COURSE GUIDE

GST111
COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH I

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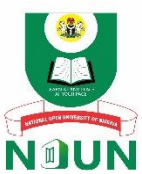

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Introduction

Welcome to *GST111 Communication in English*. I am confident you will enjoy taking this course. This guide offers a broad overview of the course and includes helpful details about its structure.

GST111 Communication in English is a course intended for the 100 level. The course is available to all students who have registered for any programme at the National Open University of Nigeria. The material has been developed to suit distance learning.

What You Will Learn In This Course

GST111 will enable you to gain an understanding of a variety of issues relating to effective communication/study skills.

Course Aims

GST111 has a specific aim: to give you an understanding of how to communicate effectively in English, the medium of instruction at this level of your education.

The aim will be achieved by:

- introducing you to the basic principles of communicating in English
- demonstrating how the principles of communicating in English can be applied to language use in diverse situations
- sensitising you to the rules of English and applying these rules in diverse areas where the language is used
- increasing your proficiency in the language substantially, so as to make you capable of performing language functions in social and academic settings.
- introduce you to diverse writing skills in English;
- give you a broad-based knowledge of the phonological forms of the
- language;
- expose you to diverse speaking enabling skills relevant to the
- language; and
- give you the grammatical rules and usage of English.

Course Objectives

To achieve the aims set out above, GST111 sets overall objectives. In addition, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are always included at the beginning of every unit. I advise you to read them before you start working through the unit. You may want to refer to them as you study the unit to check your progress.

Set out below are the wider objectives for the course. By meeting the objectives, you can count yourself as having met the aim of the course.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- use the listening enabling skills
- listen and comprehend lectures and talks
- take down notes while listening to a talk or lecture
- retrieve general and specific information through listening comprehension
- state how to listen to and comprehend data, figures, diagrams and charts
- listen for the main idea
- listen and be able to interpret and evaluate the speaker's viewpoints
- apply effective reading techniques to reading in diverse texts
- skim and scan through diverse reading texts
- read and comprehend at varying speed levels
- discuss how to read for vocabulary development
- acquire and utilise vocabulary of various academic fields
- explain how to comprehend diverse text materials
- describe how to read and comprehend texts with tables
- explain how to read and comprehend scientific texts
- interpret what is read accurately and evaluate the author's viewpoints.
- write topic sentences and attain coherence in written English;
- develop paragraphs in a logical manner using English;
- recognise and produce cause-and-effect types of paragraphs in
- English;
- write accurate formal letters;
- present written reports in a coherent and accurate manner;
- produce summaries of passages in a concise and effective
- manner;
- recognise and produce as accurately as possible, the English
- vowels and consonants;
- conduct interviews using the English medium;
- present seminar and conference papers;
- deliver an effective public speech; and
- recognise and operate the grammatical rules of English
- accurately.

Working Through This Course

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units and read sets of books and other relevant materials that you may lay your hands on. You will also need to undertake practical exercises for which you need a pen, a pencil, a notebook, and other

materials that will be listed later in this course guide. At the end of each unit, you will be required to submit written assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course, there will be a final examination. The course should take about 8 weeks.

Course Materials
The major materials you will need for this course are listed below.

1. Course guide
2. Study Units
3. Relevant textbooks
4. Presentation schedule

Study Units

There are forty-four units (nine modules) in this course. These are listed below.

Module 1

Unit 1	Listening Enabling Skills
Unit 2	Listening and Comprehending
Unit 3	Listening -Comprehension and Note Taking
Unit 4	Listening-Comprehension and Information Retrieval: General
Unit 5	Listening-Comprehension and Information Retrieval: Data, Figures, Diagrams and Charts

Module 2

Unit 1	Listening for the Main Idea
Unit 2	Listening for Interpretation and Critical Evaluation
Unit 3	Skimming and Scanning
Unit 4	Effective Reading and Types of Reading
Unit 5	The 3RsQ Method
Unit 6	Reading and Comprehending at Varying Speed Levels I

Module 3

Unit 1	Reading and Comprehending at Varying Speed Levels II
Unit 2	Reading for Vocabulary Development I
Unit 3	Reading for Vocabulary Development II
Unit 4	Reading for Vocabulary Development in Various Academic Contexts I
Unit 5	Reading for Vocabulary Development in Various Academic Contexts II

Module 4

Unit 1 Reading Diverse Texts: Narratives
Unit 2 Reading Diverse Texts: Expository Texts
Unit 3 Reading and Comprehending Passages with Tables
Unit 4 Reading Scientific Texts
Unit 5 Reading for Interpretation and Critical Evaluation
Unit 6 Art of Public Speaking

Module 5

Unit 1 Introduction to ICT and Digital Tools in Language Learning, Unit 2 Multimedia in Language Learning

Module 6

Unit 1 Writing Paragraphs: Topic Sentence and Coherence
Unit 2 Development of Paragraphs: Illustration and Description
Unit 3 Development of Paragraphs: Cause and Effect and Definitions
Unit 4 Formal Letters: Stylistic Forms and Essential Parts
Unit 5 Formal Letters: Complaints and Requests

Module 7

Unit 1 Formal Letters: Letters about Jobs, Ordering Goods and Letters to Government and other Organizations
Unit 2 Writing Reports I: Reporting Events
Unit 3 Writing Reports II: Reporting Experiments
Unit 4 Writing Summaries I: Techniques of Summarising
Unit 5 Writing Summaries II: More on Techniques of Summarising

Module 8

Unit 1 Letters and Sounds in English
Unit 2 English Vowels and Consonants
Unit 3 Interviews
Unit 4 Seminar Presentation
Unit 5 Public Speech Making

Module 9

Unit 1 Articles, Concord and Sentences
Unit 2 Tenses
Unit 3 Gerunds and Particles
Unit 4 The Active, Passive and the Infinitive
Unit 5 Modal Auxiliaries

Textbooks And References

At the end of every unit, you will find a list of books and other such materials that will enable you to have a firm grasp of the course. The books required to aid your understanding of this course are by no means exhaustive here. You are, therefore, expected to consult as many materials as possible. This will enable you to deepen your understanding of the course.

The Presentation Schedule

The dates for submission of all assignments will be communicated to you in due course. To be communicated to you are the dates of completing the study units and the dates for examinations.

The Assessment File

The assessment file will be made available to you. In this file, you will find details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain in this course will count towards your final marks.

Assessment

The course has two types of exercises or questions you are expected to tackle. The first is the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs), which you are expected to solve, but not to submit, at the end of the study. The second is the Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMAs), which you must solve and submit in an assignment file, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the successful completion of the course. The TMA accounts for 30% of your total course score. Every unit has a Tutor-Marked Assignment, which is a compulsory question that must be answered and submitted at the end of the course. You will minimise your chance of doing well in the course if you fail to submit answers to all the Tutor-Marked Assignments, as required.

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination for GST 111 will take a certain duration. The examination itself will carry 70%. It will consist of questions that reflect the self-assessment exercises and the tutor-marked assignments. You are expected to spend quality time reading the entire course units and all the SAEs and TMAs for the final examination.

Course Marking Scheme
The table below shows how the actual course marking scheme is broken down.

Table 1: Course Marking Scheme

Assessments	**Marks**
Assignments	These will count as 30% of the course mark.
Final examination	70% of the overall course mark
Total	100% of course marks

Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials

A number of tutorial hours have been provided in this course to enable students and their tutors to meet and review the course content at intervals. You will be informed of the dates, time, and venue for these tutorials, along with the name and particulars of your tutor, as soon as one is assigned to your group. Your tutor will grade and comment on your assignments, monitor your progress and provide answers to your questions during tutorials. You must submit your assignments in good time to enable your tutor to read them well and to make appropriate comments. Do not play with your tutorials or hesitate to consult your tutor when the need arises. Tutorials afford you the opportunity to meet and discuss with your tutor face to face, and they help you to get immediate answers to troubling questions. Apart from tutorials, you may consult your tutor when:

- you do not understand any part of the study units
- you have difficulty understanding self-assessment exercises or tutor-marked assignment
- When you have problems with the tutor's comments on your assignments or their grading.

To gain maximally from the tutorials, you ought to prepare a list of questions before attending them, and you must endeavour to participate actively in discussions during tutorials.

Summary

The course guide has provided you with an overview of what to expect in GST111 - Communication in English. I wish you success as you go through the course.

MAIN COURSE

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MODULE 1

Unit 1 Listening Enabling Skills
Unit 2 Listening and Comprehending
Unit 3 Listening-Comprehension and Note Taking
Unit 4 Listening-Comprehension and Information Retrieval: General
Unit 5 Listening-Comprehension and Information Retrieval: Data, Figures, Diagrams and Charts

UNIT 1 LISTENING ENABLING SKILLS

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcome
1.3 Developing Effective Listening Skills
1.3.1 Who is a Listener?
1.3.2 Why Must We Listen?
1.3.3 Listening Enabling Skills
1.4 Summary
1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
1.6 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise



1.1 Introduction

Welcome to this unit on Listening Enabling Skills. Listening is an essential part of communication and learning. Every day, you receive information through spoken communication at home, at work, in academic settings and in your interactions with others. Effective listening helps you understand information, follow instructions, participate in discussions and respond appropriately to what others say.

As a learner in an open and distance learning environment, you may receive information through lectures, audio recordings, videos, radio programmes, telephone conversations and other spoken communication. You therefore need effective listening skills to understand and use the information presented to you.

In this unit, you will learn who a listener is, why listening is important and the skills that can help you become an effective listener. As you study the unit, think about your own listening habits and identify areas that you need to improve.

.

1.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- state clearly who the listener is
- determine the reason you must listen throughout the programme
- list the listening enabling skills
- apply the listening enabling skills discussed while practising some of the activities given in the unit.

1.3 Developing Effective Listening Skills

Every day, you receive information through spoken communication, whether in class, at work, at home, or while interacting with others. Understanding your role as a listener provides the foundation for developing effective listening habits throughout your studies.

Listening is a process rather than a single activity. When a speaker communicates a message, the listener must first receive the sound, pay attention to it, interpret its meaning and respond appropriately. The process can be represented as follows.

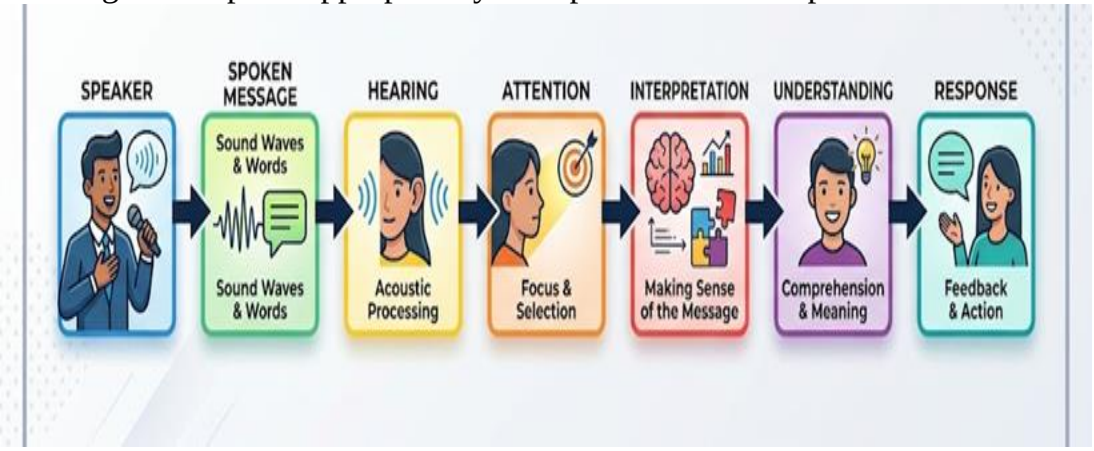


Figure 1.1: The Listening Process

The figure shows that effective listening involves several interconnected stages. Hearing allows the listener to receive the message, while attention helps the listener focus on what is being communicated. Interpretation enables the listener to assign meaning to the message. Understanding occurs when the listener grasps the intended meaning, while the response shows that the listener has processed the information. A weakness at any of these stages can undermine effective communication.

1.3.1 Who is a Listener?

I have a simple answer to this question. You are that listener. You are a listener because listening is a compulsory day-to-day activity in the programme. Although most of the time you will be reading, there will be occasions when you have to listen to a tape recorder, radio, television or video in this programme. You are likely to attend lectures and meetings at the study centre. You need the skill to listen accurately and to comprehend what is conveyed to you as information. That is why you need to go through this unit carefully.

As a listener, I cannot determine where you are now as you study this unit; you may be at home, at work, in a secluded place, or even in a vehicle on your way to a destination. Wherever you may be, there is something important about listening. We listen daily, moment by moment.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

i. Who is a listener?
ii. What do you listen to?

If you have done the above self-assessment exercise very well, you probably wrote down answers similar to those indicated below.

A listener is anyone capable of listening to what is said and possibly participating in what he hears and what is demanded to be done. In fact, as a reader of this unit, you are a listener, although it is possible for you to be deaf and be doing this course. Even if you are deaf, you still listen to sign language. What do you listen to? You can listen to a tape recorder, a video, or a lecture. Did you get all the answers correctly? If you did, then fine. It means that you are following me in this study.

Having identified who a listener is, the next step is to understand why listening plays such an important role in learning and everyday communication**.**

1.3.2 Why Must We Listen?

Listening is not simply hearing sounds. It enables us to receive information, follow instructions, solve problems, and communicate effectively with others.
Have you ever wondered why careful listening often prevents mistakes during learning or work?

You, as a listener, must listen because listening is a day-to-day activity. You listen to your friends talking, maybe in your language or English. You listen to directions when you are lost or new to a place. You listen to lectures delivered by specialists in the field. You listen at home, at work, in the office, to a telephone conversation and so on.

Listening activities can therefore be divided into two major parts, namely, listening in general, social setting and listening for specific purposes.

The kind of listening we are interested in here is listening with a specific purpose. That is, listening to gather information, for directions, to academic lectures, to process, to be involved in doing something, or to critically evaluate what a speaker is saying. Your concern in this study is also listening to English. Indeed, English is the medium of instruction.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Which of the following is NOT the purpose of listening to gather information? Indicate with a tick (□).

i. Day-to-day activity □
ii. Telephone conversation □
iii. Eating a delicious food □
iv. Working in the office □
v. Critical evaluation of what people are saying □
vi. Absorbing academic lectures. □

The last part of this unit is the most important. This part deals with listening enabling skills. Continue reading to examine the skills that can make your listening more effective.

1.3.3 Listening Enabling Skills

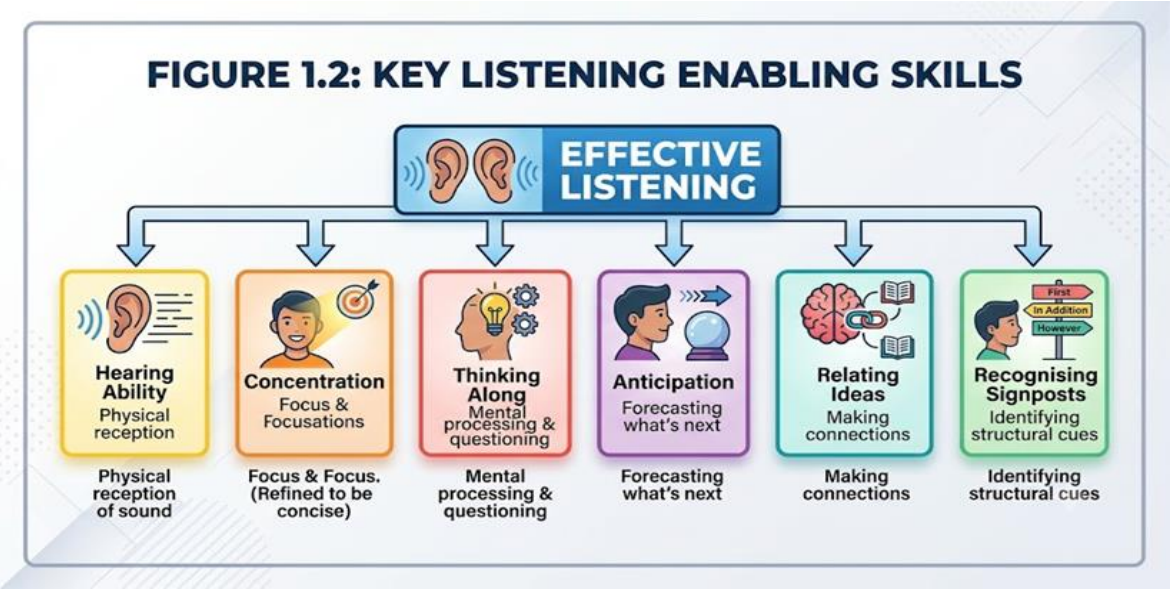
Effective listening requires more than simply hearing words. It depends on several complementary skills that work together to improve understanding.

Before you continue, consider this question. Which listening habit do you think contributes most to understanding a lecture?

No matter where you are, you need the following requirements for active listening:

- functioning ears
- concentration
- ability to think along with the speaker
- ability to anticipate what the speaker is about to say
- ability to note important signposts that keep the listening activity going.

Effective listening depends on several skills working together. A listener may hear a speaker clearly but still fail to understand the message due to poor concentration or difficulty connecting ideas. The major skills discussed in this unit are summarised in Figure 1.2.



