from the same school doesn't mean they're friends, so essentially, each student in your class may feel like the new kid.

Be the spark: Although English Wonderland is only a three-day camp, the experience can have a dynamic, positive effect on students, lasting far beyond the short length of their stay. Our goal is for each student to return to their respective school with a new outlook on learning English. By igniting the spark of learning potential within each student, we help prepare them to return to their English class more eager, optimistic and braver than they were before camp. With a little careful planning, thoughtful lesson design and genuine student-teacher interactions, three days can last a lifetime.

Bilingual Program Lesson & Unit Design: The Big Picture

Creating a CLIL Environment: CLIL (Content & Language Integrated Learning) is the educational method in which we teach students about a subject through a foreign language. By using cross-curricular content in the classroom, we can ensure our curriculum has a dual focus. For example, students may paint a picture in class, but they must use specific English to do so (target vocabulary & sentence patterns). This presents two benefits: Students' English ability increases because they need it to paint their picture. Secondly, students' artistic ability increases because they now have the chance to practice it outside of art class.

Why? Students must use the English vocabulary and sentence patterns necessary to participate in each activity. This creates an authentic need to learn English for a purpose, not just a grade.

Structure: Each unit consists of five lessons. Each unit uses similar activities and structure.

Why? By using similar activities/order for each unit, we reduce teacher-centered instruction time and increase practice/production time, allowing for a more natural, student-centered classroom where students focus more on acquiring new language, not learning new procedures.

Progression: All activities are first modeled by teachers, including students when applicable, anticipating and responding to classroom needs, until students are able to progress from teacher-centered instruction to small group/one-on-one student-centered practice.

Why? As students become more familiar with each activity/game, less modeling will be required. During modeling, teachers will informally assess each class' needs, shortening modeling time as necessary. The small group, student-centered practice allows both teachers a chance to circulate through the room, assessing student needs, intervening when necessary, to provide extra help, clarification or differentiation where needed.

Differentiation: Each lesson has two sets of target vocabulary and language: basic and advanced. Some higher-ability students will progress to the advanced language before a unit is completed, while some lower-ability students may need additional help and/or time with the basic language. The advanced target language and vocabulary for each lesson will become the basic language for the following lesson, granting higher-ability students familiarity and confidence with upcoming basic material, allowing them the opportunity to serve as "Little Teacher", group leader or other such "helper" positions.

Why? Higher-ability students are often bored, while lower-ability students are often lost, making both a potential distraction to other students. Giving higher-ability students the task of "Little Teacher" helps reinforce their understanding of the basic target language, as well as instill a sense of pride and responsibility in helping their partner and/or group. The same partnership also provides lower-ability students with the extra time and attention they need.

Differentiation Example

Lesson 1 Target Language

Basic: I can/can't ____.

**Advanced: I want to/don't want to ____.*

Lesson 2 Target Language

**Basic: I want to/don't want to ____.*

Advanced: I want to ____, but ____.

Basic Classroom Elements

As teachers, we encounter new challenges every day in our classrooms. The following tools can help minimize these challenges to maximize your results.

Student Questions

During any challenging lesson, students will encounter words they can't pronounce or don't know the meaning of. When they do, they must have the necessary English to get the help they need. Student questions are any short, simple questions a student can ask to get the answers they need. These questions should be used by the students and modeled by the teachers daily. They will vary according to your students' age, ability, readiness, etc. The key to using Student Questions successfully is to keep them simple, direct and consistent.

** Example: "What's this? How do you say this? How do you spell _____?"*

Student/Teacher Tools

Sometimes Student Questions aren't a viable option, especially with struggling learners that might have trouble even remembering "What's this?". When Student Questions aren't enough, students need to have other options, such as drawing, pantomime, sound effects, etc. If students are made aware of their communication options, they're much more likely to persist through challenging moments in class. Teachers can also use these same tools to help students understand them without resorting to Chinese translation. ** Example: "Use your pen (draw it). Use your hands/body (pantomime it). Use your voice (sound effects)."*

TPR: Total Physical Response

TPR is a classroom tool that stands for "Total Physical Response" and attempts to mirror the way children learn their native language through language-body conversations with family members. When a parent asks, "Are you sleepy?" and rubs their eyes, the child will soon connect the action with the words to deduce the meaning of sleepy, the same way they might learn what "hungry" means when a parent rubs their stomach each time they say, "hungry".

The same technique has proved useful in EFL classrooms worldwide, but is most effective when...

