LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CLASSROOM: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO COMPETENCY-BASED ESL TEACHING

Student Companion Manual

Find your community. Find your voice. Find your English.

Quick FAQ

What is the Neighbourhood Voices Student Companion Manual?

The *Neighbourhood Voices Student Companion Manual* is a student-focused guide for a fifteen-unit college English course. It supports students as they develop listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills through social, cultural, literary, and community-based themes.

The manual combines language instruction, academic communication, research skills, essay writing, oral presentations, and preparation for course evaluations.

What is the Neighbourhood Voices Project?

The *Neighbourhood Voices Project* connects English learning with the communities and environments around students. Students explore social, cultural, and literary themes while developing their ability to communicate their ideas clearly in English.

The project encourages students to observe their communities, investigate issues, use reliable sources, and communicate their findings through written and oral work.

How is the manual organised?

The manual is organised into **15 units** that follow the progression of the course. Each unit identifies what students should be able to do and provides explanations, examples, practice exercises, and preparation for upcoming evaluations.

The course progresses from basic communication and language foundations to more advanced reading, writing, research, and oral communication.

What will I learn in the first units?

Units 1 to 5 establish the foundations of the course. Students work on:

a. Course orientation and self-introduction
b. Paragraph development
c. Verb tenses
d. Listening strategies
e. Reading strategies

f. Question forms
g. Vocabulary development
h. Oral presentation structure
i. Summarising
j. Present perfect
k. Preparation for Listening Exam I
l. Preparation for the midterm oral presentation

What happens in the middle of the course?

Units 6 to 10 focus more strongly on academic communication and essay writing. Students learn about:

1. Oral presentation techniques
2. Attention-getters
3. Modal auxiliaries
4. Thesis statements
5. Essay planning
6. Essay structure
7. The passive voice
8. TEEL body paragraphs
9. Pronouns and precise word choice
10. Transition words
11. Advanced reading strategies
12. Conditional forms
13. Conclusion writing
14. Revision strategies
15. Reliable sources
16. The CRAAP Test
17. Preposition

TEEL is introduced in Unit 7 as part of the detailed study of essay structure.

What is PEEL?

PEEL is another useful structure for developing academic paragraphs:

Both TEEL and PEEL help students organise their ideas, develop arguments, integrate evidence, and maintain paragraph coherence.

How does the manual help me with essay writing?

The manual guides students through the complete essay-writing process. Students learn how to:

Choose and develop a topic.

a. Identify the main issue.
b. Develop a thesis statement.
c. Build an essay plan.

d. Organise body paragraphs.
e. Use TEEL and PEEL structures.
f. Support ideas with evidence.
g. Use transitions effectively.
h. Write introductions and conclusions.
i. Revise and edit their work.

The manual also includes a structural blueprint for a 450-word essay and a comprehensive self-editing checklist.

What are ARMS and CUPS?

ARMS and CUPS are revision and editing strategies introduced in Unit 10.

How will I learn to evaluate sources?

Unit 10 introduces the **CRAAP Test**, which helps students evaluate the quality and reliability of sources.

This is particularly important when students use research sources in essays and presentations.

What happens in the final units?

Units 11 to 15 focus on final preparation and evaluation. Students review:

1. Future perfect
2. Comparison of adjectives
3. Frequency adverbs
4. Sentence variety
5. Essay planning
6. Self-editing
7. Oral presentation skills
8. Listening comprehension
9. Reading comprehension
10. Final writing
11. Final oral presentation

The final units are designed to help students consolidate the skills developed throughout the semester.

What evaluations are included in the course?

The manual prepares students for several major evaluations, including:

1. **Listening Exam I**
2. **Midterm Oral Presentation**
3. **Midterm Writing Evaluation**
4. **Listening Exam II**
5. **Final Listening Exam**

6. **Final Reading Exam**
7. **Final Writing Exam**
8. **Final Oral Presentation**

Each evaluation section explains what students can expect and provides preparation strategies.

How does the manual help me prepare for oral presentations?

Students learn how to organise an oral presentation, introduce a topic, attract the audience's attention, develop ideas, use appropriate visual support, and respond to questions.

The manual also includes a full oral presentation rehearsal, cue card guidelines, and a four-step structure for answering questions.

How does the manual develop reading and listening skills?

Students learn strategies for becoming more effective listeners and readers this includes the **SQ3R** method.

Listening instruction covers what to do **before, during, and after listening**. Reading instruction includes preparation strategies, inferencing, identifying the author's purpose, and distinguishing fact from opinion.

The manual also prepares students specifically for the listening and reading examinations.

What grammar is covered?

The fifteen units provide progressive grammar instruction covering:

a. Verb tenses
b. Question forms
c. Simple present
d. Past tenses
e. Future forms
f. Present perfect
g. Modal auxiliaries
h. Passive voice
i. Pronouns
j. Conditional forms
k. Prepositions
l. Future perfect
m. Comparison of adjectives
n. Frequency adverbs
o. Sentence variety

Grammar is presented in connection with communication, academic writing, and course tasks.

Does the manual include practice exercises?

Yes. Each unit contains practice activities that allow students to apply the language, reading, writing, listening, and communication skills introduced in the unit.

These exercises can also be used for review before evaluations.

Is this manual only about grammar?

No. Grammar is one component of the course. The manual develops the four major language skills:**Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing**

It also develops research, critical thinking, academic writing, oral communication, source evaluation, and revision skills.

Who is this manual for?

The manual is intended primarily for students enrolled in the Language and Culture Classroom course. It can also serve as a reference throughout the semester when students are preparing assignments, presentations, examinations, and written work.

How should I use this manual?

Students should use the manual throughout the semester rather than only before examinations. Read the explanations before completing the practice exercises, use the checklists when preparing assignments, and return to the relevant units when preparing for evaluations.

The manual is designed to accompany students from the beginning of the course through the final writing and oral evaluations.

What is the main goal of the course?

The central goal is to help students **communicate with ease in English on social, cultural, and literary themes**.

Through the *Neighbourhood Voices Project*, students develop not only their English language skills but also their ability to understand their communities, investigate issues, express ideas, support arguments, and communicate with confidence.

What makes this a student companion rather than an instructor's handbook?

The Student Companion Manual is written directly for students. It explains course expectations, learning strategies, language concepts, writing structures, evaluation requirements, and preparation techniques in a format students can use throughout the semester.

The accompanying Instructor's Handbook provides the instructor with additional teaching guidance, classroom activities, assessment resources, answer keys, and instructional support.