The figure shows that effective listening is supported by several related skills. Hearing ability allows the listener to receive spoken information. Concentration keeps attention focused on the message. Thinking along with the speaker helps the listener follow the development of ideas. Anticipation enables the listener to predict what may come next. Relating ideas helps the listener connect earlier information with new information, while recognising signposts helps identify important points and the organisation of the speaker's message.

Anybody with a functioning ear can listen. Indeed, this is the attribute common to many people. Even the deaf listen through sign language signals. Of course, if you have listening defects, listening ability will be difficult. Test the functioning of your ears by clicking the link below to listen to the short clip and answer the questions in it.

https://youtube.com/shorts/UQEr5p7hEwI?si=v2Ow1PxCjQmsOgj2



If you allowed your functioning ear to be active, you would have been able to answer the questions correctly from the video above. Were you able to get the answers correctly? Congratulations, if you did. If you cannot do so, more practice activities in this module will help you utilise your functioning ear effectively.

The next listening enabling skill you need is CONCENTRATION. Effective listening is difficult in the midst of interruptions, when there is a lack of interest in the topic, when there is noise, and when a speaker speaks above your head using difficult words.

The point for you to note here is that **concentration** is an important component of effective listening.

The third listening enabling skill is the **ability**. **Think** along with the speaker and **anticipate** what they are about to say. You cannot think along with the speaker if your mind goes astray. You cannot anticipate the next thing if your attention is not there. There are some listening signals that can facilitate anticipation. Some of these are put in the box below.

The speaker says…	You anticipate…
First of all…	Secondly
In the past…	Now…
Areas of strength…	Areas of weakness
The most important…	The less

Indeed, the ability to anticipate can assist you in good listening.

The fourth listening enabling skill is **relationship**. That is, your ability to relate or connect what was said before with what the speaker is saying now. Relationship comes into play in listening when expressions such as “as I said before”, “on the one hand”, “consequently”, “in other words”, etc., are used by the speaker.

Lastly, the ability to pay attention to significant signposts such as “firstly”, “secondly”, “lastly”, “now”, “next”, “where”, “when”, “who”, and so on, is an important listening enabling skill. These signs indicate the key points the speaker is making.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

1. Which listening skill helps you predict what the speaker will say next?

A. Memorisation
B. Anticipation
C. Guessing
D. Observation

2. Which expression is a common signpost?

A. Secondly
B. Delicious

C. Colourful
D. Quickly
3. Concentration during listening is improved by:
A. Frequent interruptions
B. Excessive noise
C. Minimising distractions
D. Ignoring the speaker



1.4 Summary

In this unit, you have studied listening and the skills required for effective listening. You learned that a listener is a person who pays attention to and interprets information conveyed through speech or other appropriate means.

You also examined why listening is important in academic and everyday communication. Listening enables you to gather information, follow instructions, understand lectures, participate in discussions and evaluate information.

The major listening-enabling skills discussed include functioning hearing ability, concentration, thinking along with the speaker, anticipation, relating ideas, and recognising significant signposts. Developing these skills can improve your ability to understand spoken information in academic and everyday situations.



1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources/Web Sources

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UNIT 2 LISTENING AND COMPREHENDING

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Relationship between Listening and Comprehending
    2.3.1 Listening-Comprehension
    2.3.2 Factors Affecting Comprehension
2.4 Summary
2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
2.6 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises



2.1 Introduction

Have you ever listened carefully to someone, only to realise later that you misunderstood the message? Or perhaps you remembered only part of what was said? Experiences like these show that hearing words is not the same as understanding them. In the previous unit, you learned about the meaning of listening, why listening is important, and the skills that support effective listening. Those skills provide a solid foundation, but they become truly valuable only when they lead to comprehension.

In this unit, you will explore the close relationship between listening and comprehension. You will discover practical strategies to help you understand spoken messages more effectively and identify common factors that may hinder successful comprehension. As you work through the unit, try to relate the ideas to your own experiences in lectures, conversations, meetings, or everyday interactions.

By the end of this unit, you should appreciate that effective listening is not simply about hearing words. It is about making meaning from what you hear and responding appropriately.

Pause for a moment and reflect on the following question

Imagine that two students listen to the same 20-minute lecture. At the end of the lecture, one student can explain the main points while the other remembers only a few words. Both students heard the same speaker. What might explain the difference?

Continue reading to find out how listening and comprehension work together.

2.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- show clearly the relationship between listening and comprehension
- perform tasks to comprehend
- state factors affecting comprehension

2.3 Relationship between Listening and Comprehending

Do you know the relationship between listening and comprehension? You listen to comprehend, and you comprehend, while listening. This section explores the relationship between listening and comprehension.

As you listen, you must always be ready to comprehend. Comprehension is at different levels during the art of listening. Some speeches are best understood superficially because the points are not very important. Some need proper attention because the discussion is very important. Flexibility in the art of listening and comprehension is therefore very important.

The relationship between listening and comprehension can be viewed as a process. A listener first receives the spoken message, pays attention to it, processes the information and interprets its meaning. When the message has been successfully interpreted, comprehension takes place. The listener can then respond appropriately.

FIGURE 2.1: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LISTENING AND COMPREHENSION

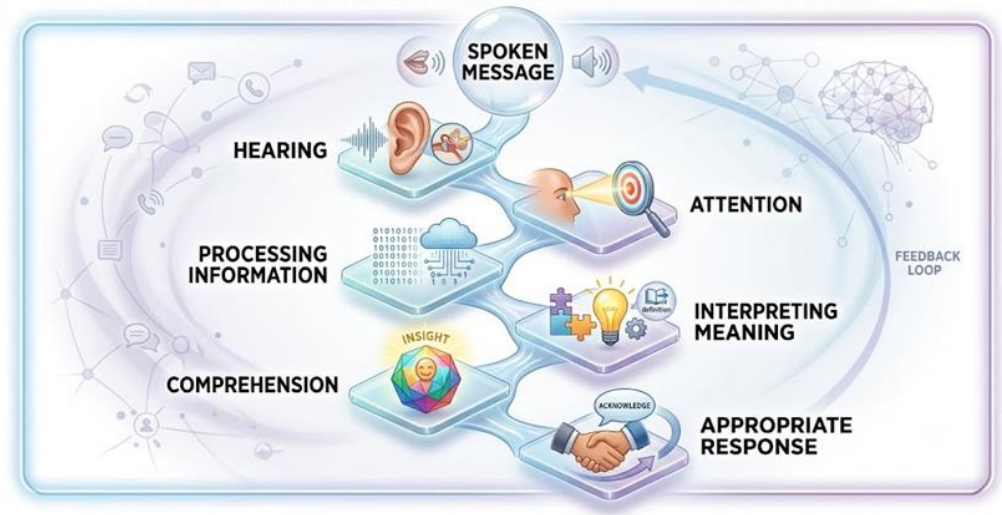

Figure 2.1: Relationship between Listening and Comprehension

The figure shows that comprehension does not occur simply because sound reaches the ears. The listener must actively process the information.

Comprehension is more than getting all the words or expressions in a listening passage. You need more than words to comprehend. You need general knowledge to comprehend. The more familiar you are with the topic, the better the comprehension. This brings us to the second part of our study: How can you comprehend what you listened to?

2.3.1 Listening-Comprehension

So far in this unit, we have stressed that listening is closely related to comprehension. In this action, we will discuss how to comprehend. In order to comprehend, you should:

- **listen** attentively
- **follow** the speaker
- **posses** a wide range of vocabulary related to the subject being discussed
- **recognise** general speech patterns and major speech divisions such as **introduction**, **main body of speech, transitional clues, change of ideas, shift of emphasis, summary, concluding remarks**, etc.
- **put** your experience of the world to bear on the topic
- **show** interest in the topic.

The chart below indicates how to carry out all the comprehension steps listed above.

COMPREHENSION STEPS	HOW TO TAKE THE STEPS
• Listen attentively 	• Show high concentration. • Avoid noise and distractions. • Be focused, do not let your mind wonder away. • Fix your eye on the speaker.
• Follow the speaker 	• Imagine what he is saying. • Speak along with him. • Be close to him in thought.
• Possess vocabulary 	• Read widely on the topic before the lecture. • Search the library. • Bring to memory all words related to the topic.
• Recognise general speech pattern 	• Know what introduction is given. • Be conscious of the major speech divisions. • Note transitional words such as **now, then, later, on the other hand, firstly, however, etc.** • Note shift of emphasis, change of ideas, etc. • Note when the speaker is summarizing all points: that moment is important. • Note the conclusion.
• Previous knowledge 	• Think about what you know about the topic before. • Think about what is going on at the moment related to the topic. • Think about the horrible or pleasant experience about the topic.
• Let's practice all these steps	

Fig.2.2: Steps to Listening-Comprehension

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Test your understanding of the concepts discussed before proceeding.

List five steps that help improve listening comprehension.

Let's go to the last part of this unit, and this is a factor that can affect comprehension.

2.3.2 Factors Affecting Comprehension

Before reading this section, think about the following question.

Why do some people fail to understand information even when they appear to be listening?

Continue reading to discover the possible reasons.
This section is directly the opposite of how to comprehend. The following can affect the rate of comprehension.

- Not being familiar with the topic
- Lack of concentration
- Lack of interest
- Limited language and vocabulary of the subject matter
- Inability to think deeply.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

State the 5 steps required in carrying out listening comprehension.

Before reading the case study below, think about how the concepts discussed in this section apply in everyday situations. As you read, identify the key issues, analyse the decisions made, and consider how you would respond in a similar situation.

Case Study 2.1: Listening During a Tutorial Session
Two NOUN students attended the same tutorial. One listened attentively, followed the facilitator's explanation, related the discussion to prior knowledge, and asked clarifying questions. The second student was distracted by phone notifications and conversations with classmates. Although both attended the same session, only the first student completed the assignment correctly because the instructions were properly understood.

Reflection Questions on case study 2.1

1. Which student demonstrated effective listening comprehension?
2. What factors affected the second student's comprehension?
3. What lessons from this case can you apply to your own learning?

2.4 Summary

Congratulations on completing this unit. You have explored the close relationship between listening and comprehension and learned that effective listening involves much more than simply hearing spoken words. True listening requires understanding, interpreting, and making meaning from the message being communicated.

The unit also introduced practical strategies for improving listening comprehension, including listening attentively, following the speaker carefully, applying prior knowledge, developing relevant vocabulary, recognising the organisation of speech, and maintaining a genuine interest in the topic. In addition, you examined several factors that may hinder comprehension, such as unfamiliarity with the topic, lack of concentration, limited vocabulary, and lack of interest.

As you continue your studies and engage in everyday communication, remember that successful listening is measured not by what you hear but by what you understand and how effectively you respond. By applying the principles discussed in this unit, you will become a more attentive listener and a more effective communicator.

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2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A., & McKean, J. (1983). *Text To Note.* London: Edward Arnold. Anderson, A. & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening.* Oxford: University Press.

James, K., Jordan, R.R. & Matthews, A.J. (1988). *Listening- Comprehension and Note-Taking Course.* London: Collins ELT.

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UNIT 3 LISTENING-COMPREHENSION AND NOTE TAKING

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Learning Outcomes
3.3 Developing Effective Listening and Note-Taking Skills
3.3.1 Note-Taking and Note-Making
3.3.2 How to Take Notes from Lectures
3.3.3 Dos and Don'ts of Note-Taking
3.4 Summary
3.5 References/Further Reading
3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



3.1 Introduction

Have you ever attended a lecture, meeting, seminar, or workshop and later struggled to remember the important points? Have you wished you had captured the speaker's ideas more accurately? Effective note-taking is one of the most valuable academic and professional skills you can develop because it helps you record, organise, and recall important information long after the presentation has ended.

In the previous unit, you learned that listening becomes meaningful only when it leads to comprehension. Once you understand a message, the next important step is to record the key ideas in a clear and organised manner. This is where note-taking becomes an essential learning skill.

In this unit, you will learn the difference between note-taking and note-making, discover practical techniques for taking effective notes during lectures and presentations, and examine the good practices that make note-taking more efficient. As you study this unit, think about your own note-taking habits and consider how you can improve them to support your learning.

Let us begin.



3.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define note-taking
- distinguish between note-taking and note-making
- state, in clear terms, how to take notes
- apply note-taking techniques to taking notes from lectures
- state the dos and don'ts of note-taking activity.

3.3 Developing Effective Listening and Note-Taking Skills

Now that you appreciate the importance of listening with comprehension, the next step is to learn how to record important information effectively. This section introduces practical note-taking skills that will support your academic success and lifelong learning.

3.1 Note-Taking and Note-Making

Pause for a Moment and Reflect

Before reading this section, consider the following questions.

- Have you ever used the terms *note-taking* and *note-making* as though they mean the same thing?
- When do you usually take notes?
- When do you usually make notes?

Continue reading to discover the differences.



Some people cannot distinguish between note-taking and note-making. To such people, the two terms can be used interchangeably. In this unit, we distinguish between note-taking and note-making. We take note-taking to mean taking notes from lectures or speeches. We, however, see note-taking as an activity done during study time. You make notes from your textbooks, journal articles or study texts.

The ability to take good notes while listening to an important talk or lecture is a skill that you will find useful in your studies and generally in life. You should always take notes while listening to a speech, talk or a lecture, no matter the medium of delivery. That is, if you listen to a lecture on a video or CD-ROM, you should be able to take notes. You should also take notes in discussion groups, seminars and tutorials.

Before moving to the next section, test your understanding of what you have learnt.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Going by the distinction made between note-taking and note-making in this unit, tick (□) situations when you will take notes and put (x) in situations where you will make notes. Do this for the situations listed below.

1. When reading a book in the library □
2. When consulting an encyclopedia □
3. When reading a recent journal □
4. When in a distinguished annual lecture □
5. When listening to a documentary □
6. When you are in the reference section of a library □
7. When listening to a budget broadcast □
8. When consulting the yellow pages □
9. When in a crucial meeting □
10. When consulting an open university directory □

I don't think you will find this exercise difficult. The answers are straightforward. Any situation that suggests reading, in all the situations listed above, requires note-taking. Thus, when reading a book in the library, consulting an encyclopedia, a recent journal, when in the reference section of the library, when consulting the yellow pages and an open university directory, you should make notes (put x in the boxes).

There are situations when notes are made. All other situations which entail listening should have a tick (□). There are situations when notes are taken.

Let's go to the next section of our study. Can you guess the next section? Check the table of contents if you cannot. The next section of this unit is on how to take notes from lectures. Let's study it.

3.3.2 How to Take Notes from Lectures

Consider These Questions Before Moving On

- Why do some students leave a lecture with useful notes while others leave with pages of confusing information?
- Is writing everything the lecturer says always the best approach?
  Continue reading to find out.

This section gives you training on how you can take notes from lectures, seminars, and tutorials from speeches. The rules are simple and straightforward. You should not forget them.

1. **Listen carefully to the lecture -** paying attention is very important in note-taking. Some students start writing as soon as the speaker starts speaking, without taking the time to listen attentively to what the speaker is saying.

2. **Understanding-** understand what the speaker is saying before attempting to take notes; take notes when you understand the point.
3. **Put** down the summary of the main points of the lecture. Some students start writing even before the points are made. Thus, they end up writing irrelevancies. Most of what students study as notes today is irrelevant because proper notes are not taken. Write points. Do not write full sentences in note-taking.
4. **Use abbreviations where necessary and possible.** This saves time. Common note-taking abbreviations are listed in the box below.

i.e	=	that is	V		=	verb
b/4	=	before	Prep		=	
preposition/preparation						
i/c	=	in charge		Pro	=	pronoun/pronounce,
etc	=	and so on				syn = synonyms
viz	=	namely	idm	=	idom	
sb	=	somebody		sgm	=	symbol, symbiotic
sth	=	something		fig	=	figure
abr	=	abbreviations		BrE	=	British English
b/c	=	because/became		Nig	=	Nigeria/Nigerian
				Afr	=	African/Africa
				Conj	=	conjunction

Fig. 3.1: Common Note-Taking Abbreviations

These are just a few. You can, on your own, find out many more. Do you know what? You can even create your own abbreviations. The only thing is that you should not fill up your notes with too many abbreviations, which will make the notes incomprehensible. Abbreviations save time during note-taking. You need them more when the speaker is fast.

In addition to abbreviations, symbols allow learners to record information quickly without losing important ideas. Study the examples below.

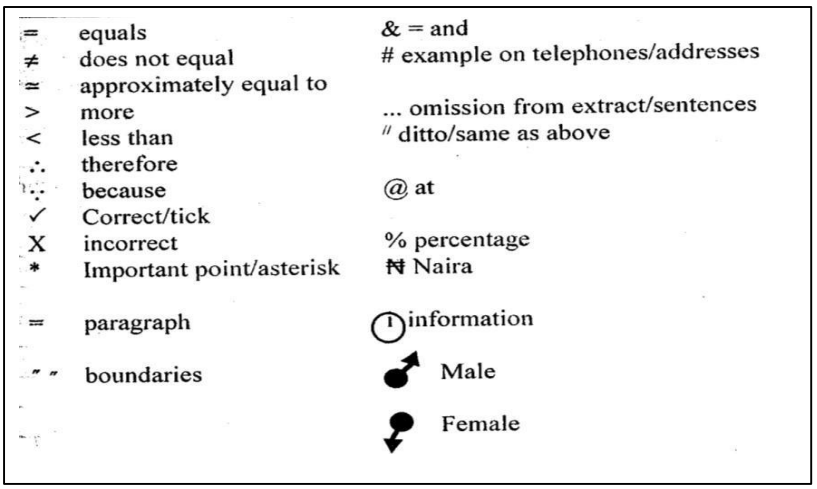


Fig. 3.2: Symbols for Note-Taking

Use symbols where necessary or important- there are many symbols that you can use. Science and technology students use more symbols than the humanities students. Be familiar with the symbols in your field. Some of the symbols you can use in note- taking are presented in the next box.