1. You commit to your TPR. Don't half-heartedly pantomime peeling a banana, when you teach "banana". Get into it. First, hold the "banana", turn it over in your hands to indicate size, maybe smell it and say, "mmm...I loooooove bananas." Next, grab it by the stem and peel it down in three distinct segments, rotating your imaginary banana just like you would a real one. Finally, take a bite, chew, swallow and repeat, "mmm...I loooooove bananas." **If you can "see the banana", your students can see it too.*

2. You make sure each TPR is distinct and unique. Although drawing and writing are very similar, we can distinguish between the two by pantomiming quick, small pen strokes for our writing TPR and long, large shapes for our drawing TPR. This helps avoid ambiguity and confusion.
3. You connect your TPR words to a sentence to give them meaning, such as saying, “*Write your name*” or “*Draw a watermelon*,” while performing the accompanying TPR motion.

Further Reading on TPR: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/total-physical-response-tpr>

Classroom Rules

Any EFL classroom needs to establish rules and expectations, if the students are expected to behave in a way conducive to learning. To be effective, rules must be three things: simple, direct and consistent. Although additional rules will certainly be necessary throughout the year, the below example is a good place to start, while you figure out each class’ specific needs. Note that each rule has an accompanying gesture to help lower-ability students understand quickly and easily.

Classroom Rules	
Rule	TPR Gesture
1. Listen.	1 st : Touch your ear. 2 nd : Finger to lips, “shh...” = Listen <i>and</i> be quiet.
2. Sit nicely.	Straighten back, face forward, hand moves up and down to indicate proper posture.
3. Speak English.	Open and close hand, like a talking puppet.

The above rules are extremely simple and direct, enough so to be accessible to even lower-ability students. To be consistent, use them every day. It takes just a moment at the start of each class, but it will be quicker each time, until your whole class understands your expectations.

Show it, Don’t Tell it

To achieve the broadest understanding, showing is much more effective than telling. When introducing your classroom rules, don’t simply write them on the board, use your co-teacher to demonstrate. *Show* your students what a good listener looks like. *Show* them what sitting nicely looks like.

Rules Modeling Example

You play the part of a rule-breaking student. Your co-teacher plays the teacher, as well as guides the class in correcting your misbehavior.

"Is teacher James *listening*? No, he's not. He's *talking*. You can't *listen* if you're *talking*. Help him *listen*. Say, 'Teacher James, *listen*.' Good job. Now, is he *listening*? No, he's not. He's not *looking* at me. When we *listen*, we *look*. Is he *looking* at me? No, he's looking *there*, not *at me*. Help him listen. Say, 'Teacher James, *listen*.' Good job. Uh oh. Is he *sitting nicely*? No, he's not. *Sit nicely*. (model sitting nicely). Help him *sit nicely*. Say, 'Teacher James, *sit nicely*.'"

*Note the simple, repetitive nature of this example. Being mindful of our classroom English and speaking economically allows students to focus on the words you want them too by eliminating verbal clutter. Notice how much of the example dialogue is dominated by "listen" and "look". Your students will notice and benefit from this repetition, especially struggling learners.

Invest in Consistency

Review your classroom rules daily, using TPR each time. The TPR not only serves as a comprehension aid, it also allows students to help correct their peers' behavior in a quiet, non-disruptive way. When a student is not listening or being disruptive, it's common for his/her peers to want to correct him, but this too often results in additional disruptions ("Be quiet!")

Once students know and understand the rules thoroughly, they can help each other follow them by using *only the TPR gesture*, eliminating the need for extra noise. When students know how to correct peer behavior silently, it allows the teacher to spend more time as a facilitator and less time enforcing classroom rules.

The second and most valuable benefit of this consistency is establishing a positive, respectful classroom culture, where students listen and engage appropriately, not because they have to, but because they want to.

Students Helping Students

Helping their peers follow classroom rules is only one way students can help each other. Pairs and small groups are great opportunities for students to help one another, but first they need to know *how* to help. To be effective helpers, students need *helping phrases* that are clear, direct and easy to remember, as well as understand.

Helping phrases

Helping Phrases are simple, direct English phrases. If used consistently, we can improve student English production with just a few: Be loud. Be clear. Too fast.

Notice the repetition of the word, "be". This was no accident. It was a deliberate attempt to minimize necessary English to maximize student understanding.

Basic 3 Helping Phrases

1. **Be loud.** (Use TPR: cup hand to ear)
2. **Be clear.** (Deliberately stress key, underlined syllables “Be clear”. Be clear. Cl...Clear.)
3. **Too fast!** (Many higher-level students need to slow down when helping a peer because they don’t understand that what’s simple for them, may be challenging for others.)

