

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION TO THE TEACHER'S BOOK

This Teacher's Book builds complete lessons specific to the sub-test activities in the Student's Book. The aim of this Teacher's Book is to help you develop students' skills through scaffolded activities that can be adapted to your teaching context. The focus of the lesson sketches is communication in a healthcare setting, and it is important to help your students understand that this is the key to succeeding in OET. Every effort has been made to establish the relevance of each skill to the healthcare context, and therefore the OET context. This approach helps students to practise the skills acquired in the lessons well beyond Test Day and into their lives as healthcare professionals. The Teacher's Book helps you to engage your students in a meaningful way.

OET assesses a candidate's ability to use language to communicate in different healthcare situations. It is not a test of knowledge of language or medical knowledge, and in that sense, it is different from other tests candidates may have taken before, especially general-purpose language tests. Students in OET preparation classes do have slightly different expectations, but it is important to remind them that candidates who demonstrate that they can communicate in different healthcare contexts using the appropriate language skills are more likely to succeed than candidates who are focussed on acquiring language or strategies to 'crack' the test. Therefore, the book recommends a communicative, skills-based approach that does not rely heavily on the use of practice tests.

Using the lesson sketches

Students in OET preparation classes are generally very focussed and clear about their needs. Some of them may have strong views about how classroom time should be used and their expectations of the course. Understandably, they may feel that practice tests are a better use of classroom time than learning a new skill, so they may want a fine balance between the two. To help you achieve this balance, the lesson sketches are designed to include both skills and transfer of these skills to OET tasks.

The purpose of the lesson sketches in the Teacher's Book is not to teach pedagogy but to provide a framework that can be adapted to your context. It covers the key ideas which a lesson on that skill should cover. You are free to adapt it to your own teaching model. A specific timing for each stage in the lesson sketches hasn't been mentioned, but most lessons are designed to be between 45 minutes and an hour and a half.

You may find that students are reluctant to study language skills which aren't directly related to OET practice tests. If that's the case, the lesson sketches will allow you to focus on language skills in conjunction with questions from the practice tests within the same lesson.

The lessons are designed to help you link them to the healthcare context as well as to create transfer of learning to OET tasks based on the teaching model recommended by OET. It helps keep the class focussed on a skill but also allows enough focus on OET through both guided and free practice.

Stage	Purpose	Features
Setting the context / warmer	This stage helps to link the skill in focus to the healthcare context. The purpose is to help students identify where they have used the skill in their everyday work as healthcare professionals.	This is a short stage, just like the length of time you would devote to any warmer or lead-in activity. The most important feature is that the warmer not only stimulates interest, but its main function is to help students see how the use of the skill links to the healthcare context.
Exploring the skill	This stage provides students with input on the skill through communicative activities that help them understand and practise the skill.	Ideally, this forms the main part of the lesson. There are communicative or skills-focussed activities involving pair and group work. The examples and activities are all set in a healthcare context.
Applying the skill to an OET task	In this stage the skill is linked to an OET task through guided practice. The purpose is to provide candidates as much scaffolding in order to enable them to apply the skill which they learnt in the previous stage to an OET task.	This stage is medium-length and most effective when only a part of an OET task is given to students. This allows them to focus on the skill from the previous stage. The tasks can be scaffolded through different techniques such as teacher modelling, or pair/group work. The stage involves a lot of feedback and can include peer feedback. Each lesson sketch has suggestions for tasks that can be used for this stage from Practice Test 1.
Doing an OET Task	The aim of this stage is to allow students to practise the skill and to apply it to OET tasks. Feedback is also an important aspect of this stage, but it can also be provided at the end of the next stage.	This stage is also medium length. The questions can include an entire part of a sub-test or the remaining questions from the previous stage. You may need to implement reduced time allowances if you are only doing certain questions. The lesson sketches have suggestions for relevant questions, but you can choose your own questions too.
Following up	The goal of this stage is to allow students to reflect on their learning and link the skill they have just practised to their own workplace context.	This is a short stage. Any review activity that facilitates a link with students' workplace or everyday life is effective. For example, students can discuss how they now feel about a question posed in the warmer stage. Students can also be given extension tasks based on the skill. Merely giving extra practice test questions doesn't count as effective follow-up.

Students in an OET class

Students come to class with different expectations and ideas of their own level of English. It is recommended that you conduct a screening using any standardised placement test to ascertain their level of proficiency. It is not advisable to have students below the CEFR B2 level in a regular preparation class for OET. However, for students at a lower level, you can provide general English classes with a flavour of medical English and have them work their way to a B2 level. This may take time, but it will save disappointment and dissatisfaction that usually go with students not being able to achieve their desired score at the first attempt.

Because OET is set in a western medical healthcare context, students may also be unaware of the cultural aspects of communication, or even of how the healthcare system works. Your classes can include input on these aspects or an orientation to them wherever necessary.

Additional resources

The lesson sketches are designed to be self-sufficient, and you won't need to access additional resources outside the classroom unless it is for an extension task, or if you choose to replace a recommended activity in the warmer stage with a short clip or video. The lesson sketches have been created keeping a low-resource classroom in mind, since access to technology may not always be possible. However, if you have these facilities and would like to make use of them, read through the lessons and see where you can adapt. The lesson sketches largely use the tasks in the Student's Book. However, there are some activities in the sketches where cutouts or photocopies have been suggested; but there is always room for adapting these to a low resource classroom.