Again, many symbols can be used during note-taking. Only a few are given here. Of course, you can also form your own symbols. Note-taking activities during lectures are faster when symbols are used.

Leave plenty of space between different headings and sub-headings when taking notes. The spaces are to be used for writing additional information or facts that you may discover after the lectures or during your own private study. Also, leave wide margins for later comments and related references. Emphasise key words, phrases, sentences and ideas by use of capitalisation, underlining, colouring, asterisks, etc.

Neatness- the neater your notes, the more attractive and the more you would like to read them. Good handwriting, systematic organisation, and consistent use of headings and subheadings all contribute to making your notes attractive, easy to read, and easy to learn from.

Before reading the case study below, think about how different note-taking approaches can influence learning outcomes. As you read, identify the practices that contributed to successful note-taking.

Case Study 3.1: Two Students, One Lecture
Ngozi and Musa attended the same economics lecture. Ngozi listened carefully, recorded only the major ideas, used abbreviations, left spaces for additional information, and reviewed her notes immediately after class. Musa attempted to write down every sentence the lecturer said, missing several important explanations because he was focused on writing continuously.

When preparing for the examination, Ngozi found her notes organised and easy to revise, whereas Musa struggled to understand his lengthy, incomplete notes.

Reflection Questions on Case Study 3.1
1. Which student demonstrated effective note-taking?
2. Which note-taking principles did Ngozi apply?
3. What improvements should Musa make in future lectures?

You are doing well. Before moving to the next section, answer the following question to check your understanding.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Explain the requirements needed for note-taking from a lecture.

3.3.3 Dos and Don'ts of Note-Taking

Pause and Reflect

Think about your own note-taking habits.

- Do you write every word spoken by a lecturer?
- Do you organise your notes after class?
- Which habits would you like to improve?

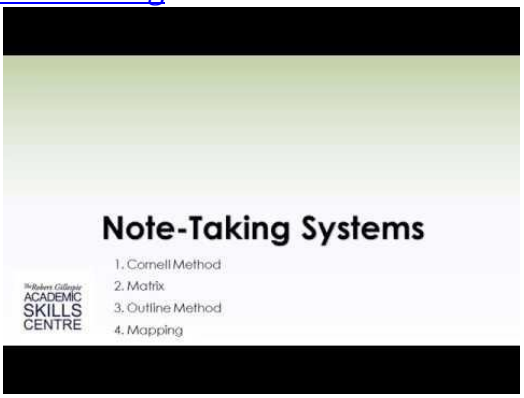
Continue reading to compare your practice with recommended note-taking principles. Here are some ‘‘dos’’ and ‘'don'ts’' of note-taking from lectures:

1. **Remove irrelevances from notes:** one of the most important "dos" of note-taking is always to remove irrelevances. Do not write everything the lecturer says.
2. Use **Abbreviations: Check for a**bbreviations used in a passage, such as etc. (and so on), e.g. (for example), and symbols such as "/" (for either -or). Use abbreviations too during note-taking.
3. Check for Consistency in **Headings and subheadings in notes: The heading is centralised, underlined/in bold letters,** because not all the letters are capitalised. If all letters are capitalised, do not underline.
4. **Notes are not written in full sentences**. You should write points and not full sentences in note-taking. See the illustration in the box that follows.
5. **You should write points in notes.** Do not write long sentences. The fewer your points, the more concise your notes, but beware! Do not be too brief in your notes so that your meaning becomes unclear to you. Put down enough that you will remember the major points.
6. Do not write notes on loose sheets which are improperly kept. Write notes in exercise books or on sheets that are well filed.

Note-taking activity is very important to all students. It is needed when listening to lectures, seminars, tutorials, and important speeches. Note-taking helps bring to mind what has been learned or heard. You must always take notes while listening to an important talk.

Watching experienced learners demonstrate note-taking strategies can reinforce the techniques discussed in this section. Click on the link/image or scan the QR code to access the video

https://youtu.be/SjcOl82EFMg



3.4 Summary

Congratulations on completing this unit. You have learnt that note-taking and note-making are related but distinct activities. Note-taking involves recording important ideas while listening to lectures, speeches, seminars, or discussions, whereas note-making involves preparing notes from written materials during personal study.

You also explored practical techniques for taking effective notes, including listening attentively, understanding the speaker before writing, recording only the main ideas, using abbreviations and symbols appropriately, leaving sufficient space for additional information, and maintaining neat, well-organised notes. Finally, you examined the recommended practices and common mistakes associated with note-taking. Applying these principles will help you become a more organised learner and improve your ability to recall and use information effectively throughout your academic and professional life.

3.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note.* London: Edward Arnold.

Anderson, A. & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening.* Oxford: University Press. James, K., Jordan, R.R. & Matthews, A.J. (1988). *Listening-Comprehension and Note-Taking Course.* London: Collins ELT.

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UNIT 4 LISTENING-COMPREHENSION AND INFORMATION RETRIEVAL: GENERAL

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Objectives
4.3 Learning Outcome
4.3.1 Types of Information to be Retrieved: Instructions, Directions and Facts
4.3.2 Listening for General Impression
4.4 Summary
4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise



4.1 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learned about an important skill. Can you remember this skill? It is the skill of taking notes from lectures, seminars, speeches, or talks. Note-taking is a skill that you must use all the time. This unit moves you to another aspect of listening comprehension. This is listening- comprehension for information retrieval. The word retrieval is formed from the word 'retrieve', which means to receive. One of the primary aims of academic pursuits is to receive information.

Indeed, today, much information is stored in what we call multimedia systems (radio, television, video, internet, computers, etc.), so it would be an act of ignorance for any student like you not to tap into them. Information highways across the world are congested. Only the wise can retrieve them. This is why this unit and the next one are important to you.

Get ready to study the unit.



4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify different types of information retrieved through listening;
- retrieve the information through listening comprehension.



4.1 Retrieving Information Through Listening

Listening is valuable only when the information received can be understood, organised, and applied appropriately. This section explains the different types of information listeners encounter and how they can interpret both specific details and the overall message.

4.3.1 Types of Information to be Retrieved: Instructions, Directions and Facts

Pause for a Moment and Reflect

Before reading this section, consider the following questions.

- Have you ever misunderstood an instruction because you did not listen carefully?
- Can you distinguish between a fact, an opinion, and a direction?
- Why is it important to recognise different types of information during listening?

Continue reading to find out.

Academic life is full of different kinds of information. You spend most of your time acquiring this information from your social life and academic fields. Basically, you can break the world of information into different segments. Only the three general ones will be discussed in this section: instructions, directions, and facts.

We may go on and on analysing all of the statements, but what we are trying to emphasise here is that as you listen, you should be capable of isolating **facts** from **fables**, **facts** from **opinions**, etc.

The discussion above introduced the three major categories of information commonly retrieved through listening. The figure below summarises their meanings and provides simple examples to help you distinguish them more easily.

Table 4.1: Types of Information Retrieved Through Listening

Type of Information	Description	Example
Instructions	Tell someone what to do	"Submit your assignment before Friday."
Directions	Show the way or sequence	"Turn left after the library."
Facts	Objective, verifiable information	"Abuja is Nigeria's capital city."

Table 4.1 highlights the differences among instructions, directions, and facts. Although all three may be communicated through listening, each serves a different purpose. Recognising these distinctions enables learners to retrieve information more accurately and respond appropriately in academic, professional, and everyday situations.

4.3.2 Listening for General Impression

Consider These Questions Before Moving On

Imagine listening to a keynote address or watching a documentary.

- Can you explain the speaker's central message without remembering every detail?
- Why is understanding the overall message often more important than remembering every sentence?

Continue reading to discover the answer.

There are types of listening comprehension that extend beyond instructions, directions, or facts. They are listening comprehension that demands getting the overall or general impression of what the speaker says. Thus, in such a listening activity, you link all details to the topic and form your own overall impression. This kind of listening is important in life. It makes you capable of forming your own impression and not a listener who merely imitates or copies, or agrees uncritically with whatever is said, no matter the rubbish. Look here! I want to be such a listener for you.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

POLUTION: Everything must go somewhere

To maintain his standards of living, 20th-century man employs technology to produce an enormous variety of goods and services. Technology requires energy and matter, but neither can be created or destroyed; they can only be transformed. So, since everything must go somewhere, the transformations which are part of production processes cause pollution in some form or other- this is unavoidable. So, talk of cleaning up the environment and pollution-free cars, products or industries is a scientific impossibility.

For example, we can collect smoke, dust, and soot from factory chimneys with filters, but these solid wastes will then contaminate our water or soil. Similarly, we can collect rubbish and remove solid waste from sewage, but it must then be either burned (causing air pollution), dumped into our rivers, lakes, and oceans (water pollution), or deposited on land (soil pollution and water pollution if it runs off).

Another example is air pollution from cars. We can reduce air pollution from petrol and diesel-propelled cars by switching to electric cars. Nonetheless, electric cars would need to be recharged almost every night, so we would need to increase the number of power plants to generate the extra electricity required. As well, an increase in the number of power plants that use fossil fuels would result in increased air pollution from sulphur oxides, nitrogen oxides, and smoke, increased water pollution from heat, and increased land pollution from mining. We can shift to nuclear power, which is not dependent on fossil fuels, but it increases thermal pollution of the water and poses the risk of releasing radioactive substances into the environment.

Now complete this table, using relevant facts from the passage, 'Pollution: everything must go somewhere'.

i. As you read the passage titled "Pollution: everything must go somewhere", take down notes. Use your notes to complete the table below. Also, use the notes to complete the task that follows.

Present pollution	**Possible solution**	**New pollution**
1.	a.	a.
2.	a. b. c.	a. b.
3.	a. b.	c. a. b.

ii. Use the relevant information from the passage and the table you have completed above to summarise, as far as possible, in your own words, the way the writer has successfully proved the fact that 'everything must go somewhere'. You should write the summary in about 100 words.

iii.

Having explored how to retrieve different types of information through listening, it is helpful to observe these skills in practice. As you watch the video below, pay attention to how the speaker identifies key ideas, distinguishes important details from supporting information, and communicates the overall message. Reflect on how these techniques can improve your own listening comprehension and information retrieval skills. Click on the link/image or scan the QR code to access the video

https://youtu.be/DrxKWYoXhZ8



2.4 Summary

Congratulations on completing this unit. You have learnt that listening is an essential means of retrieving information for academic study, professional activities, and everyday communication. Effective listeners can identify different types of information, including instructions, directions, and factual information, and use them appropriately in various situations.

The unit also highlighted the importance of listening for a general impression by focusing on the speaker's overall message rather than isolated details. Developing this skill enables you to analyse information critically, draw meaningful conclusions, and communicate more effectively. As you continue your studies, make a conscious effort to practise active listening, accurately identify key information, and relate individual details to the broader message. These skills will strengthen your academic performance and support lifelong learning.

2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note.* London: Edward Arnold.

Anderson, A. & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening.* Oxford: University Press.

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UNIT 5 LISTENING-COMPREHENSION AND INFORMATION RETRIEVAL: DATA, FIGURES, DIAGRAMS AND CHARTS

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Retrieving Academic Information Through Listening
5.3.1 Listening Comprehension for Data Information
5.3.2 Listening Comprehension and Information Retrieval from Figures
5.3.3 Listening Comprehension and Labelling of Diagrams
5.3.4 Listening Comprehension and Information Retrieval from Tables and Charts
5.4 Summary
5.5 References/Further Reading
5.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



5.1 Introduction

Have you ever listened to a lecturer explain a graph, describe a scientific diagram, or interpret a table of results? Understanding spoken information is important, but many academic situations also require you to connect what you hear with visual materials such as figures, diagrams, tables, and charts. Developing this skill will help you interpret information more accurately and communicate it effectively.

In the previous unit, you learned how to retrieve general information by listening carefully to instructions, directions, factual information, and a speaker's overall message. This unit builds on that foundation by introducing listening comprehension skills specifically designed to interpret and retrieve information from visual representations commonly used in academic and professional settings.

As you study this unit, think about occasions when you have used diagrams, charts, or tables during lectures or while reading textbooks. Consider how careful listening can help you understand and complete these visual representations accurately.
Let us begin.



5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- retrieve data presented through listening comprehension;
- interpret information presented in figures;
- label diagrams accurately using spoken descriptions; and

- complete tables and charts using information obtained through listening.



5.3 Retrieving Academic Information Through Listening

Many academic disciplines present information visually rather than through continuous text. Effective learners must therefore develop the ability to combine listening with interpreting data, figures, diagrams, tables, and charts. This section introduces practical strategies for developing these essential skills.

5.3.1 Listening-Comprehension for Data Information

Pause for a Moment and Reflect

Before reading this section, consider the following questions.

- Have you ever listened to someone present statistical information?
- Was it easy to remember the numbers without recording them?
- Why do researchers often organise information as data?
  Continue reading to find out.

A lot of information is stored in data form. Part of your concern in academic life is retrieving information for use. In this section of the unit, you are introduced to how you can obtain information from data that is orally presented.

Data is a collection of information in a computer or a research document. Large amounts of data collected over time are also stored in a database, unlike a bank, where money is kept.

Before reading the example below, think about how numerical information is presented during lectures.

During a NOUN tutorial on population studies, the facilitator explains the population figures of selected Nigerian states over a ten-year period. Learners listen carefully, record the important data, and later organise the information into a table for analysis. This demonstrates how listening supports accurate data retrieval.

The discussion above highlights how spoken numerical information can be organised systematically. The figure below illustrates a simple process for retrieving and recording data during listening activities.

5.3.2 Listening Comprehension and Information Retrieval from Figures

Data can also be stored as figures. Figures or scores are representations of information in the form of drawings, paintings, sketches or other forms of illustrations. You can label a figure as you listen. You can also convert what you hear into pictorial or figure form. Let’s practice this.

5.3.3 Listening-Comprehension and Labelling of Diagrams

Pause and Reflect

Before you continue, think about the following.

- Have you ever labelled a diagram while listening to a teacher?
- Which parts of the task did you find most difficult?

Continue reading to strengthen your skills.

In the previous section, you learned how to retrieve information from figures. You were also taught how to interpret figures using input from the listening comprehension passage. In this section, you are going to practise labelling a diagram with the information you acquire from listening to a description of the components of the diagram. In order to be able to label the diagram, it is important that you go through the following listening comprehension processes.

1. Listen attentively to each part of the diagram;
2. Pay attention to transitional words such as firstly, secondly, thirdly, etc., that may signal the arrival of the name of the component of the diagram to be labelled;
3. Observe the diagram very closely to be able to locate the area where that is situated; and
4. Then label the part of the diagram announced by the speaker.

By taking all these steps, you are directly and actively participating in the active listening-comprehension process.

Let's practise all the processes presented above. Get ready. You must follow all the instructions as stated in the exercise that follows.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
Label the diagram as you read the various parts of the diagram that will be described for you in the title of the passage, REMOTE CONTROL OF SHARP T.V. SET. Use the passage to label the diagram below:

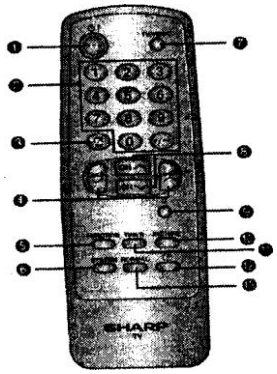

Fig. 5.1: Remote Control of Sharp T.V. Set

Passage 3.3

Remote Control of a Sharp TV Set

Read the parts of a remote control. You need to know these parts to operate the remote control for your Sharp TV set. Read and listen attentively to me as I discuss the parts of the remote control. Above is the diagram of the remote control. Fill in the parts as I list and describe them. Let's start. The first part to be discussed is the STAND BY/ON button. This is to switch on the TV. With a finger press, switch on the TV.

Second is CHANNEL SELECT buttons. The buttons are listed. The third is FLASH BACK button which you can use to return to the previously viewed channel. The fourth component is the VOLUME UP/DOWN

buttons. These are used to adjust the volume. They are also used to control FUNCTION, TIMER, PICTURE, COLOUR and SOUND system. Component number five is called FUNCTION button for fine tuning channel skip, blue back, OSD language and white temp. The sixth component suggests SYSTEM button which is colour system and sound system. Seventh is the TV/VIDEO select button, while the eighth is channel UP/DOWN button to select the channel. These buttons are also used to control the OSD language.

The ninth is MUTE button, when pressed the first time, it mutes the sound and pressed again, it restores the sound to the previous level. PICTURE button is number ten. This is for adjusting the picture quality brought by the TV set. For component eleven, the TIME button is used for reminder, OFF timer and ON timer. The twelfth button is CALL button used to display the different current settings on the screen. The last, of course, is NORMAL button which is number thirteen. It normalises things.