“Be loud.”

Rationale: If a student isn’t loud enough, we can’t hear them, which means we can help them.

Once a student can *be loud*, we can determine if they can *be clear*. It’s quite common for EFL learners to drop the endings of difficult words, or not stress a consonant sound strongly enough. This is where “*Be clear*,” becomes invaluable.

“Be clear.”

Rationale: When we help students, especially reading new words, these two commands will be necessary. “Be loud,” allows us to informally assess, while “Be clear” allows us to correct pronunciation.

Keep it Simple

By using these two simple terms, we can encourage our students to help each other in using the same language and method, while only requiring three words of English!

“Too fast!”

Rationale: Allows students to get the help they need at a speed that’s comfortable and effective. Additionally, it encourages students to advocate for themselves and speak up when the help they’re receiving isn’t as effective as it could be.

Introducing Helping Phrases

The first time you introduce helping phrases to your class, model with your co-teacher, allowing your co-teacher to guide the class in helping you. Without modeling, these concepts will remain abstract to your students. Like we said before, “*Show it, don’t tell it!*”

Modeling Tip: Your modeling is most effective when you and your co-teacher use clear, easy-to-read TPR, facial expressions, hand gestures and actions. If you want to model natural English, be natural and most importantly, get into it! When you’re excited and invested, your students are too.

*Remember, excitement, as well as other emotions, transcend clearly across linguistic boundaries, connecting with lower-ability students who might otherwise be lost and confused.

Helping Phrases: Model Dialogue

The following script models how you and your co-teacher can effectively present helping phrases, or any new English, to you class. Note the deliberate repetition and streamlined English.

Co-Teacher: What's this? (*Points to the word "dog" written on the board*)

Teacher: (*Quiet, incomprehensible mumble*)

Co-Teacher: (*To class*) Can you hear teacher James? No...you can't. Help him...*be loud.*

CLASS: *Be loud!*

Co-Teacher: Good job class. What's this? (*Points again to "dog"*) *Be loud (Hand to ear, as if straining to hear).* What's this?

Teacher: Daw. (*Loud enough, but no "g" sound. Loud, but not clear.*)

Co-Teacher: Is he *loud*? Yes, he is. Good job, class. Is he *clear*? No, he's not. Help him *be clear.*

(*To teacher*) Say, "dog" (stressing the "g" sound, while simultaneously tapping the "g" on the board) Dog. Help Teacher James *be clear.* Say, "*Be clear!*"

CLASS: *Be clear!*

Co-Teacher. *Be clear,* Teacher James. Do...(taps "g" in "Dog" with finger). What's this?

Teacher: G.

Co-Teacher: What does *G* say?

Teacher: Guh.

Co-Teacher: Good job. Try again. Do...(taps "g" with finger). What this?

Teacher: Guh.

Co-Teacher: Good job. *Now,* what's this? (*traces finger under whole word, tapping the "g"*)

Teacher: Daw.

Co-Teacher: Be clear. Daw...(taps "g" with finger to elicit "guh" sound).

Teacher: Guh.

Co-Teacher: Try again. (speaking very quickly) What's this? What's this? Come on! Go! Go! What's this? Do you know?

Teacher: *Too fast!* (*shaking head in confusion*)

Co-Teacher: (*to class*) Was I *too fast*? Yes, I was. Say, "*too fast,* Teacher Julie!". Good job. *Now,* I'll try again. (*much slower*) Ready?

Teacher: Ready.

Co-Teacher: (*slowly*) What's this? *Be clear.* What's this? (*traces finger under whole word, tapping the "g"*)

Teacher: Daw...guh.

Co-Teacher: Good job. Try again(*traces finger under whole word again, but faster, tapping the "g"*).

Teacher: Dog.

Co-Teacher: Thank you for helping him, class. Thank you for helping him *be loud*. Thank you for helping him *be clear*.

*The above scenario is just a model and built to be adjusted to fit your classes' specific needs. The key goal of this modeling, however, is to repeatedly model key phrases until students demonstrate thorough understanding by correctly using the phrases themselves.

Benefits of Modeling Helping Phrases

By modeling how to help someone, we provide a clear example of what we want: audible, clear speech and slow, patient helpers. When expectations are clear, students are much more likely to meet them. Additionally, by guiding the class to help you, you and your co-teacher have a great chance to informally assess their understanding of the helping phrases.

This modeling does take much more time than having your co-teacher translate those three small phrases into Chinese, but the benefits are much longer-lasting. By engaging the students until their understanding is clear, we've now given them a tool for peer and self-assessment, instead of just a quick translation.

