Say less. Make it clearer.

TI1 | Teacher English | 45-minute practice + next-lesson review

We do not need an impressive speech to start a useful task. We need words our learners can act on. Rehearse one instruction, one explanation and one piece of feedback, then try one change in a real lesson. The classroom is not an audition.

Who this pack is for

Teachers working alone, with a colleague or with a mentor. Choose examples that fit our learners and our own English. No CEFR level is assigned. These are original suggested models from Gav and Em, not a podcast transcript or a language test.

Preparation and outcome

Print pages 2 and 3. Keep page 4 for checking and reflection. Bring a task we will teach soon. A colleague can read the learner prompts aloud; working alone, read both parts or make a private recording of our own rehearsal. No supplied audio is needed. By the end, we have clearer wording and a check that shows what the learner understood.

Our 45-minute practice route

Time	What we do
0-5	Without preparing, say the instructions for a two-option decision task. Write down our opening wording. What must the learner do first?
5-15	Use page 2 to shorten the instructions. Show one example, then rehearse the revised wording. A colleague follows the instructions rather than judging our accent.
15-25	Use page 3 to explain a word and a grammar point. The learner answers the meaning check. Change one sentence if the response reveals confusion.
25-35	Rehearse the feedback and uncertainty scenarios on page 3. Give a usable next step and time for a retry. Check possible models on page 4.
35-42	Use our own upcoming lesson task. Rehearse the instruction, likely learner question and our response twice. Choose one change to keep.
42-45	Complete the plan on page 4. After the next lesson, record what learners actually did and decide whether to keep or adjust the wording.

What counts as clearer?

The learner knows the first action, can explain the intended meaning and can use the feedback to try again. Ask our partner what they understood before offering a correction. We can improve wording, pace, pausing or the example. There is no single required accent.

A smaller version

With ten minutes, practise just one instruction and one checking question. Online, show the task before speaking and use a shared document for the response. With children or learners who need more support, demonstrate each action and use familiar language. Rehearsal time is not the learner lesson time.

Instructions we can act on

Teacher practice sheet | Keep the task visible while we speak

1. Repair an overloaded instruction

Task: pairs compare two class-trip options, choose one and write one reason. Give them three minutes. Here is the overloaded version:

What I would like you to do is, having considered both of the possibilities, discuss them with the person adjacent to you and arrive at a decision, which you should then justify in writing.

Write clearer instructions. Include who, the action, the result and the time.

2. Show the task, then say the model

Point to two options. Show a sample choice and a reason. Then try:

Work with your partner. Compare the two options. Choose one together. Write one reason. You have three minutes.

For learners who need more support, give one step at a time: Look at these two options. Show them. Talk with your partner. Demonstrate a short exchange. Choose one. Then model the written reason.

3. Which question checks the task?

Circle the two questions that check the required action.
A Are you working alone or with a partner?
B Do you understand everything?
C What do you write after you choose?
D Is this an interesting topic?

A question for our own task, and the answer we expect:

4. Rehearse a repair

Colleague as learner: Do we write about both options?
Teacher: respond in one or two short sentences. Point to the model. Ask a check that reveals what the learner will write.

Working alone, write the reply before looking at page 4. Then say it aloud.

Our reply and our check:

Notice the result

Ask our colleague to begin the task. Which action was clear? Which part needed repeating? Change one phrase and try again. Saying exactly the same thing more loudly is not always a repair.

Explain. Check. Give a next step.

Teacher practice sheet | Try each response before checking page 4

1. Explain a word in its context

A learner sees: Water flows through the pipe under the sink.
Overloaded explanation: A pipe is a cylindrical conduit for the transportation of fluid.

Explain pipe here with familiar words and one example. We only need the water-carrying meaning for this sentence. Add a question that checks that meaning.

Our short explanation, example and meaning check:

2. Explain a useful grammar pattern

A learner says: Can you to help me? They want to ask for help now.
Give a correct model and a short explanation. Then ask them to make a new request with open the window. Include one question that checks whether the model is a request.

Our model, explanation and two learner prompts:

3. Give feedback the learner can use

A learner completes the pair task and writes: We choose the museum because interesting.
First recognise what communicated well. Then help them complete the reason. Ask them to retry rather than simply copying our correction.

Our feedback and the learner’s next action:

4. Say what we know, and check what we do not

A learner asks whether an unfamiliar word can be used in a formal email. We are unsure.
Ask for the complete sentence. Say how we will check the usage and when we will return to it. Practise the response without pretending to know.

Our response:

Two different checks

Instruction check: What do we write after we choose? This checks the task.
Meaning check: Does water move through a pipe, or stay in it? This checks the intended meaning. A learner may know what to do but still misunderstand a word.

Possible models. A real next step.

Teacher key and review | Other clear, accurate wording is welcome

Page 2: instructions and repair

Task-check answers: A and C. Expected answers: with a partner; one reason. B invites a yes without showing understanding. D asks for an opinion.
Possible repair: Choose one option together. Write one reason for that choice. How many options do you choose? Expected answer: one.
Sample written result: We choose the museum because it is interesting. Show the result before asking learners to write.

Page 3: word and grammar explanations

Pipe: Here, a pipe is a tube that carries water. Water moves through the pipe under the sink. Does the water move through it, or stay in it? Expected answer: it moves through it. A drawing can make this clearer. Other meanings of pipe need their own context.
Grammar: Can you help me? After can, use help without to. Are we asking for help or describing yesterday? Expected answer: asking for help. Now ask me to open the window. Expected response: Can you open the window? This checks use as well as meaning.

Page 3: feedback and uncertainty

Feedback: Your choice and your reason are clear. To make the reason a complete clause, add it is: because it is interesting. Try your whole sentence again. Expected retry: We choose the museum because it is interesting. After the supported retry, ask for a different reason to check transfer.
When unsure: Could you show me the whole sentence? I am not sure whether that word fits a formal email here. Let’s check the usage examples in a reliable dictionary. If we cannot settle it now, I’ll check before our next lesson and bring back an example. Use a follow-up time we can actually keep.

Our next-lesson experiment

Before the lesson	After the lesson
One instruction, explanation or feedback move I will change: _____ _____	What learners actually said or did first: _____ _____
The wording and check I will try: _____ _____	Keep, shorten or change? My reason: _____ _____

Review with a colleague

Which words helped the learner act or show meaning? Where did we need a second example? Choose one next step. Do not count every pause as a failure, or use a rehearsal as an accent test.

For more explanation practice

Find our guide to simple definitions and examples, and more teacher questions, at howtoenglishpod.com. TI1 is reusable: change the classroom situation and repeat the same observe, rehearse, try and review cycle.