I think you now know the parts of your sharp remote control. If you do, be ready to use all these parts for the pleasant viewing of programmes on your TV set. What a wonderful remote control you have!

I think you have completed the above Exercise by now. Have you been able to label all the parts of the Sharp remote control? Remember, you are allowed to read the passage only once. Which of the parts were you unable to label?

Now let's discuss the exercise. Of course, you should NOT turn to this discussion until you have completed the exercise. Let me assure you, the reason for this exercise is not to test your knowledge of labelling diagrams, but to teach you the art of reading, listening and labelling diagrams. Our goal is for you to learn and not merely to score high marks.

What do you think the speaker did to call your attention to the different parts of the diagram? The speaker used signals such as the first, second, third, fourth, and so on. What other ways do you think a speaker can call attention to parts of a diagram? Jot down some other ways in your notebook. Cross-check these ways with the ones presented in the box below.

ALWAYS CALL ATTENTION TO PARTS OF DIAGRAM USING THE FOLLOWING.

- **Directional Forms**
  East, west, northern part, eastern part, middle part etc.
- **Preposition**
  At the right, by the left, on top of ...through the centre, under, over, etc
- **Graduation**
  High-low-mid
  Tall-taller-tallest
  Short-shorter-shortest
- **Order**
  Of importance: more important,
  Important, most important,
  Least important, less important, etc.

How accurate is your labelling of the parts? Cross-check the labels you gave the remote control with the ones presented in the box below.

(1) STAND BY/ON button
(2) CHANNEL SELECT buttons
(3) FLASH BACK button
(4) VOLUME UP/DOWN button
(5) FUNCTION button
(6) SYSTEM button
(7) TV/VIDEO select button
(8) CHANNEL UP/DOWN button
(9) MUTE button
(10) PICTURE button
(11) TIMER button
(12) CALL button
(13) NORMAL button

Self-Assessment Exercise 2
Read the passage a g a i n on REMOTE CONTROL OF SHARP TV SET and provide answers to the following questions.

i. Which of the buttons is used to control the function?
ii. Which of the buttons is used for OSD language_?
iii. The buttons used for white temp are_____
iv. The buttons used for adjustments are_____ and __

v. The buttons related to the sound system are___and

_____

_____

_____

Check the correct answers at the end of the unit

5. 3.4 Listening-Comprehension and Information Retrieval from Tables and Charts

Let's Reflect Together

Tables and charts are widely used to summarise information.

- Why do researchers use tables instead of lengthy paragraphs?
- How can listening skills help you complete an incomplete chart?

Continue reading to find out.

Just as you can store information you are listening to as diagrams, so too can you store it as tables and charts. As you listen to speech or talk that can be stored in the form of a table or chart, you should store them in these forms. They make reading and understanding very vivid. Information presented on three pages, for example, may be stored in a simple chart or table. Again, the information may have been stored in a table or chart, and you may be required to retrieve it as you listen to the speaker. Whichever way, information retrieval through tables and charts is an academic exercise that you may be called upon to do in your various fields.

In this section, you will practise storing information from listening comprehension in a table and a chart. For our convenience, we distinguish between a table and a chart here. A chart is an illustration that gives clear information about something that changes over a period of time, e.g., a weather chart, a temperature chart, a sales chart, and so on. A table is regarded here as a list of facts or figures arranged in an ordered way, especially in columns
e.g. a table showing how prices and earnings have increased since 1945.

The figure below illustrates how spoken information can be organised into tables and charts for easier interpretation and comparison.

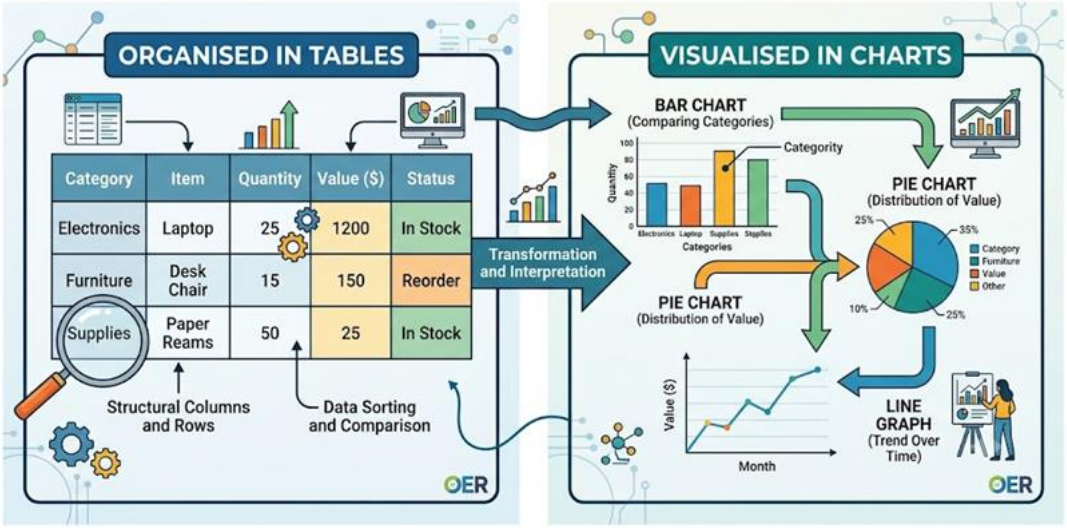

Figure 5.2 shows that tables and charts organise information into clear patterns, making comparisons and trends easier to identify. When learners combine careful listening with systematic recording, they can retrieve and interpret information more accurately.

Observing practical demonstrations can strengthen your ability to interpret spoken information presented through data, diagrams, and visual aids. As you watch the video, pay attention to how the presenter explains visual information and extracts key points.

5.4 Summary

Congratulations on completing this unit. You have explored how listening comprehension extends beyond understanding spoken words to interpreting and retrieving information presented through data, figures, diagrams, tables, and charts. These visual forms of communication are widely used across academic disciplines to simplify complex information and support informed decision-making.

The unit explained practical techniques for retrieving numerical data, interpreting figures, labelling diagrams accurately from spoken descriptions, and organising information into tables and charts. By combining attentive listening with careful observation and systematic recording, you can improve both your academic performance and your ability to communicate information effectively. As you continue your studies, practise these skills whenever you attend lectures, presentations, tutorials, or professional training sessions, as they are essential for lifelong learning and workplace success.



5.5 Reference/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note*. London: Edward Arnold.

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MODULE 2

Unit 1 Listening for the Main Idea
Unit 2 Listening for Interpretation and Critical Evaluation
Unit 3 Effective Reading
Unit 4 Skimming and Scanning
Unit 5 The 3RsQ Method
Unit 6 Reading and Comprehending at Varying Speed Levels I

UNIT 1 LISTENING FOR THE MAIN IDEA

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcomes
1.3 Identifying the Main Idea Through Effective Listening
1.3.1 Why Listen for the Main Idea?
1.3.2 Determining the Main Idea
1.4 Summary
1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



1.1 Introduction

Have you ever listened to an interesting lecture or presentation but later struggled to remember the speaker's most important message? This often happens when we pay equal attention to every piece of information instead of identifying the central idea that ties everything together. Developing the ability to recognise the main idea is one of the most valuable listening skills for academic success.

In the previous module, you learned how to retrieve both general and specific information through listening. While those skills remain important, effective listening also requires you to distinguish between essential information and supporting details. Not every statement made by a speaker carries the same level of importance. Some ideas communicate the speaker's central message, while others simply explain, illustrate, or reinforce that message.

Before you begin this unit, consider the following questions:

- Have you ever written down every detail during a lecture and later found it difficult to identify the most important points?
- How do you usually decide which information deserves to be included in your notes?
- Why do you think lecturers emphasise certain ideas more than others?

As you study this unit, you will learn practical techniques for identifying the main idea in speeches, lectures, seminars, and discussions. These skills will help you take better notes, organise information more effectively, and improve your performance in assignments and examinations.



1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- state many reasons why you listen to get the main idea
- show how to determine main ideas from what you listen to
- practise the art of identifying main ideas from passages listened to.



1.3 Identifying the Main Idea Through Effective Listening

Every lecture, presentation, or discussion is built around one central message. Although speakers often use examples, explanations, stories, and illustrations to clarify their ideas, effective listeners know how to identify the main idea that holds the entire presentation together. This section explains why recognising the main idea is an essential listening skill and introduces practical techniques for identifying it.

1.3.1 Why Listen for the Main Idea?

Before You Continue, Consider These Questions

You are making good progress. Pause for a moment and reflect on the following questions:

- Why is it easier to remember the central message of a lecture than every detail?
- How does identifying the main idea improve note-taking?
- What problems might arise if you treat every piece of information as equally important?

Continue reading to find out.

Perhaps the most important thing in listening comprehension is for you to be able to determine the main idea of a lecture, seminar or tutorial. You need the main idea to determine the major points to take as notes. You also need the main idea to know what to study during examinations. If you have the main idea of a lecture or seminar, you can easily develop it during an examination or assignment.

A common mistake is for you to want to learn everything, both facts and fables, main ideas and supporting details that you yourself can provide during examinations. The

end-product is spending more time, sleepless hours, on study activity than is necessary. This eventually leads to a breakdown, diminishing returns, and utter confusion during the examination itself.

The discussion above shows that successful listeners focus first on the speaker's central message before paying attention to supporting details. The figure below illustrates how the main idea serves as the foundation upon which all other information in a lecture or presentation is organised.

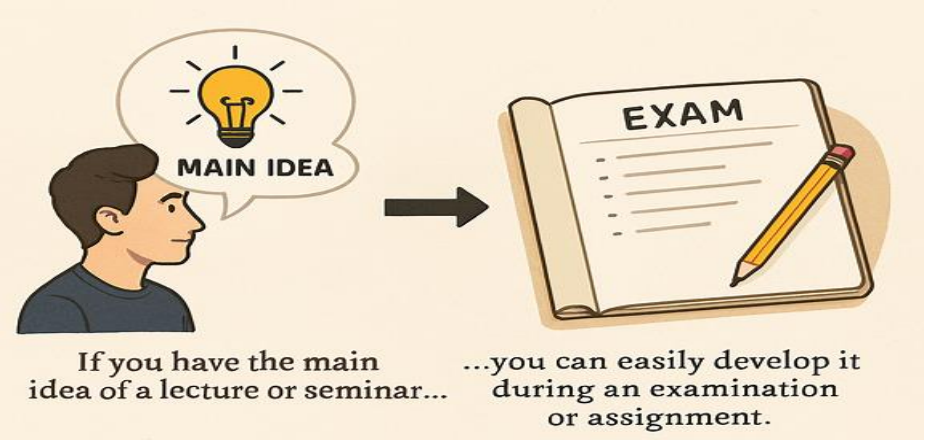

Figure 1.1 illustrates that every effective lecture or presentation centres on a single central idea. The supporting details, such as facts, examples, illustrations, and explanations, all exist to clarify or strengthen that central message. As an effective listener, your first responsibility is to identify the main idea before recording the supporting information.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Which of the following is not an important reason for you to be able to determine the main idea in a listening comprehension activity?

Tick (□) if it is the purpose of determining the main idea, and put (x) if it is not the purpose of determining the main idea.

1. To be able to eliminate minor points □
2. For note-taking activity □
3. To encourage sleepless nights □
4. To cheat during examinations □
5. To isolate facts from fables □
6. To be able to complete charts, figures and tables □
7. To gain an overall impression □
8. To promote diminishing returns □

Let's discuss it!
Do not start reading this discussion until you have finished carrying out the activity in the above self-assessment exercise. If you have completed the exercise, then we can go on to discuss the answer to the activity.

Do you think we need the main idea to eliminate minor points? Of course, yes, we do. If we know the main idea of a lecture, surely we will be able to eliminate minor details used to develop it. As we said earlier, the main ideas are the notes we take. Now, note that it will be foolish for you to think that the knowledge of main ideas will assist you in cheating during examinations. Rather than helping you cheat, I think it will help you perform better. Main ideas are facts/statements. Supporting details are used to develop the main ideas; they are not necessarily to be regarded as tables.

As discussed in Unit 5 (Module 1), we need the main ideas to complete charts, figures, and tables. In most cases, these visual representations convey the main ideas of what is listened to. From the knowledge of the main ideas, you get the overall impression of the lecture or seminar. Remember, if you are fully armed with the main ideas/concepts of your course, you have less to read and thus reduce rather than promote diminishing returns from study.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2
(Worksheet for Students)
Read the passage titled 'Computer Revolution' and form notes as you listen to the lecture. Use your notes to fill in the gaps below.

The main idea of the passage is
_____

i. The supporting details are__
a. ____
b. ____
c._____
d._____
e._____
g. ____
h. ____
I. _____
J. _____
k. ____

You are to give ten (10) supporting details.

Computer Revolution

Computers are revolutionising the work of those who work with words. Up to now, in newspaper production, a reporter has typed his story, known as copy. This has then been passed on to the editor. After being edited, the story would often have to be retyped and then sent to the typesetter. Prints would then be made of individual articles, and these, together with advertisements, would be assembled manually to form a complete page. This would then be the basis for the making of the printing plate.

In computerised production, the reporter types his copy directly into the computer, which shows it on a visual display unit, or VDU. This is like a television screen. The editor accesses this story on his own VDU and changes it by typing instructions into the computer. Various articles are then arranged into columns according to a programme run by the computer. The page layout is performed on another VDU, and the page automatically passes to the printing stage.

For the office typist, things are changing too. They can now use word processors and small computers similar to those used by reporters. If you make a mistake, you don't have to paint out the error before retyping. You just backspace and type the correct letter. The change is made automatically on the VDU. It is also possible to insert material, single words, lines or complete paragraphs. The computer itself reorganises the layout of the whole text to accommodate the changes. It can also store complete texts and organise the paragraphs as needed. This is especially helpful in legal work, where many standard paragraphs are used. When the text is complete, the page's typing is handled again by the computer. You will realise from hearing about these uses of computers that there are big changes in the kind of work done by many people and, more importantly, in the number of people needed to do the work.

The passage addresses the broader issue of computers and employment.

Source: *Adkin, A. & McKean, J. Text to Note. London: Edward Arnold.*

Instruction

Here, you are expected to take down notes on the passage. Then you are expected to use the notes to complete the task. The task is to suggest the main idea of the lecture and to give ten (10) details to support the main idea.

1.3.2 Determining the Main Idea

There are many ways speakers or lecturers can convey main ideas. We will bring out only a few of them in this section. As you practice to recognise main ideas from lectures, more ways will become clear to you.

1. **By announcing the main idea in the title of the talk or lecture, in** some cases, the title of the talk or lecture may give you the main idea of what you will hear in the lecture or talk. This is not always so. A speaker may want to captivate you and take you by surprise by not giving you the main idea of the lecture in the title. In fact, the title of the lecture may, at first, seem not relevant to the

lecture. It is only when you start following the lecture that the relevance of the title to the lecture may start to unfold to you.

2. **By calling attention to the main idea in the body of the lecture or talk**
   The speaker may, deliberately, call attention to main ideas in the body of a lecture or talk. You may discover that the speaker continues to use words or expressions such as “let's go to the point”; “the crucial issue we are grappling with is ...”; “the most important point is” ;“...the first point is…”; “... the second is...”; “lastly... finally”, etc.

3. **By constant repetition**
   Some speakers structure their talks or lectures to allow for repetition of the main points in various ways. Instead of consciously or directly drawing attention to the main ideas with pointers such as "firstly," "secondly," etc., they do so through repetition. They say it once, then say it again to drive home the main point. You should know that points that are stressed or emphasised are relevant points.

4. **By identifying the speech patterns of the speaker**
   This is the last point we will discuss on how to determine the main idea of a lecture or talk. As you listen to a speech, you can begin to observe the pattern the speaker follows. Different speakers have different speech patterns. The most common one, however, is to present the main point first, as a topic.

You have now learnt several techniques for identifying the main idea in a lecture or presentation. The following activity gives you an opportunity to apply these techniques by analysing a short passage.

Self- Assessment Exercise 3

Passage
Read this passage, “Jennifer's Withdrawal from School was Avoided,” and identify the words and expressions that make the title related to the main idea of the lecture.

Jennifer's Withdrawal from School was Avoided
“I want to let you know that I am pulling Jennifer out of the academy”. Mrs Nelson's announcement stunned me.

As a Charter School principal, I routinely dealt with parental concerns, most of them about discipline or grading policies. Withdrawal was not routine, however. I asked why they were taking this step.

“This school is simply too hard for her,” Mrs Nelson said. “Jennifer is reading books she barely understands, and the pace of the class is too fast. Because you only have one class in her grade, I don't see any options.” It was true that we expected much of our students. Academic rigour was central to the school's mission. It was also true that our small size meant students had only one choice in any given subject.

But removing Jennifer was not the only option. I asked Mrs. Nelson a few more questions and suggested we meet with Jennifer and her teacher to develop strategies to help Jennifer succeed. Through this process, Jennifer began to excel and remained in the academy.

Source: *Focus on the Family (August, 1999).*

sentence, and be followed by supporting sentences which act as examples, illustrations and expansion of the topic sentence. In some lectures or talks, the speaker may prefer to start with illustrations and supporting details, then gradually move to the main point.

The ability to identify the main idea is useful not only in classrooms but also in everyday professional and academic situations. The following case study illustrates how this skill can improve learning outcomes.