Tip: Repeat the modeling for "Be loud. Be clear. Too fast!" every time you have class. It only takes a few minutes, but some students will need the extra repetition to fully grasp the concepts enough to become effective helpers. The student-guided work that follows is definitely worth the initial investment of time up front.

Be Concise & Precise

In the example above, the teacher's language was natural, but calculated. Her words were carefully chosen to be *concise and precise*. Each word had a clear purpose.

- The teacher used action, not extra words, to guide the student to articulate the "g" in dog. She communicated this simply by tapping on the "g" while she stressed that sound when saying it.
- The teacher used action again, not words, to guide the student to connect the "d" sound with the "og" sound to read the word, by tracing her finger underneath.
- By tracing her finger underneath more quickly, she guided the student to shorten, then eliminate the gap between the two sounds.
- If the student continued to struggle, the teacher could read the word *while* performing the same motions, adding emphasis where needed.
- It's no accident that both directions used "be": Be loud. Be clear. This simple choice minimizes the necessary English.
- In future lessons, the teacher can build more English off of "be," such as "Be quiet/nice/careful/etc."
- In this respect, "be" also functions as a cue for the students to tune in and listen. The teacher can say "be..." a little louder and longer to gather student attention,

while students focus and anticipate *what they should be*, helping not only to direct your students, but also improving their active listening skills.

Classroom English

In the *Helping Phrases: Model Dialogue* the teacher and co-teacher minimized their vocabulary to maximize student understanding. By being mindful of our classroom English, we can increase our efficiency as teachers, as well as our students' success as learners.

From a Student's Perspective

A single, 40-minute class might seem short, but to a struggling EFL learner, it can present quite a challenge. While each lesson will focus on just 5-8 target vocabulary words, your class will still be filled with much more English than many of your students are used to. Imagine yourself in a 40-minute Chinese lesson, where no English is spoken or written.

To counter this, we must begin be extremely mindful of *what* we say and *how* we say it, much more so than we need to with native English speakers. There will still be confusion, but if we're careful, we can minimize that confusion.

Mindful Classroom English Do's & Don'ts: A Quick Guide

Don't...	Do
<p>DON'T speak too quickly.</p> <p>Your lower-ability students <i>and</i> those lacking active listening skills will get lost.</p>	<p>INSTEAD, start slow.</p> <p>Keep your speech clear by deliberately articulating more than normal.</p> <p>Watch your students faces, then speed up gradually, staying aware of their comprehension.</p>
<p>DON'T say too much!</p> <p>Your target vocabulary is 5-8 words per class, so any additional language has the potential of pulling focus from your target.</p>	<p>INSTEAD, speak economically.</p> <p>Keep your classroom language <i>concise and precise</i>. This means less is more. The <i>less</i> you say, the <i>more</i> your students can focus on your words.</p>
<p>Don't let the cost outweigh the benefits.</p> <p><u>Example</u> In <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i>, "the caterpillar eats through one slice of Swiss cheese". The words <i>slice</i> and <i>Swiss</i> will likely lead to questions requiring</p>	<p>INSTEAD, choose words that prioritize understanding over accuracy.</p> <p>First help your students to be understood, then worry about accuracy. Communication is the fun part of English, not scrutinizing minutiae.</p>

translation to be fully understood.

Student: What's a slice of Swiss cheese?

Teacher: *Swiss* is an adjective describing things and people from Switzerland, which is why it needs a big *S*. The piece of cheese is actually called a slice, due to its thickness."

Here, cost outweighs benefit.

*Even after students understand, this knowledge won't be widely applicable outside class.

Tip: Deciding what *not* to teach is just as important as what you *do* teach. Don't let superfluous English distract your students from the target language.

Should *Swiss* be capitalized? Of course. Do students need to know why? Probably not. There are many more important details to focus on in your 40- minute class.

Example: Capital vs. Big

Instead of "Capital S," say "Big S".

Technically, *capital* and *lower-case* are the correct terminology, but *big* and *small* are more effective in a lesson because students already know them.

Additionally, *capital*, *lower* and *case* all have additional meanings, which equals potential confusion.

Student: "What's a slice of Swiss cheese?"

Teacher: "A yummy cheese for sandwiches."

*In this example, the student will likely understand all the words in your explanation.

*So we can set etymology aside for this question and focus on English our students can actually use.