Case Study: Listening Strategically During a Study Centre Tutorial
During a NOUN tutorial on environmental management, Musa notices that the facilitator provides many examples, statistics, and case studies. Instead of trying to record every detail, he first identifies the central message that **effective waste management depends on proper planning, public participation, and government enforcement**. He then records only the supporting points that explain this message.
When preparing for his examination, Musa finds his notes easier to understand because they are organised around the main idea rather than a collection of unrelated details.

Reflection Question
How did identifying the main idea help Musa improve both his note-taking and examination preparation?



1.4 Summary

Congratulations on completing this unit.

In this unit, you have learnt that effective listening is not simply about hearing every word spoken by a speaker. Instead, it involves recognising the central message that the speaker intends to communicate and distinguishing it from supporting information.
Throughout the unit, you explored the importance of listening for the main idea and discovered how this skill improves note-taking, comprehension, revision, and examination preparation. You also learned that speakers often help listeners identify the main idea by announcing it in the title, drawing attention to it with signalling expressions, repeating important points, or organising information in recognisable patterns.

You should now appreciate that examples, illustrations, facts, and explanations exist primarily to support the main idea rather than replace it. As you continue your studies, practise identifying the main idea before recording supporting details. This simple habit will help you organise your notes more effectively and improve your academic performance.



1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note*. London: Edward Arnold. Anderson, A. & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening.* Oxford: University Press.
James, K., Jordan, R.R. & Matthews, A.J. (1988). *Listening- Comprehension and Note-Taking Course.* London: Collins ELT.

Olaofe, I.A. (1991). *English and Communication Skills for Academic Purposes.* Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

Olaofe, I.A. (1993). *Communicate English Skills.* Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Statement	Answer
To eliminate minor points	✓
For note-taking activity	✓
To encourage sleepless nights	✗
To cheat during examinations	✗
To isolate facts from fables	✓
To complete charts, figures, and tables	✓
To gain an overall impression	✓
To promote diminishing returns	✗

UNIT 2 LISTENING FOR INTERPRETATION AND CRITICAL EVALUATION

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Developing Critical Listening and Interpretative Skills
2.3.1 Listening for Interpretation and Critical Analysis
2.3.2 Words and Expressions Associated with Critical Analysis, Evaluation and Interpretation
2.3.3 Suggested Steps to Follow in Listening for Interpretation and Critical Analysis
2.4 Summary
2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



2.1 Introduction

In the previous units (units 1-5, module 1, and Module 2, unit 1), efforts have been made to develop listening skills for note-taking, retrieving general and specific information, and identifying the main idea. This unit goes to probably the highest order of listening - comprehension activity. That's to interpret, evaluate, and critically analyse the speaker's viewpoints while listening.

Listening for interpretation and critical evaluation is the type of skill that can enable you to be the real master of what the speaker is saying. This type of listening skill is perhaps the most difficult. Since it is the highest level of listening activity, only a few students engage in it. I want you to attain this level. In your academic life, you should be able to interpret and evaluate speakers' viewpoints. This is the only way you can grow, academically.

Before you continue, consider the following questions:

- Do you usually accept everything a speaker says without questioning it?
- How do you decide whether a speaker's opinion is convincing?
- Why is critical thinking important when listening to lectures, debates, or public discussions?

As you study this unit, you will discover that interpretation and critical evaluation are higher-order listening skills. They require you not only to understand spoken information but also to analyse it carefully, draw logical conclusions, and make balanced judgements. These skills are essential for successful academic study, informed decision-making, and lifelong learning.



2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of listening for interpretation and critical evaluation;
- interpret speakers' viewpoints during listening activities;
- identify words and expressions associated with interpretation and critical analysis; and
- apply appropriate steps for listening critically and evaluating spoken information.



2.3 Developing Critical Listening and Interpretative Skills

Understanding what a speaker says is only the beginning of effective listening. In many academic and professional situations, you are expected to interpret meaning, analyse arguments, evaluate evidence, and make reasoned judgements. This section introduces the concepts and techniques that will help you become a thoughtful and critical listener.

2.3.1 Listening for Interpretation and Critical Analysis

One of the high-order skills you need to perform creditably well while listening to a talk, a speech or a lecture is the skill or ability of interpreting the speaker's viewpoints. Interpretation is not as simple as finding or locating general or specific information while listening. Interpretation involves deriving meaning out of what is said. This can be at two major levels: giving the speech its surface and deeper meaning. Interpretation involves inferencing, thinking between and beyond what has been said. Giving utterance, meaning and making deductions or observations out of the meaning, as well as establishing trends or recurring patterns out of the observations, are also some of the processes involved in interpretation.

Critical analysis involves looking at the merits and demerits (pros and cons) of what is heard. It is the art of weighing or assessing each point, discretely, to determine strengths and weaknesses. Critical analysis and evaluation involve passing value judgements, making generalisations and drawing conclusions after careful analysis.

Listening comprehension should go beyond comprehending what is heard. It should address every aspect of what is heard critically.

The discussion above shows that critical listening involves much more than simply hearing spoken words. It is a deliberate thinking process that begins with careful listening and ends with informed judgment. The figure below summarises the stages involved in effective interpretative and critical listening.

Figure 2.1: Stages involved in effective interpretative and critical listening.

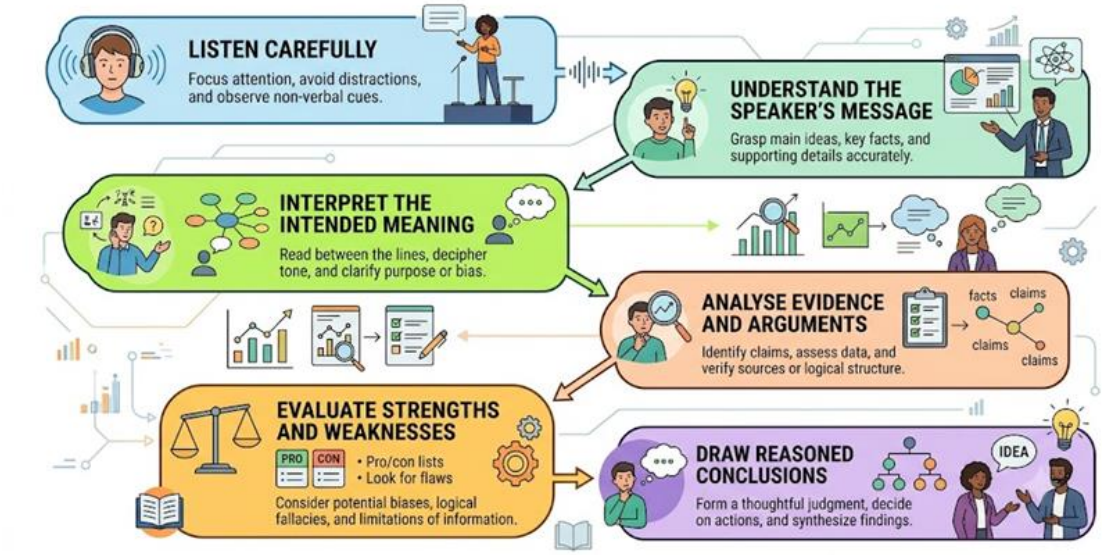

Figure 2.1 demonstrates that critical listening is a step-by-step process rather than a single activity. Effective listeners first understand what the speaker says before interpreting meaning, analysing evidence, evaluating arguments, and finally drawing balanced conclusions. Skipping any of these stages may result in incomplete or inaccurate interpretation.

Listening for interpretation, therefore, requires concentration, open-mindedness, and logical reasoning. Instead of reacting immediately to what is heard, thoughtful listeners examine the speaker's message carefully before deciding whether they agree or disagree.

Critical listeners do more than evaluate ideas. They also recognise the language that speakers use to express opinions, make comparisons, draw conclusions, and present evidence. The next section introduces common words and expressions associated with interpretation, critical analysis, and evaluation, enabling you to recognise them more easily during listening activities.

2.3.2 Words and Expressions Associated with Critical Analysis, Evaluation and Interpretation

It is true that most words and expressions can be twisted to meet the demands of critical analysis, evaluation and interpretation of issues, concepts or situations. However, you will agree with me that some words or expressions are more closely related to these language tasks.

The table below presents examples of words and expressions commonly associated with interpretation, critical analysis, and evaluation. As you study the table, consider how each expression helps communicate a particular type of thinking.

Table 2.1: Common Words and Expressions Used in Interpretation and Critical Evaluation

Purpose	Examples of Words and Expressions
Interpretation	suggests, implies, indicates, reveals, means, demonstrates, signifies
Analysis	examine, analyse, investigate, compare, contrast, identify, distinguish
Evaluation	assess, evaluate, judge, determine, justify, support, challenge
Drawing Conclusions	therefore, consequently, thus, hence, overall, in conclusion
Expressing Opinions	in my opinion, it appears, arguably, it can be concluded, it is reasonable to say
Comparing Ideas	similarly, likewise, however, on the other hand, whereas, although

Table 2.1 shows that different expressions perform different functions during listening and discussion. Some words help speakers interpret information, others assist in analysing evidence, while others signal evaluation or conclusions. Recognising these expressions enables listeners to follow arguments more accurately and understand the speaker's reasoning.

As you become familiar with these expressions, you will find it easier to identify when a speaker is presenting facts, expressing opinions, drawing conclusions, or evaluating evidence. This awareness strengthens both your listening skills and your ability to participate confidently in academic discussions.

You need to recognise these words and expressions while listening to a talk or lecture. You also need to be able to use some critical, analytical, evaluative, and interpretative words when responding to issues, items, or concepts you listened to.

2.3.4 Suggested Steps to Follow in Listening for Interpretation and Critical Analysis

In this section, I'll suggest some steps you can follow to listen for interpretation and critical analysis. You should not regard these steps as the gospel truth. They are subject to modifications. In fact, they are the steps that have worked for me. I think they will also work for you.

In order to be able to interpret what a speaker says, you must:

- listen very attentively and fully understand the speaker's point of view

- take down notes on relevant points raised by the speaker
- read deeper meaning into what the speaker is saying
- relate what the speaker says with what you understand it to mean and use your background knowledge of the issue, the situation or concept being discussed to give/surface a deeper meaning to what is said.

In order for you to be able to listen and critically evaluate what the speaker says, you must do the following:

- listen attentively and fully understand what the speaker's points of view are
- take down notes
- consider the strengths and weaknesses (or "Pros" and "Cons") of what the speaker has said
- use your own previous experience of the issue being discussed and relate such an experience to what the speaker has said. Pass valued judgments where necessary and
- contribute suggestions, modifications or innovations that will improve what has been said.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Let's try to find out what you have learnt in this unit.

Which of the following is an activity involving critical evaluation? Tick (□)

i.	**Listening to a talk that is boring**	□
ii.	Listening and asking probing questions	□
iii.	Listening and engaging in an active interaction, a reasoning process of accepting and rejecting points heard	□
iv.	Listening and recalling the facts.	□

Of course, you can figure out from this exercise that listening to a talk that is boring may not stimulate critical evaluation. Nevertheless, when you ask probing questions and engage in an active, interactive reasoning process or accept and reject points heard, you can rightly say you are performing an activity that involves critical evaluation. Critical evaluation is beyond mere recall of facts.



2.4 Summary

This unit explains the following:

- why you must listen for interpretation and critical evaluation

- how to listen critically, interpret and evaluate the speaker's viewpoints
- the suggested words and expressions that you can use for interpretative and critical analysis
- steps to follow in listening for interpretation and critical analysis.

2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note.* London: Edward Arnold.
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UNIT 3 EFFECTIVE READING AND TYPES OF READING

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Learning Outcomes
3.3 Effective Reading Skills
3.3.1 The Importance of Reading
3.3.2 How to Read Effectively
3.3.3 Types of Reading
3.4 Summary
3.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources



3.1 Introduction

In the previous units, you learned how to listen effectively for general and specific information, identify the main idea of a message, and interpret and critically evaluate what you hear. These listening skills are essential for academic success because they enable you to understand lectures, participate in discussions and retain important information.

Another equally important way of acquiring knowledge is through **reading**. Reading is one of the most valuable skills for every learner, particularly in an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) environment where independent study forms a major part of the learning process. Effective reading helps you locate information quickly, understand complex ideas, evaluate different viewpoints and apply knowledge to solve problems.
In this unit, you will learn why reading is important, explore practical strategies for reading effectively and examine the different types of reading used for various academic and personal purposes. As you study this unit, endeavour to practise each reading strategy in your daily academic activities. Doing so will help you become a more confident, efficient and independent reader.



3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the importance of reading in academic and everyday life
- apply practical strategies for effective reading
- distinguish between the different types of reading and their purposes.



3.3 Developing Effective Reading Skills

Reading is much more than recognising written words. Effective reading involves understanding ideas, selecting appropriate reading strategies and applying suitable reading techniques based on your purpose. As a learner, you need to know not only **why** you are reading but also **how** to read different materials efficiently.

Before you continue, reflect on these questions:

- Why do some students understand a textbook after reading it once, while others struggle even after reading several times?
- Do you always use the same reading method regardless of the material you are studying?
- How can choosing the right reading strategy improve your learning?

Continue reading to discover practical techniques that will help you become a more effective and purposeful reader.

3.3.1 The Importance of Reading

An important aspect that you use English for in your programme is to read books, articles, newspapers and your study texts and other materials that can give you useful information. Frequently, you will be asked to read a book for a particular purpose. Usually, the book contains useful information about the topic you are studying. It may be valuable for the ideas or views that it puts forward.

Indeed, you read to gain knowledge of what is around you. Not being able to read means being ignorant of the happenings, events, situations, and developments around you. Books enlighten you and make you intelligent. They expose you to a range of life experiences and enrich your understanding of the world around you.

You also read to collect facts that can be useful for you in your academic life. Such facts are in the form of data, explanations, reports, findings, theories, laws, and so on. The facts are also stored in different forms. Some of these are in the form of words, tables, charts, diagrams, formulae and pictures.

Reading can also be for pleasure. You need to cultivate the habit of reading whatever comes your way for pleasure, entertainment and the joy it gives. Many studies have shown that Nigerians have not formed the habit of wide, informative reading. Reading culture is yet to be our culture. Many read only when they are forced to read. They read for examination or academic purposes only. They are weak in reading for pleasure. Do you know what? Reading is like a medicine. It heals souls. It enlivens minds and always makes you feel better.

Before attempting the activity below, reflect on your own reading habits and answer the questions honestly.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
Rate yourself on the scale presented here to show how important reading is to you. The rating scale is (0) for situations that are not applicable to you, (1) for just poorly applicable, (2) fairly applicable to you and (3) highly applicable.

	0	1	2	3
I read for pleasure everyday	☐	☐	☐	☐
I hate reading	☐	☐	☐	☐
I read for examination only	☐	☐	☐	☐
I read a complete book a day	☐	☐	☐	☐
I read a complete book a week	☐	☐	☐	☐
I read a complete book a year	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have never read a complete book throughout				
I read newspapers daily	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐
I never read newspapers	☐	☐	☐	☐
I don't read because I'm a slow reader	☐	☐	☐	☐
I don't read because I cannot find books to read	☐	☐	☐	☐

Have you responded to these questions very honestly? Do you read for pleasure every day? Many do not do so. This is because they have not seen the importance of reading. Remember, reading must be a pleasurable activity for you. What is your rating of the items that say " I hate reading? If you are honest, that may be your view about reading. Reading should be your friend. You should not hate it.

Item 3 in the above exercise is interesting. Many students read only for the examination. After examination, they hardly read again. This should not be the case. Reading should be a day-to-day affair. You should not let a day go by without gaining something from a book. Some fast readers read at least a novel a day. Some make it a duty to read a novel a week or a month. If you have not cultivated this habit, please do so today. It will be the most disheartening experience for you never to have read a complete book throughout your lifetime. As of today, I want you to start to read extensively. You can do that by reading at least five novels before you complete this course.

It is true that many do not read because they face certain reading problems. Some are extremely slow readers. Some read word by word. Some fix their eyes on one letter for a long time. Some pronounce every word when they read silently. Some read and go back to read the same thing again (this is called regression), and some find it difficult to concentrate while reading. Whatever your problems may be, this course aims to remove them. If you practise the exercises in the upcoming units very well, you will surely overcome these problems.

Having explored why reading is important, the next section explains practical strategies that will help you become a more effective and purposeful reader.

3.3.2 How to Read Effectively

The first step towards effective reading is to identify why you are reading a particular material. Different reading purposes require different reading strategies and speeds. Some suggestions are provided below to help you read effectively.

1. Decide the purpose of reading a book, article, newspaper or any other reading material

Note that there is no single purpose for reading all materials. Some of the different reasons why you read are listed below:

- to find some information quickly
- to answer a question
- to understand a difficult idea
- to find the meaning/of a word, a concept, or a diagram
- to analyse a particular concept, diagram, table or chart
- to study a concept intensively
- to gain a general overview of a particular idea
- to critically assess a point of view
- to read for pleasure, entertainment or the joy of it
- to locate a specific information concept, idea
- for many other reasons.

Your reading speed will vary according to the purpose of reading. For example, if you just want to locate a point or information, you will either skim or scan through the passage to locate such information. If your purpose is to study the concept thoroughly, then your reading speed will be slow. What am I saying here? Flexibility in reading is paramount to effective reading.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Tick (□) which reading speed you will use while performing the following reading tasks; tick (□) slow, average or high speed.