<p>DON'T use multiples terms for the same word.</p> <p><u>Example</u> Don't say "pencil box" on Monday and "pencil case" on Tuesday; it's unnecessary effort for unnecessary results.</p>	<p>INSTEAD, pick one term and stick with it.</p> <p>Why? Using the same terms = more exposure. *You'll be surprised how much your students will learn peripherally.</p> <p><u>Example</u> If you say <i>pencil box</i> 10 times in a week during class and <i>pencil case</i> 10 times, your students will hear each term 10 times. By simply replacing <i>pencil case</i> with <i>pencil box</i> during that same week, you've just doubled your students' exposure to that term.</p> <p>*This same principal can be applied to any vocabulary or English phrase with similar results.</p>
<p>DON'T say, "Understand?" to check for understanding.</p> <p>Students may very well repeat it back, loud and clear, without actually understanding.</p>	<p>INSTEAD, ask comprehension questions like...</p> <p>*"What color is the cat?"</p> <p>*Now, students must <i>prove their understanding</i>, instead of merely repeating what they've just heard.</p>
<p>DON'T rely on translations.</p> <p>When students know they'll receive a translation, many will tune-out the English and simply wait for the Chinese.</p> <p><i>Think of it in terms of cost and benefit.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much time will the translation save? 2. Could the students work through the unknown English themselves, or with a little help, rather than using a full translation? 3. <i>Example:</i> If game instructions take 5 minutes, using only English vs. 1 minute relying on Chinese, were those 4 extra minutes a 	<p>INSTEAD, keep it simple and slow.</p> <p><i>Eliminate any words you can</i>, without sacrificing communication. This will allow students to focus on their target vocabulary.</p> <p><i>Get into it!</i> Use TPR, sound effects, drawings, whatever you need to get your point across. *For students, this makes learning a new term or idea more like a game and less like an exercise.</p> <p>Eliminating unnecessary translations not only helps students learn, it builds their confidence that they <i>can</i> learn, even if they start out lost, creating resilient</p>

<p>meaningful experience or wasted time?</p> <p>4. With thoughtful planning, we can take the necessary steps to ensure that extra time is meaningful.</p>	<p>learners.</p> <p>The process of decoding new language, especially when done in a natural, conversational manner, can be quite rewarding, <i>if we make that our goal as teachers.</i></p>
<p>DON'T use slang or jargon (overly specific words)</p> <p>Jargon and slang are language only used by certain people in a specific context, which automatically limits its usage for students, so it's best avoided.</p> <p>An American football teacher may feel inclined to teach words like <i>quarterback, field goal, first down</i> and <i>wide receiver</i>, but these words have no use outside of class, as well as being too abstract to be valuable.</p>	<p>INSTEAD, choose target vocabulary that's applicable outside class.</p> <p><u>Useful</u> American football vocabulary.</p> <p>Throwing Vocabulary: higher, lower (aiming at targets), wait/now/faster/slower (throwing to a running target).</p> <p>Catching Vocabulary: look (over your shoulder/behind you/to the right), run straight/left/right, faster/slower</p> <p>In this example, American football is merely a vehicle to teach meaningful English.</p> <p>Giving students the necessary vocabulary to improve their throwing and catching skills provides great incentive to learn and even more satisfaction when they succeed.</p> <p>Most importantly, all the vocabulary listed above could be applied outside class, even in non-athletic context, making it more valuable to a wider variety of student personalities.</p>

Planning Your Bilingual Curriculum

Each semester is 20 weeks, so you'll see each class at least twenty times. By dividing your class time into four, 5-week units, you provide students the structure they need to feel secure, streamline your instruction and leave more room for student-centered activities.

Semester Structure:

1 Year = 40 weeks

1 Semester = 20 weeks

1 Class = 40 minutes

Step 1: *Backward Design*

Define which skills & knowledge you want your students to master by the end of your last lesson. Keep this goal in mind as you plan; write each lesson so it builds toward your ultimate goal.

Why? A clear destination allows for focused travel and quick corrections when you veer off-course.

Step 2: *Organize & Plan*

Divide each semester into four, 5-week-long, thematic units.

Why? The structure will reduce instruction time by building familiarity and the themes will give your lessons context and meaning.

Step 3: *Assign Target Language*

Each unit should have 5-7 target vocabulary words and 1-2 sentence patterns.

Why? When you only see your students 40 minutes per week, it will take time to assess their readiness. You can always differentiate with your higher-ability and struggling students, adjusting your curriculum as needed.

Step 4: *Add Conversational Activities and/or Games*

Look at your target language and ask yourself, "Which classroom activities will encourage the most effective, natural and enjoyable practice of these words and phrases?"

Why? While students are certainly capable of learning English without them, thoughtfully designed games and activities, created to encourage natural English usage, will result in deeper learning and happier students.

Step 5: *Assess & Adjust*

Take time after each lesson to reflect and make changes in 3 areas:

Content: *difficulty, amount, delivery, strategy, techniques, etc.*

Classroom Management: *flow, pacing, distractions, differentiation, etc.*

Co-Teacher Interaction: *clear roles/goals, smooth flow*

Why? Even our best lessons benefit from reflection.

"Have no fear of perfection-you'll never reach it." –Salvador Dali

Student Interaction

English is for Communication

While teacher-centered activities have their place and are, at times, necessary, they are not what engage students most. Student-learning is at its peak when students are truly engaged in an activity. To achieve this goal, we must provide our students the proper setting for authentic English usage, which is small groups and pairs.

Small Group Games/Activities = More Speaking

After teacher-led demonstrations of each game/activity, dividing students into small groups of 4-5 provides learners more opportunities to participate. Additionally, the smaller audience will be less intimidating than speaking in front of the whole class. Assign students to groups where they feel comfortable participating and have the best chance for peer-supported learning.

Learn Through Conversational Activities and Games

The lessons for each unit are based around five different conversational activities and/or games. Because the main focus of each lesson is a game or fun activity, students must learn and practice new language to participate and/or be competitive, shifting the purpose of each lesson from grades to social interaction and/or gameplay.

Game Structure

Each game in this sample unit is played 4 times per semester, once every 5 weeks. Each time a game is played, students will require less explanation, resulting in more participation and less instructions. This extra time should be used to increase the complexity and difficulty of the game, resulting in deeper thinking and a more satisfying, lasting learning experience. Don't teach a new game each week; teach 5 games, then play each 4 times per semester.

Tip: Instead of adding new games to your repertoire, add challenge and complexity to the games your students already enjoy and understand. Your game choices should be games you enjoy playing with your students. If you're having fun, they probably are too.

Effectively Grouping Students

In each of your classes, two of the most formidable challenges will be keeping your higher-ability students from feeling bored and keeping your lower-ability students from feeling lost. Both of these goals are equally important, as both bored and lost students are the most likely to become unfocused and disruptive. The best way to counter both of these challenges is to proactively arrange your students into groups in which they'll have the highest chance for success. Doing so requires a delicate balance of mixing student abilities and personalities to produce groups that are as enjoyable as they are effective.

Heterogeneous Small Groups

In heterogeneous small groups, students are arranged to create small groups comprised of multiple ability/interest levels. These groups give students the opportunities to learn from or assist their peers, so we must pay careful attention to the make-up of each group to ensure its effectiveness. Students in heterogeneous groups must know how to help their peers, as well as get the help they need as individuals, so we must provide them with the tools to do so.

These groups are also ideal for small group competitions in class, as homogeneous grouping would most likely result in unbalanced competition. If used for in-class competition, it's important to ensure students of all levels participate, not just the highest ability students.

Homogeneous Small Groups

In homogeneous small groups, students are arranged according to similar characteristics, rather than differences. Often, homogenous groups are ability-based, and made up of students at a certain skill level for a specific objective. When using homogenous grouping, it is useful to keep Gardner's Multiple Intelligences in mind, as a reminder that no group of students is ever truly homogeneous.

While a particular group of students might have very strong reading comprehension, that same group might harbor wide disparities in other areas, such as interpersonal or logical skills. In short, each group of students is different and each student will bring their own unique strengths and challenges to their group. Taking these factors into consideration will greatly increase each group's frequency and degree of success.

Mixed-Ability Pairs (Study Buddies)

Your average class size will range between 25-30 students; this means there will be many questions for you and your co-teacher.

Try adding a new rule to your class: "Ask your study buddy before you ask a teacher."

Academic purpose: Higher-ability students reinforce what they've learned by teaching it and lower-ability students get the help they need, making both groups less likely to become a distraction.

Classroom management purpose: Many of the questions your students have will be about regular classroom procedures and instructions.

Example: "What did he say? Pen or pencil? How long do we have? Can we finish tomorrow"

By asking their study buddy first, students get back on track faster, leaving you more time to engage with the students who need you most.

Creating Effective Mixed-ability Small Groups

Ideally, when using heterogeneous grouping, if there are 6 groups, the 6 highest-ability and 6 lowest-ability students should be divided evenly among the groups. The 6 highest-ability students will act as group leaders, helping their group members before “teacher help” is asked for. Seat the 6 lowest-ability students next to the leaders. Now, the six students most likely to need help can receive it immediately, rather than waiting for a teacher.

Small groups provide a natural setting for face-to-face conversation, but also distractions, so make sure your students are with others they enjoy, but can also work effectively with.