Reading speed			
Reading Tasks	**Slow**	**Average**	**High**
• Locating the scores of a football match in a newspaper	□	□	□
• Preparing for examinations	□	□	□
• Writing assignments	□	□	□
• A lawyer preparing for a case	□	□	□
• A medical doctor looking for a particular			

medicine to use for a patient in a book □ □ □

- Engineering drawing □ □ □
- Study a particular nursing topic □ □ □
- Locating a date in a book □ □ □
- Deciding whether to read a book or not □ □ □

From the above exercise, you can see the importance of flexibility in reading. You can see that you don't read all materials the same way. You can also see that some materials are to be read very fast, while some are to be read slowly. For example, to locate the score of a football match, you will have to scan the newspaper very quickly. Of course, in preparing for examinations where you need to understand the concept very well, you must read at a slow or average speed. If a lawyer is preparing for a case, he has to get all the facts of the case correctly. To do this, he must read the material very slowly. But if a medical doctor wants to locate the name for a particular medicine very quickly, he should skim through the medical book at high speed. When studying a particular nursing topic, the reader must use an average or slow pace, depending on the material's difficulty.

2. Decide what to read

In effective reading, you must always decide not only the purpose of reading but also what to read. It is rarely necessary to read a whole book, except a novel which is to be read for pleasure. A good starting point is to look at the contents page at the front of the book to identify the relevant chapters or pages to read. A quick look at the chapter headings and sub-headings may help to indicate what should be read. The index at the back of the book may indicate the relevant sections to read.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

In two minutes only, look at the contents presented below and decide the pages you will read, if you want to find information about the following topics or issues. Write the pages on a piece of paper.

1. Truth about Nigeria
2. FM radio
3. Poetry
4. Pan-African
5. Wade
6. Return to traditional justice
7. Face to face with God
8. Challenging the West
9. Boxing
10. Jammeh

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Source: BBC focus on Africa, BBC world service, (2002)
Have you completed the exercise? What is your experience? You discovered that you had to read quickly to find the article pages. Cross-check your answers with the ones provided at the end of this unit.

3. Get the overview of what is to be read
When you have decided on what to read, you should get an overview of the contents before starting to read the material. You need to do that because sometimes you may think the passage, chapter or section of a book is relevant, and it may turn out to be irrelevant to the purpose of reading the text. This quick overview, probably at the back of the book (blurb), which gives a summary of the reading material or the introduction, which gives you the direction of the material, can give an impression of the relevance of the material.

Self-Assessment Exercise
In a one-minute scan through this extract on '**livestock'** to decide its relevance to a project on livestock breeding in Nigeria, give five reasons for your acceptance or rejection of the relevance of the material to the topic. Do not spend more than one minute on the article.

Livestock
Nigeria has a wide range of livestock which provides an important source of protein. The concentration of these livestock varies from one part of the country to the other. Available figures show, for example, that in 1990, of the 13,947,000 cattle in the country, Borno had the highest number of about 3 million while Bauchi, Gongola(now made up of Adamawa and Taraba states), Kaduna, Niger, Plateau and Sokoto had over one million heads of cattle each.

Bauchi, Borno and Kano had over two million sheep and goats in 1990; while Katsina, Gongola and Sokoto followed- with over one million each. Pigs were, predominantly, found in Benue and Plateau with over 500,000 each, followed by Gongola and Kaduna with 470,000 and 250,000, respectively. The highest numbers of chickens were found in Benue with over eight million; followed by Ogun, Oyo, Ondo, Anambra and Bendel with over four million birds in 1990.

Bendel and Benue had more than I million each of ducks followed by Bauchi, Plateau, Gongola and Sokoto with slightly less than one million each. Guinea fowls were predominantly found in Bauchi and Sokoto where over one million each were found in 1990.

The highest number of turkeys was found in Kano, Akwa Ibom and Plateau. Bauchi had over 500,000 rabbits compared with Kano, Katsina and Kaduna with population of 217,000; 166,000 and 112,000 respectively.

On the whole, Northern states had 75 -90% of the total livestock counted in 1990. Northern states- cattle 96.6%; sheep 82.3%; goat 73.1%; pigs 72.6% chickens 56.6%; ducks 75.7%; guinea fowl 93.6%;
turkey 73.6% and rabbits 28.5%.
Southern states: cattle 3.4%; sheep 17.7% goats 26.7%; pigs 27.4% chickens 43.4%; ducks 24.3%; guinea fowl 6.4%; turkey 26.6% and rabbits 28.5%.

Source: Federal Department of Livestock and Pest Control Services.
Do you find the passage relevant to livestock breeding in Nigeria? If you find it relevant, you may probably give the following reasons.

(a) The article shows the spread of livestock in Nigeria
(b) The article shows where a particular livestock can be bred
(c) The article shows the types of livestock that can be bred
(d) The article shows the area where some of the livestock can be favourably bred
(e) The article gives statistics on the breeding rate and number.

From this simple exercise, you must have discovered the need to survey articles or reading materials before actually going through the tedious process of reading them intensively. You may be wasting your time reading irrelevant material and later on find out that such material is not meeting the purpose for which reading is intended. In order for you to decide the relevance of a reading material, read:

- the abstract
- the introduction or opening paragraph
- headings and sub-headings, conclusion, usually the final paragraph of the material.

4. Ask yourself specific questions connected with the material

To focus on what you are reading, start with a guide. You should endeavour to answer the guiding questions as you read. If you make notes as you read, you will be able to answer the relevant questions more accurately. Your notes will help you focus on what you are reading. They will also provide you with a summary of what you have read that can be re-read or revised later on in life, especially during examinations.

Self-Assessment Exercise
As you read the passage entitled ‘Using Geographical Information Systems in the Management of Education’, use the following question

as your guide. Try to form notes as you read along. Use the notes to answer the question after reading the passage.

Guiding question: What is the value of a geographical information system?

Using Geographical Information Systems in the Management of Education
Space is one of the key dimensions of our lives. In some places, space is rigidly controlled by clear features such as fences, political borders, walls, and school districts, and people arrange what they do and where they go according to these barriers. These kinds of boundaries may not have been established elsewhere, but space remains equally important. Where can water be obtained, where can crops be planted, and how far must a child walk to school? Space is both an important resource and constraint for everyone. It also has a substantial impact on education.

What does someone working as an education planner or manager do about considering the effects of space on education? How does this person quantify, analyse and display the relationships between geography and education? How does he or she determine just where education should happen? How does he/she answer such questions as:

- *where are new schools needed?*
- *where can pupils move after completing their primary schooling?*
- *where are school facilities duplicated?*
- *where is there a need for new teachers, or where is in-service training most urgently required?*
- *where should inspection circuits be created?*

The tools described in this book will make it easier for the planner to obtain answers. A Geographical Information System (GIS) comprises a set of tools useful for processing spatial information. As with any set of tools, much of its effectiveness depends on the paradigm in which it is used. Educational planners and managers with a strong interest in the details of education, in local conditions and local solutions, and in having their efforts translated into tangible products will make good use of GIS. Those with broader interests in policies, processes and central control will also use a GIS to highlight, among other things, regional disparities, problem areas, and schools in need of immediate action.

This book has been designed to strike a middle ground between those with a strong interest in education and those with a greater interest in GIS technology. The book seeks to bridge that gap by showing how modern computer technology can be 'user-friendly' in a discipline that often hesitates to adopt technology when seeking solutions. Hopefully, it will convince educationists who wonder whether a GIS can be useful that there is much to be gained. For those embarking on the actual development of a GIS, this book provides a clear introduction to the methodological principles and the broad range of products that can be expected from such a system.

And for those who know a good deal about GIS but wonder how to apply the technology in an educational setting, examples of spatial issues and questions in education should illustrate the potential value of these applications. The book describes the planning and development of a geographical information system, explains the components necessary for a GIS and presents a variety of examples of how a GIS map can be used in educational planning and management. Parts of the book will be published in a series of training modules on school mapping and micro planning. But given its wider perspective, it was felt necessary to make it available to a wider audience.

While this book is intended for those who might wish to develop and use a GIS for education planning and management, it should also be of interest to people working in other social sectors. Many of the principles important to education are relevant to other services and processes involving people. This book was compiled with the kind assistance of staff in the Ministry of Education and Culture in Namibia.

Source: *I1EP Newsletter, October-December (1996). Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning.*

If you have gone through the passage carefully and taken useful notes, you will be able to answer the guiding question posed at the beginning of the passage. You will discover that the first two paragraphs are not to be read with seriousness. This is because they do not answer the question posed at the beginning of the passage. The values of the Geographical Information System come more clearly from the third paragraph. Compare your answer with the one I present here:

The value of Geographical Information Systems lies in their ability to process spatial information and highlight regional differences, problem areas, and schools in need of immediate action by educational planners and policymakers.

Once again, guiding questions can assist you in identifying the important things you need from the reading materials, the proper focus to give the material, and what is relevant and what is irrelevant.

Having examined practical strategies for reading effectively, the next section introduces the major **types of reading** and explains when each should be used.

3.3 Types of Reading

Not every reading task requires the same approach. Depending on your purpose, the type of material and the level of understanding required, you may adopt different reading styles. Choosing the appropriate type of reading enables you to read more efficiently, improve comprehension and make better use of your study time.

Before you continue, reflect on these questions:

- Do you read a novel in the same way you read an examination textbook?
- Why might a teacher ask learners to read aloud in class but expect silent reading during examinations?
- Which type of reading do you use most often in your studies?

Continue reading to discover the major types of reading and when each is most appropriate.

1. **Loud Reading**

Loud reading is also known as oral reading. It is introduced two months after a student has learned to read his/her textbook. Loud reading helps the student to read with correct pronunciation, articulation, intonation, stress and rhythm. It enables the student to read with expression. It also enables the teacher to evaluate the students' knowledge of spoken words, phrases and sentences. It aids the student to read with understanding and paves the way to silent reading.

2. **Silent Reading**

This is a very important type of reading. As a learner or student in an Open and Distance Learning environment, such as the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), you will adopt this kind of reading. The purpose of silent reading is to encourage you to read and comprehend. Silent reading is sometimes considered recreational or independent reading, such as reading silently in a relaxed mood, with only a single individual involved. You would agree that reading silently improves one's understanding because it helps one concentrate on what one is reading, rather than the pronunciation of individual words. When we read silently, we can form mental pictures of the topic we are reading and discussing.

3. **Intensive Reading**

Intensive Reading occurs when the learner focuses on the language rather than on the text. For example, the learner may be answering comprehension questions, learning new vocabulary, studying the grammar and expressions in the text, translating the passage (sometimes called 'careful reading'), or performing other tasks that involve the student in looking intensively (inside) the text.

4. **Extensive Reading**

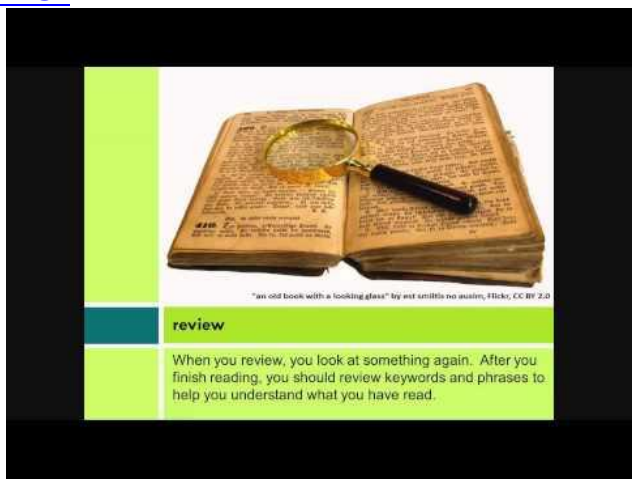
Extensive reading is wide reading, which is not as deep as intensive reading. It is like reading for pleasure (for example, reading an entertainment page in a newspaper) when compared with reading for examination, which is intensive reading. Extensive reading is reading as much as possible, for your own pleasure. In this case, you can read smoothly and quickly without looking up the meaning of words in a dictionary.

It is important to state that a reader chooses appropriate reading strategies depending upon the particular text that s/he intends to read. An efficient reader can 'switch' styles

according to the type of text. So a reader has to match reading skills with the reading purpose.

Furthermore, whatever type of reading it might be, one important thing is the understanding of what one is reading. This is because one can read and may not comprehend what s/he has read. Reading is effective when one understands what one has read.
Before concluding this unit, watch a short instructional video on effective reading strategies. As you watch, identify the techniques that can improve your own reading habits.

https://youtu.be/W_Ap0ecnHOI



3.4 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- reading is an essential means of acquiring knowledge, developing critical thinking and supporting academic success;
- effective reading requires planning and purposeful use of appropriate reading strategies;
- determining the purpose of reading helps you choose the most suitable reading speed and approach;
- surveying reading materials before a detailed study helps you identify relevant information and avoid wasting time;
- asking guiding questions and taking notes improves concentration, comprehension and retention of information; and
- the major types of reading include loud (oral) reading, silent reading, intensive reading and extensive reading, each serving different learning purposes.

You are encouraged to apply these strategies consistently as you study your course materials. Developing effective reading habits will improve your understanding, make revision easier and enhance your overall academic performance.



3.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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3.6 Possible answer to Self-Assessment Exercise

Possible answer to Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Responses will vary depending on individual reading habits. However, effective readers generally:

- read regularly rather than only during examinations;
- enjoy reading for both academic and personal development;
- consult newspapers, journals and other learning resources frequently; and
- continually seek opportunities to improve their reading skills.

Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Reading Task	Appropriate Reading Speed
Locating football results	Fast
Preparing for examinations	Slow
Writing assignments	Slow
Lawyer preparing for a case	Slow
Finding a medicine in a reference book	Fast
Studying an engineering drawing	Slow
Studying a nursing topic	Slow or Average
Locating a date	Fast
Deciding whether to read a book	Fast

UNIT 4 SKIMMING AND SCANNING

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Learning Outcomes
4.3 Developing Rapid Reading Skills
4.3.1 Skimming
4.3.2 Scanning
4.4 Summary
4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
4.6 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise



4.1 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learned that effective reading requires flexibility. You discovered that your reading speed should depend on your purpose, the type of material you are reading, and the information you need to obtain. In this unit, you will study two important rapid-reading strategies: **skimming** and **scanning**. These skills are valuable for academic study, professional work, and everyday information gathering. By learning and practising these strategies, you will become a faster and more efficient reader without sacrificing comprehension

Before you continue, consider these questions:

- Have you ever searched quickly through a newspaper just to know the major headlines?
- Have you ever looked rapidly through a document simply to find a telephone number, date, or name?
- What reading strategy did you use?

Continue reading to find out.



4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- identify different silent reading speeds
- apply the skill of skimming to reading passages in real-life situations
- practise how to scan passages to locate specific information.

4.3 Developing Rapid Reading Skills

To become an efficient reader, you must know when to read slowly and when to read rapidly. This section introduces two essential rapid-reading techniques that help readers obtain information efficiently depending on their purpose.

4.3.1 Skimming

You should recognise three main reading purposes. The slowest speed is what you may call study speed for proper understanding of what you read. At this reading level, you are expected to have a high level of concentration and high level of understanding. Your attention should go to the details in the reading passage. These details are to be remembered. Next, reading speed is the one usually called the **average** reading speed. This speed is best for books or reading materials that are important and require intensive reading and comprehension, but are easier than textbooks. A large number of novels are read at an average speed, depending on the enjoyment obtained from them.

The last reading speed, which is the focus of this section of the unit, is the fastest. This is called **skimming**. This reading speed is used when you do not need a high level of comprehension. Skimming is used to get a general idea, impression, overview or gist of the reading materials. Skimming is a rapid reading technique often used to quickly get the gist. Let's practice this skill.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Skim through the passage entitled: IMPACT OF PETROLEUM ON THE ECONOMY to determine the general idea, overview and the impression that the author wants to give. You have three minutes for this exercise.

You are not to go back to the passage after you have skimmed through once. Use the following questions as a guide.

(a) What are the positive sides of petroleum on the economy?
(b) What are the negative sides of petroleum on the economy?

Do not turn to the discussion until you have completed the Exercise.
Have you completed the exercise? If you have done so, then go to the discussion section.

Impact of Petroleum on the Economy
In many ways, the easier part of my tasks today is evaluating the impact of petroleum on the economy. It has been both beneficial and negative. On the positive side, the exploitation of petroleum led to a dramatic explosion in government revenues between 1973 and 1981. This enabled the Federal and State Governments to undertake a vast expansion of infrastructure development and the provision of social services. It also meant a faster growth of national income in the 1970s than would have been possible without petroleum. Some linked industrial development has also occurred, including oil

refineries, the beginning of the petrochemical industry, and the establishment of some oil service enterprises.

It is difficult these days, after more than ten years of economic depression and relative decline, to recapture the rising expectations and near-euphoria that exploding oil revenues created in the early '70s. It is useful to recall a few figures, and I must stress that the naira figures are pre-devaluation, when it was stronger than the US dollar. The National Development Plan of 1955-62 was to cost £164 million. Actual expenditure was £85 million or 170 million. The size of the Second Plan, 1970-74, was 3.2 billion. By contrast, the Third Plan, 1975-1980, called for the investment of"30 billion naira. Unlike the other plans, which assumed 50% dependence on foreign financing, the 1975-80 plan assumed nearly 100% financing from national savings, made possible by oil taxation. The vision for 1980-85 was even grander.