Tip: To avoid your higher-ability students feeling unfairly burdened, find or create opportunities to give them credit for helping others. Help them understand that their groupmate’s success, is theirs as well. Additionally, be sure to seat at least one other student in their group they especially like. They’ll be much more willing to help when they’re happy, a sentiment which is often contagious when we encourage it.

Sample Small Group Creation: 30 students, 6 groups of 5 students each

Step 1: Divide your six strongest leaders, one into each group.

Tip: English-ability alone doesn’t make an effective student leader. Attitude, maturity and social skills all play significant roles in a student leader’s effectiveness.

Step 2: Divide the six students that need the most help, one into each group, according to how effectively each leader can work with them.

Tip: Carefully match each leader with the struggling student they’re most likely to have a positive effect on. This effect is most often academic, but can often be a desired behavioral outcome, if that would be most beneficial to the student and/or class.

Step 3: Distribute the remaining students into groups based on effective ability and personality combinations.

Make the Most of Your Small Groups

-Model and enforce proper group behavior: Leaders assist those who need it, but everyone must participate to some degree.

-Use the small groups to build student confidence, friendships, teambuilding and support.

-Small groups allow more students to actively participate, as opposed to a single student that gets called on.

Purposeful Repetition

Students, like anyone learning a second language, notice patterns, then make inferences based on those patterns as to how their new language works. Purposeful, meaningful repetition is the solid foundation upon which students build their English.



Cycle of Success

Learning English as a foreign language is no easy task for our students. English, like any other language, is full of contradictions, broken rules and countless other opportunities for frustration, embarrassment and confusion. This is why we, as teachers, must give our students the support and momentum they need to keep moving in the right direction.

While there is no easy answer as to how we can ensure each student's success, we can certainly celebrate individual successes as we see them, using each one as a stepping stone toward the next achievement. We can give our students the confidence to attempt new challenges and the strength they need to get back up after they fall. We can build trust, acceptance and understanding. Most importantly, we can create a classroom environment where learning is celebrated, challenges are embraced and students feel supported.

Kindness Bridges the Language Gap

Teaching EFL in Taiwan is certainly rewarding, but many teachers often miss the more personal connection they've had with native English-speaking students. Although the language gap limits the extent of our expression and relationships, our students still easily perceive the universal attributes in a caring teacher's voice, expression and actions. We might not be able to communicate fully with every student, but we do have the capacity to communicate clearly enough that they understand how much we care.

"Kindness is the language the deaf can hear and the blind can see." –Mark Twain

*Sample Semester: Curriculum Overview (*For example only.)

Unit 1: Getting to Know You: Week 1-5

Self-Exploration (Indicator 1-2-2): Students participate in a variety of activities, exploring their interests and specialties.

Target Language

Basic: I can/can't ____.

Advanced: I want to/don't want to ____.

Target Vocabulary

Basic: read (a book), write (an email), draw (a dog), sing (a song), swim, can, want to, can't

Advanced: read a book, write an email, draw a picture, sing a song

Unit 2: Brand New Super You!: Week 6-10

Life Adjustment (Indicator 2-2-3): Students participate in family affairs, and share their experiences and feelings about family interactions.

Target Language

Basic: I want to/don't want to ____.

Advanced: I want to ____, but ____.

Target Vocabulary

Basic: read a book, write an email, draw a picture, sing a song

Advanced: ...help grandma/grandpa (read a book, etc.)

Unit 3: Listen to Learn, Learn to Listen: Week 11-15

Interpersonal Interaction (Indicator 3-2-2): Students participate in various self-management activities and develop attitudes that reflect self-discipline, following rules and personal responsibility.

Target Language

Basic/Advanced: I want to ____, but it's __ o'clock.

Target Vocabulary

Basic: clean, bedroom, bathroom, living room, dining room

Advanced: study, read, eat, wash dishes

Unit 4: Earth is Everyone's Home: Week 16-20

Outdoor Life (Indicator 4-2-2): Students participate in outdoor activities and experience nature with their basic knowledge and abilities.

Target Language

Basic: I want to ____, but ____.

Advanced: If ____, then ____.

Target Vocabulary

Basic: hot, cold, rainy, cloudy, sunny

Advanced: snowy, windy, icy, sticky

Unit Structure & Objectives

Note: This structure is not a one-size-fits all solution, but merely a suggestion. Please feel free to modify any/all of this content to custom tailor your curriculum to best fit the specific needs of your school, program and most importantly, your students.

Make Each Semester Count

Each semester is 20 weeks, so you'll see each class at least twenty times. By dividing your class time into four, 5-week units, you can provide students the structure they need to feel secure, streamline your instruction and leave more room for student-centered activities.

Structured for Success

This 5-lesson structure is designed to introduce students to language in a natural, meaningful way. After first exposure to new language in Lesson 1, students will progress from guided practice to independent production, getting help where they need it and gaining confidence with each challenge and success along the way.

Lesson 1 Goal: Exposure to New Language

Objective: Introduce students to new vocabulary and sentence patterns, focusing on difficult language and guiding students through various strategies to *increase confidence* and *improve production* through *guided practice* and *clarifications*. Teachers use informal assessments to adjust Lessons 2-5 according to student needs.

Activity #1

Lesson 2 Goal: Structured Practice

Objective: *Review* and *reinforce* new English through structured practice required to play the game, focusing on *volume*, *clarity* and *accurate pronunciation*.

Activity #2

Lesson 3 Goal: Guided Student Production

Objective: *Review* and *reinforce* new English through guided (teacher-centered) student production required to play the game.

Activity #3

Lesson 4 Goal: Independent Student Production

Objective: *Review* and *reinforce* new English through independent (student-centered) production required to play the game.

Activity #4

Lesson 5 Goal: Assessment

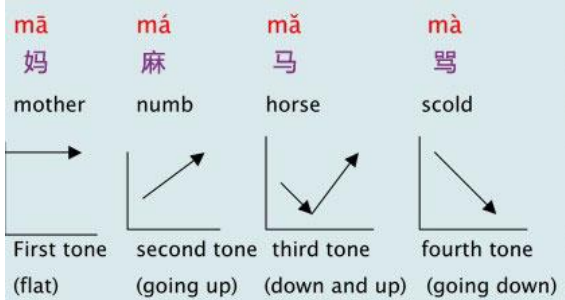
Objective: Assess student understanding and production, focusing on *reading*, *writing*, *speaking* and *listening*.

Activity #5

Appendix A: English vs. Chinese

English vs. Chinese: A Further Explanation of Differences

Note: These differences are just a few of the many you'll encounter between English and Chinese. The purpose of this appendix is to help foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for the amount and depth of these differences.

English	Chinese
<p><u>Use of Tones</u> (highs and lows of a voice)</p> <p>Tonal changes = expression</p>	<p><u>Use of Tones:</u> Chinese has 4 different tones. Each changes the meaning of the word.</p> <p><u>Example</u></p>  <p>The diagram illustrates four tones with their respective line graphs and examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First tone (flat): mǎ (妈) - mother Second tone (going up): má (麻) - numb Third tone (down and up): mǎ (马) - horse Fourth tone (going down): mà (骂) - scold
<p><u>Basic English Pronouns</u></p> <p>He = male She = female It = objects and *animals</p> <p>*Curiously, pets in the west, are often referred to as "he or she", while pesky, scary or animals raised for food, such as, flies, lions and cattle, are referred to as "it".</p>	<p><u>Basic Chinese Pronouns</u></p> <p>Tā (他) = "he, she" <i>and</i> "it."</p> <p><u>Effect on Students</u></p> <p>Many students often use the wrong pronoun, because pronouns in Chinese are defined by context.</p> <p>*In Chinese, tā (他) is the proper pronoun to use for each of these sentences.</p> <p><i>He</i> (tā) is my father. <i>She</i> (tā) is my mother. <i>It</i> (tā) is my bicycle.</p>
<p>Sound it Out</p> <p>Alphabet allows Ss to use phonics to sound out words.</p> <p><i>Ex: "wa-ter", can be sounded out.</i></p>	<p>BoPoMoFo</p> <p>In English, we can sound out most unknown words. In Chinese, we can't because it's character-based.</p> <p>水 = water</p>

Plural Noun Forms

Apple = 1 Apple. Apples = 1+ Apple

In most cases, English speakers simply add an "s" to pluralize most nouns.

Plural Noun Forms

No plurals.

Example

Apple = píng guǒ (蘋果)

Five = wǔ (五)

Five apples = wǔ píng guǒ

*Notice: The word for "apple" stayed the same. In English, we simply add an "s" to pluralize most words, but in Chinese, this is accomplished by adding modifiers.

Measure Words

Also, you can't simply add a number before a word to give a quantity. A measure word must be used.

*But you can't say wǔ píng guǒ (五蘋果)

*You need to use a measure word.

*"Gè (個) is the measure word for apples.

So to say "5 apples" you must say...

"Wǔ **gè** píng guǒ (五個蘋果)"