Let me say, straight away, that the project revenues for the period 1975 to 1980 were over 90% realised ("39.50 billion compared with "43.78 billion project). However, we all know that following the military changes of government in 1975, the massive purges of the public service in 1975 and the traumas which followed, the 1975-80 plan priorities and strategies were largely abandoned. The emerging enabling environment of political and regulatory stability was shattered. The nature and content of the rhetoric of several key personages, including the manner of the execution of the second indigenisation measures, frightened away foreign investment and induced capital flight, etc.
Nevertheless, the country utilised the vastly increased government revenues to achieve a massive construction of new trunk roads and upgrading of existing roads and bridges, giving Nigeria a vast network of tarred roads, which, despite the neglect and disrepair of the past several years, is still superior to what is found in many parts of Africa. Enormous sums were also expended in expanding educational facilities, telecommunications, ports, and water resources -all of which could not have come from foreign aid. The disappointing attitude towards maintenance following the commissioning of these expensive facilities is a negative development.

For those interested in fixing the exact date of the so-called oil boom, we should note that oil revenue was not very significant before 1972. In 1967, it was "54 million. By 1973, it had risen to "1.4 billion, "1.6 billion in 1974, and "4.2 billion in 1975. It was still "5.8 billion in 1977-78. The greatest windfalls came following the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. In 1980, it was US $25 billion, about US $7-8 billion over the last seven years. However, these figures in themselves are not very significant for our purpose today.

Source: *NIGERIA: The Way Forward* by Mahdi A *et al*, Kaduna: Arewa House.

How many minutes did it take you to complete reading the passage? If you took more than 3 minutes, then you were not skimming any longer. You are probably reading at an average speed. Let me sound a note of warning here- do not read too fast with no comprehension, or too slowly just because you want to comprehend what is read. Research studies have shown that you are not necessarily gaining lots of comprehension simply because you are reading slowly. The slower you read, the lower your comprehension rate.

Let's attempt the above exercise; going by the general idea or overview of the entire passage, the positive sides of petroleum include:

- explosion in government revenue
- provision of social services
- industrial development
- massive construction of new trunk roads and upgrading of existing ones
- expansion of educational facilities

The negative sides of petroleum on the economy include:

- a disappointing attitude towards maintenance after commissioning of the expensive facilities.

4.3.2 Scanning

Before reading this section, think about the following:
If you wanted to find a friend's telephone number in a directory, would you read every word from beginning to end?

Continue reading to find out.

Some people use skimming and scanning interchangeably. This is not our position in this unit. We take scanning to mean rapidly screening a passage to locate important information within a large chunk of reading material. In such a reading activity, you search through the passage to locate the information. In scanning, the eyes are not necessarily moving from left to right. They may move left and right, top to bottom, across the pages, from the northern to the southern part of the page, to locate the specific information you are searching for.

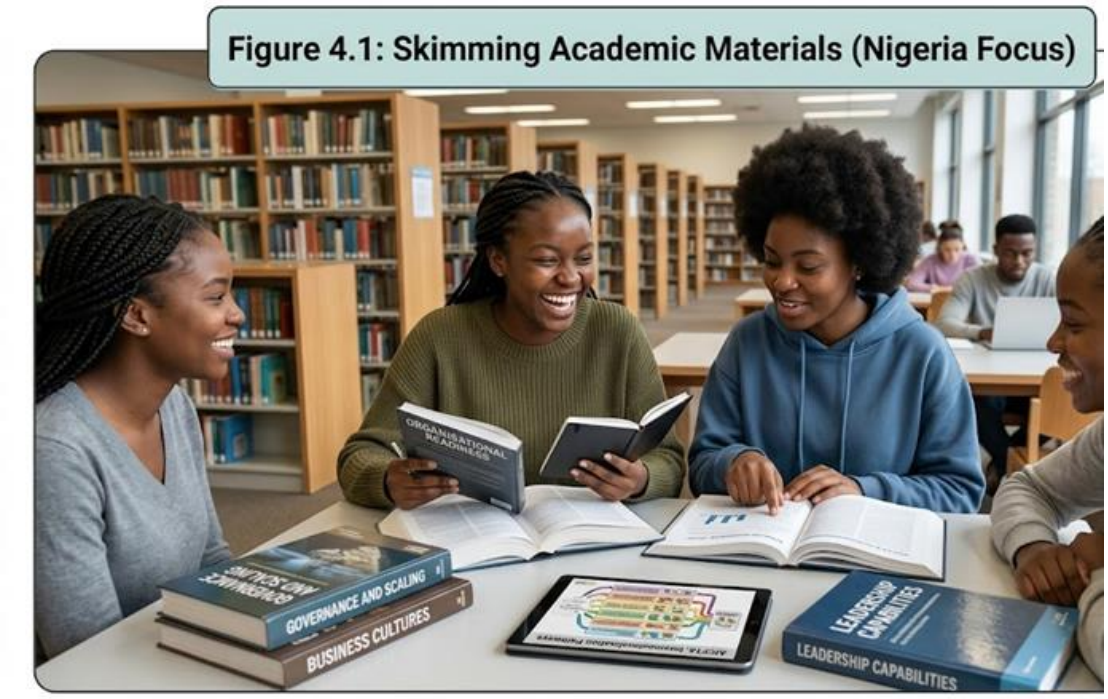


Figure 4.1: Student scanning an examination timetable or directory.

Let's practice this activity.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Indicate whether you need to skim or scan for the suggested reading tasks listed below.

(a) Locating dates in a bulletin:

(b) Determining whether the article favours our political party:
(c) Getting the specific percentage for a particular import-export exchange rate:
(d) Locating the names of lecturers in the department from the school prospectus:
(e) Looking for the telephone and email number of the company:
(f) Locating relevant headings and sub-headings of the research paper:
(g) Obtaining the overall reaction of the writer to the government's policy: and
(h) Locating specific information on the grade of the student

Now that you have completed the self-assessment above, we can discuss the answers.

You scan to locate dates in a bulletin, but skim to determine whether the article favours our political party. To get the import-export/exchange rate percentage, you will need to scan the relevant document. Scanning will also be used to locate lecturers' names in a prospectus and to find a company's telephone number and e-mail address. You may skim through a research paper to locate the relevant headings and subheadings.

Let's practise scanning using the *newsletter of the First Bank Century II*

- New Frontiers Project, February 2002.

WINNING
From the Editor

Hello again!!!. Here is another exciting opportunity to learn more about the New Frontier Project.
The focus in this edition will be on the Groupware/Enterprise Portal initiative. You will be informed about the project, its objectives, and scope. We'll also bring you up to date on the progress so far.

You can still send in your entries for the new Frontier "Buddie" Quiz published in the December edition. The deadline has been extended to February to allow upcountry responses to reach us. Names of winners will be published in the next (March) edition.

In this edition
- *The Groupware/Enterprise Portal initiative overview- objectives, scope, where we are, and expected benefits.*
- *And other regular features*

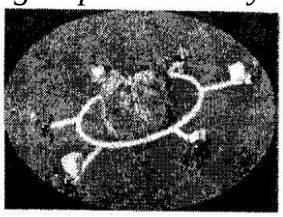
The Groupware/Enterprise Portal Project Overview
Over the past few years, many companies have begun to view the need for information gathering and sharing, and the ability to communicate this information swiftly across the organisation, as critical to business competitiveness and employee productivity.

Consequently, the selection, purchase, and deployment of systems that support "messaging" and "collaboration" have become items on the agenda of many CEOs. Messaging simply means communication between two or more people, while collaboration means working together as a group or team.
The ability to facilitate messaging and collaboration has enabled many organisations to work smarter, thereby increasing workforce productivity, reducing costs, and enhancing shareholder value. This revolution in the workplace has been brought about by two major types of technologies:

- *groupware*
- *enterprise portal*

What is Groupware?

A groupware is any software that allows two or more people to work



together as a group without necessarily being present in the same physical (geographical) location. Simply put, it is software designed to improve the productivity of a team of individuals with common goals, e.g., individuals in the same branch, project teams, or individuals with a common group identity, e.g., branch managers, regional managers, and so on.

The term "groupware" encompasses several types of technology that facilitate e-mail, electronic bulletin boards, online meetings, discussion groups, group calendaring and scheduling, knowledge management and workflow. These terms are explained in detail on Page 3.

What is an Enterprise Portal?

The enterprise portal is a simple, personalised interface (window) through which an individual can access and utilise various information sources within or outside their organisation.

Using First Bank as an example, if an enterprise portal is deployed, an employee can access the banking application, help desk, HR policy database, e-mail facility, training databases, and so on from his workstation.

Why are we embarking on this initiative?

As part of the efforts to achieve its 'big one' vision in the Nigerian Financial Services industry, First Bank recognises the fact that it can exploit the use of information as a source of competitive advantage by ensuring optimal distribution and usage of its available information resources.

Our vision: "to be the clear leader and Nigeria's bank of first choice"

Self-Assessment Exercise

Scan through the above newsletter of the First Bank Century II to locate the following information.

1. The number of sub-headings in the newsletter___
2. The meaning of messaging .
3. Our vision___
4. What is in the edition?_____
5. Deadline for New Frontier Buddie QUIZ_
6. What is an Enterprise" Portal? ___
7. The initiative the bank is embarking on is_
8. What Groupware encompasses are _____

You should spend two minutes on this exercise. If you spend more than two minutes, then you are no longer scanning, but reading at a slow or average speed. Cross-check

your answers with the ones presented in the box below. Do not check the answers until you have completed the exercise on your own.

SCANNING CLUES
Answers

1. 7 sub-headings
2. Communication between two people
3. To be the clear leader and Nigeria's bank of the first choice
4. Groupware/Enterprise Portal initiative overview, objectives, scope, where are we, expected benefits and other regular features
5. February
6. Interface (window) through which an individual can access and utiliSe various information
7. Use of information as a source of competitive advantage
8. Several types of technology: E-mail electronic bulletin boards, etc.

Do you know what? You can skim and scan at the same time, depending on the purpose and the information you are searching for. As of today, try to skim and scan through all the Nigerian newspapers you come across each day. By the time you do this for quite a long time, skimming and scanning will become second nature to you.



4.5 Summary

This unit has exposed you to the following:

- how to skim through passages to get the gist, main idea or ideas of a passage and
- how to scan to locate important information.

The next unit will train you to build on those two interrelated reading activities as you read for speed.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Skim and scan through the Newsletter Vol. 8 that accompanies this assignment and answer the following questions by filling in the gaps. You must stick to the exact words or expressions used in the Newsletter. You have just 15 minutes for the exercise.

Answer the following questions, based on the Newsletter, by filling in the gaps below.

i. Word flow means (1)_____
ii. Electronic mail means (2)__
iii. How many headings are in the newsletter? (3)___
iv. Knowledge management ensures the (4)__

(5)___and (6) _____of ideas

v. Lotus Notes can provide workflow capabilities to automate how many processes?

(7) ___

vi. (8)___ and (9)_____are very useful for managing time and setting up appointments.

vii. Mobile functions of Lotus Notes include (10)_____and (11) _____

Newsletter for Skimming and Scanning

Functionalities of Lotus Notes

The benefits of using Lotus Notes will be better understood with a basic understanding of its various functionalities. These functionalities include: Electronic mail and messaging.

Electronic mail is a system for sending messages and files between computers. Many of us are already familiar with this, as most individuals currently use the internet for this purpose. With e-mail, First Bankers can send and receive text messages conveniently, quickly and cheaply.

Group calendaring and scheduling

The calendaring and scheduling functionality is very useful for managing time and setting up appointments and meetings. With this functionality, you can send out meeting notices, respond to meeting invitations, and receive email or audible alerts/reminders for scheduled events like meetings and appointments.

This functionality also supports personal and group "To do" lists to help you effectively manage any tasks/activities you have outlined.

Knowledge management

Knowledge management ensures the capture, storage, and dissemination of ideas, skills, and knowledge within an organisation's workforce. This functionality functions like a database, harnessing an organisation's knowledge capital. Thus, with Lotus Notes, First Bankers can create, collaborate on, distribute, and share information. For instance, the bank's training curriculum, newsletters and journals can be stored in various databases which bank staff can access via Lotus Notes.

Workflow

Workflow is a generic term for the tasks, steps, people, and tools involved in each step of a business process. Lotus Notes can help automate processes and manage consistent handling of work. Lotus Notes can provide workflow capabilities to automate the following processes.

- *Processing of staff loan*
- *Application for leave*
- *Appraisal*

- *Expenditure Mandate*
- *Settlement of Bills*
- *Budget Monitoring*
- *Store Requisitions*
- *Cheque Book Procurement*

Electronic meeting systems
This functionality enables individuals to conduct meetings electronically. Consequently, individuals do not always have to be physically present in the same location to hold a meeting. This functionality supports both talking and exchanging of messages (video and audio) in real time.

Mobile features
This ensures that Lotus Notes' reach can extend to individuals in remote locations. It also allows mobile employees to stay connected to the most current information. For instance, if you are away from your branch on an official assignment, you can still access your mail via the internet or by remote dial-up from anywhere.



4.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 5 THE 3RsQ METHOD

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Applying the 3RsQ Reading Method
5.3.1 What does the 3RsQ mean?
5.3.2 The 3RsQ Method
5.4 Summary
5.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources



5.1 Introduction

In the previous units, you learned several strategies for effective reading, including skimming and scanning. These strategies help you read efficiently according to your purpose. In this unit, you will study another valuable reading technique known as the **3RsQ Method**. This study strategy helps learners understand, organise, and retain information more effectively. As a 100-level student, mastering this method will not only improve your performance in GST11 but will also support your learning in other courses throughout your academic journey.

Before you continue, consider the following questions:

- Have you ever forgotten what you read shortly after studying?
- Do you sometimes finish reading a chapter without remembering its main ideas?
- How can you improve your retention of information?

Continue reading to find out.



5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of the 3RsQ method
- identify the stages involved in the 3RsQ method; and
- apply the 3RsQ method to improve reading comprehension and information retention.



5.3 Applying the 3RsQ Reading Method

Effective reading involves more than moving your eyes across the page. Good readers actively engage with the text before, during, and after reading. The 3RsQ method provides a structured approach for achieving this goal.

5.3.1 What Does 3RsQ mean?

Have you ever wondered why some students remember what they read more easily than others?

One reason is that they use organised reading strategies such as the **3RsQ Method**.

3RsQ is actually derived from SQRRR or SQ3R; it is a reading comprehension method named for its five steps: survey, question, read, recite, and review. The method was introduced by Francis P. Robinson in his 1941 book Effective Study. In this course, we would use the term 3RsQ, as we have stated, which refers to a Reading/Study formula designed to help process and increase retention of written information. In the next sub-units, we will break down the meaning of the abbreviation.

The abbreviation **3RsQ** represents five learning activities:

- **S – Survey**
- **Q – Question**
- **R – Read**
- **R – Recite**
- **R – Review**

Together, these stages encourage active learning instead of passive reading.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
1. What is the full meaning of 3RsQ?

5.3.2 The 3RsQ Method

Before studying each stage, think about how you normally read a textbook. Do you simply begin reading from the first page, or do you first examine the headings and ask questions about the topic?

Continue reading to find out.

Although different versions such as **SQ3R**, **SQRRR**, and **3RsQ** exist, they all describe the same reading process consisting of five stages.

The 3RsQ can be rearranged SQRRR or SQRs; they all mean the same thing. (S) means Survey, (Q) means Question, and the 3R means Read, Recite and Review.

We shall now delve into the meanings of each letter.

1. **(S) Survey**



This is the preview stage. Before an in-depth reading of a passage, scan it to understand its structure, purpose and main points. That is, read the title, headings and subheadings to identify the main topics. Also, look for pictures, charts, diagrams, illustrations, bold or italicised print and read their captions. To identify the author's purpose, read the introduction and the final paragraph. This survey should take you about 5-10minutes.

2. **(Q) Question**



Question deals with inquiry. Here, you convert each heading, subheading, picture, or caption into questions (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How) to set a purpose for reading. This aids comprehension. Jot down questions that you may have as you survey a passage. For example, if the heading is "The Causes of Sore Throat," create the question: "What are the primary causes of sore throat?" Questions help you to focus your attention on finding the answers.

3. **(R) Read**



This is where you do the active search. Read the passage, but only to find the answers to the questions you generated during the questioning stage. Read one section at a time, keeping your questions in mind. As you read, take note of the main idea and supporting details in each paragraph. Also, highlight key phrases sparingly or write short notes in the margins to summarise, rather than just highlighting large chunks of text.

4. (R)Recite



This means recalling what you have read. After reading a paragraph, stop to test your understanding. Put away the passage and answer your questions aloud or in writing, using your own words. Check your answers against the passage to ensure accuracy. If you cannot explain it in your own words, you do not yet understand it. This step is critical for moving information into long-term memory.

5. **(R)Review**



At this stage, you reinforce what you have read. Review the passage to solidify knowledge and prepare for testing. Look over your notes, questions, and answers immediately after reading. Cover your notes and try to answer the questions again to test your memory. Review your notes within 24 hours of the initial reading, then again at intervals (spaced repetition) to prevent forgetting.

Click the link below to watch the video on how to use the 3RsQ method

https://youtu.be/Etv359djp-c?si=upUJROFeBJpnC5JC



Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Apply the 3RsQ method to the excerpt from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "The Danger of a Single Story"

I'm a storyteller. And I would like to share a few personal stories about what I call "the danger of the single story." I grew up on a university campus in eastern Nigeria. My mother says I started reading at age 2, although I think 4 is probably closer to the truth. So I was an early reader, and what I read were British and American children's books. I was also an early writer, and when I began to write, at about the age of seven, stories in pencil with crayon illustrations that my poor mother was obligated to read, I wrote exactly the kinds of stories I was reading: All my characters were white and blue-eyed, they played in the snow, they ate apples, and they talked a lot about the weather, how lovely it was that the sun had come out. Now, this despite the fact that I lived in Nigeria. I had never been outside Nigeria. We didn't have snow, we ate mangoes, and we never talked about the weather, because there was no need to.

My characters also drank a lot of ginger beer because the characters in the British books I read did. Never mind that I had no idea what ginger beer was. And for many years afterwards, I would have a desperate desire to taste ginger beer. But that is another story.

What this demonstrates, I think, is how impressionable and vulnerable we are in the face of a story, particularly as children. Because all I had read were books in which characters were foreign, I had become convinced that books by their very nature had to have foreigners in them and had to be about things with which I could not personally identify.



5.4 Summary

This unit introduced the **3RsQ method**, a reading and study strategy designed to improve comprehension and retention. The method consists of five stages:

- **Survey:** Preview the reading material by examining the title, headings, subheadings, illustrations, introduction, and conclusion.
- **Question:** Convert headings and other important features of the text into questions to establish a purpose for reading.
- **Read:** Read the material carefully to find answers to the questions and identify the main ideas and supporting details.
- **Recite:** Recall and explain what you have read in your own words without looking at the text.
- **Review:** Revisit your notes, questions, and answers to reinforce learning and improve long-term retention.

The unit also demonstrated how the 3RsQ method can be applied to a reading passage. By following the five stages systematically, you can become a more active reader and improve your ability to retain information from your study materials.



5.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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SQ3R Reading Method | Academic Success Centers https://in.nau.edu/academic-success-centers/sq3r-reading-method/

"The Danger of a Single Story" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie speech https://jamesclear.com/great-speeches/the-danger-of-a-single-story-by-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie

UNIT 6 READING AND COMPREHENDING AT VARYING SPEED LEVELS I

Unit Structure

6.1 Introduction
6.2 Learning Outcomes
6.3 Reading at Different Speed Levels
6.3.1 Reading at the Fastest Speed
6.3.2 Reading at the Average Speed
6.4 Summary
6.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
6.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



6.1 Introduction

Reading is not an activity that should always be performed at the same speed. The speed at which you read should depend on the purpose of reading, the nature of the material and the amount of time available to you. For example, you may need to read very quickly when looking for a particular piece of information, but you may need to slow down when studying a difficult academic text.

This unit is divided into two main parts. The first part assists you in practising reading at the fastest speed. This section is an extension of Unit 4, where you learned the skills of skimming and scanning. The difference is that skimming and scanning in this unit are geared towards reading very fast, while those discussed in Unit 4 were directed towards enabling you to locate specific information and obtain a general impression of a particular reading passage.

The second part of the unit is devoted to practising reading at an average speed. You will learn how to read materials of different types with pleasure and maximum comprehension. The slowest reading speed, used in study-type situations, will not be addressed in this unit. It will be treated in Unit 1 of Module 3 of this course.

As you study this unit, have your pen, paper and a dictionary beside you. You will need them as you complete the reading and comprehension activities.

Can you read every type of material at the same speed? What determines the speed you should use when reading? Continue reading to find out.



6.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- apply skimming and scanning techniques when reading passages at a very fast speed
- demonstrate the ability to read suitable materials at an average reading speed with adequate comprehension
- differentiate between reading speed and comprehension rate in reading activities; and
- perform comprehension tasks associated with reading at the fastest and average speed levels.



6.3 Reading at Different Speed Levels

Reading speed should change according to the purpose for which you are reading. In some situations, you need to locate information quickly. In others, you need to read a passage at a comfortable pace and retain its main ideas. The following sections provide opportunities for you to practise both approaches.

Before you continue, can you recall the three broad levels of silent reading speed discussed earlier in the course?

Continue reading to find out...

6.3.1 Reading at the Fastest Speed

In the last unit, we attempted to discuss the three kinds of silent reading speed, each for a different purpose. Can you still remember these silent reading speed levels? If you cannot remember these, turn to unit 4 of this module and find out. Well, I think you have found out these levels- the slowest speed for high-level understanding and when it is necessary to remember details; next is average speed for easier texts and reading materials and the fastest, which is skimming and scanning.

In the last unit, I ended with a note that it is possible to skim and scan- read a passage at the same time. Skimming and scanning are regarded as the fastest speed. According to Edward Fry, a good reader achieves 50% comprehension while skimming and scanning at more than 800 words per minute. This is, possibly, the fastest speed you can achieve in your academic activities. Since this unit focuses on reading and comprehension at varying speed levels, the first speed level you will practice is one that requires you to skim and scan simultaneously. This is to be regarded as the fastest reading-comprehension speed level.

Practising Skimming and Scanning

Let's practise it. The passages lumped together here cover a range of high-interest topics. You are expected to skim and scan through the passages to answer the following questions. You have half a minute for each question.

Fill in the blanks once you find the answer. Record the time you start the exercise, and when you finish.

1. What is the view of Olu Leo Ezekiel?___
2. What is the gold mine of wisdom for raising a son? ___
3. In what media is "Bring up your Boys"__
4. What is the hope of conflict resolution? _
5. Which war is reported in one of the extracts?___
6. In what ways are boys different?__

Murder of Bola Ige

That Bola Ige was murdered by the bullet of the assassins shows that there are still some individuals in Nigeria who, under a democratic system, do not appreciate how to tolerate other people's views. Therefore, if there is any mistake the Justice Minister made while in office, it is his inability to ensure that aggrieved Nigerians see the court as their last hope for conflict resolution. Those who have resorted to killing as a way of having the upper hand in any disagreement should have a rethink and know that, as their actions have caused the country a great loss, so will the punishment of the ungodly act be visited upon them on the day of judgment.

Odua Abdulfatai Maiduguri, Borno State

I am really in sympathy with the wife, children, relatives and cronies of late Ige, and I pray to God Almighty to grant them the right frame of mind to bear this great wastage to humanity. The family of Ige should not weep for their departed husband, father, brother, uncle, etc., but they should weep for our sickening country, Nigeria.

Uncle Bola Ige, may your great soul dwell in eternal peace with God in His Celestial Heavens, where Christ reigns as the overall king.

Olu Leo Ezekiel Yaba, Lagos

If Bola Ige had been murdered in Abacha's days, most people would have jumped to the conclusion that it was a state-sponsored act; but now that his death is linked to political squabbles in a democratic dispensation, the lesson inherent is that violence will continue to reign in Yoruba land except the people eschew politics without bitterness.

It is unfortunate that Bola Ige was killed at the height of his political career. However, what this gruesome murder portrays is that if the killers are not caught, we may never be close to identifying the real murderers of Kudirat Abiola.

Ige's death should serve as a reminder that we have always lived in very uncertain times. Be it the regime of Babangida, Abacha, Abubakar or Obasanjo, the naked truth is that mysterious deaths have occurred more in the Southwest than any other part of the country.

J. Okunlola

Obasanjo Stops Army Operations in Benue

A war of wit is gathering momentum in the nation's political milieu between the National Assembly and the governors of the 36 states of the federation. It is a war whose casualties may be the nation's toddling democracy and its supposed beneficiaries, Nigerians, who trooped out in 1999 to elect their representatives.

At the centre of the raging battle is the electoral bill as amended by the two houses of the National Assembly at separate sessions early this month.

Under ideal circumstances, the bill or its amendments, passed by the nation's highest legitimate body, could not have raised any dust. But the extension of the tenure of local government chairmen and their councillors from three to four years, as well as the National Assembly's interpretation of the constitutional provision restricting governors' tenure to two terms, stirred the hornet's nest.

The 36 state governors interpreted the National Assembly's decision on these highly sensitive areas as an encroachment on their constitutional power to legislate on the tenure of local government councils.

Bringing up Boys
Dr James Dobson

A Gold Mine of Wisdom for Raising Your Son
Boys will be boys, but with 'gender neutral' propaganda and pressures, many assume any differences between the sexes are merely learned. Dr James Dobson's new book, 'Bringing Up Boys', shouts straight about the most important ways boys are distinctively, instinctively different. Find out why boys are the way they are and how to understand their emotional and physical development, motivate and teach them, and guide them into dynamic, godly manhood. Essential reading for parents, teachers and leaders!

Strong, stable, godly men are the greatest need of our time.

Whether married or single, if you have a son, you will want this book as a ready reference. It's a comprehensive study by a godly man who knows his subject (Kay Arthur).
I only wish Dr Dobson's book had been available when I was raising my two boys. He touches on every essential aspect of boys, and I'm excited about the enrichment and encouragement this book will bring to families. Gary Smalley.

*Bringing Up Boys (hardcover) Suggested donation: $23 * BK 099 Bringing up Boys (four cassettes) Suggested donation: $23* BT096 Bringing up Boys (six compact discs) Suggested donation: $27* BT097*

Plan to Have an Awesome Year!
Join the thousands of students who rely on the week-at-a-glance, student- plan-it Calendar and get organised like never before. You'll be amazed at all the good stuff crammed inside a weekly devotional guide, prayer journal, memory verses, cool graphics, memorable quotes, a trivia, phone and address section, daily and semester schedules, and answers to tough situations you or your friends might be going through. Whew! All that in a compact, spiral-bound planner? Request yours and keep track of your life from August '99 to August 2000, and stay on track with God all year, too.

Source: *Focus on Family* by J.C. Dobson.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Let's practice it. The passages lumped together here are on various topics of interest. You are expected to skim and scan through the passages to answer the following questions. You have half a minute for each question. Fill in the blanks once the answer is found.

Record the time you start exercising, and when you finish.

1. What is the view of Olu Leo Ezekiel about Bola Ige's death?
2. What is the gold mine of wisdom for raising a son?
3. In what media is Bring up your Boys'?
4. What is the hope of conflict resolution?
5. Which war is reported in one of the extracts?
6. In what ways are boys different?
7. Which of the articles is not in favour of Southwest and why?

8a. The author of the book mentioned in the extracts is
8b. What is meant by "Plan to Have an Awesome Year"?

9. The view of Odua Abdulfatai is that_____
10. Why will boys be boys? ___

Have you completed the exercise? In how many minutes?

If the exercise takes you more than 5 minutes to complete, you are not skimming and scanning but reading at a study or average speed.

Again, what do you notice as you practice this exercise? When I did it, I noticed that my eyes had to move back and forth as I tried to locate the relevant extract and answer to the question. It means that when skimming or scanning, your eyes must move quickly. You should be able to locate headings and subheadings, and discover relevant names, titles, and topics at very high speed. You must always remember that you have a lot to read and that you cannot afford to waste time. You need to be able to read a large volume of material within a limited time.

It is now time to cross-check your answers to the exercise against those in the box below.

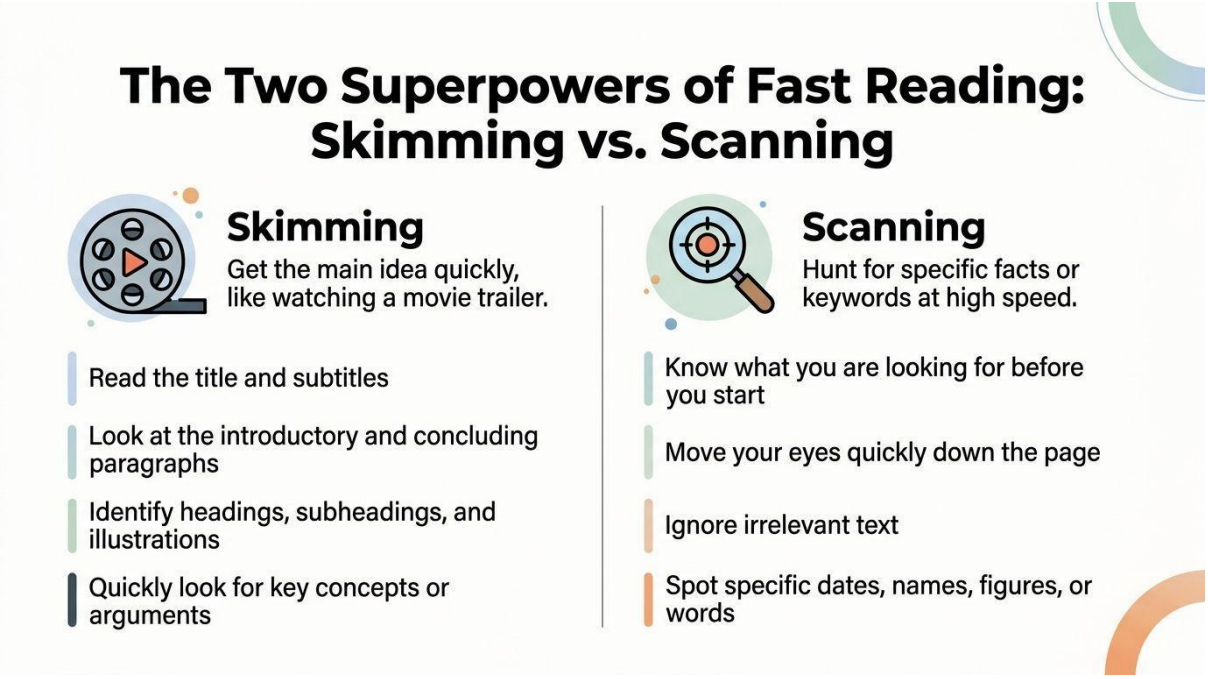
Clues to the Skimming and Scanning Extracts

1. Olu Leo Ezekiel's views of Bola Ige's death are that the death is a wastage to humanity, weep for sickening country.
2. *Bringing Up Boys*, a book by James Dobson.
3. (a) Hard cover (b) Cassettes (c) Discs
4. Court
5. War of electoral bill amended between the executives and the legislators
6. Distinctively and instinctively
7. The article by J. Okunola: S. W. Yoruba has not eschewed politics without bitterness.
8 (a) Dr. James Dobson (b) You have an awesome year if you do not buy student plan an organised weekly devotional guide.
9. Nigerians have not appreciated how to tolerate other people's views.
10. They are not gender neutral.

Checking Your Performance

What is your performance on this skimming and scanning exercise? If you scored above 7 out of 10, I can say with confidence that you are on the right path to learning and practising these very important reading skills. If you are below, please practise harder. You will make it.

Learning Tip:
When skimming and scanning, do not attempt to read every word. First, identify what the question requires, then search the passage for the words, names, headings or ideas that are likely to lead you to the answer.



The figure illustrates the basic idea behind fast reading. Notice that the reader is not attempting to process every word with equal attention. Instead, the reader searches for key information that is relevant to the purpose of the reading task.

6.3.2 Reading at the Average Speed

This is the second reading speed that we will practise in this unit. Average speed is to be used for reading novels, easy textbooks, well-laid-out articles, and materials presented with simple sentences, colourful illustrations, and ample guidance and signposts to assist the reader in grasping the content.

For you to read at an average speed, you must be reading 250-500 words per minute for 70% comprehension. If you are reading at 300 words per minute with 30-40% comprehension, you are not reading with an adequate comprehension rate. Reading speed and comprehension rate are related; you do not say you are reading. It is only when you read fast and comprehend very highly that you can be said to be an efficient reader. Reading with no comprehension is no reading.

Let's practice reading at an average reading speed.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read the extract titled ‘Inefficacy of the Confederal System’ with an average speed of 300 words per minute. Since the passage has 980 words, you should finish reading it in under 4 minutes. Record the time you start reading the passage and record the time you end. You should not spend more than 4 minutes reading the passage. After reading the passage, answer the questions that follow without going back to re-read the passage.

If you go back to re-read the passage, know that you have not comprehended it. You merely read without comprehension.

Before reading the passage, what do you think you should concentrate on when reading at an average speed? Continue reading to find out...

The Inefficacy of the Confederal System

It is my belief that those who are advocating for a confederacy in Nigeria are doing so with the ultimate motive of breaking up the country. All the confederations I know of throughout the world are the products of the movement of sovereign states to unite as a single political entity. But people are trying to turn our case the other way round.

I have carefully studied the motives of those agitating for a confederacy in Nigeria, and I have found two issues uppermost in the minds of these advocates. One of the issues is the question of the country's leadership and the inordinate ambition of a certain section of the nation to produce the country's president from their section at all costs. The other reason is oil. My investigation shows that the areas where agitation is most pronounced are the Yoruba-speaking parts of the country and some Southern minority areas. Many of those engaged in the agitation from these two areas have deliberately forgotten the contributions made by other parts of the country for many years before the discovery of oil, and are still contributing to the stability, prosperity and survival of the nation.

Our compatriots from the Western part of Nigeria need to be reminded that they depend on the rest of the country for many things, such as food, livestock, industrial raw materials, and other items essential for their survival. In addition, over 90% of manufactured goods in Nigeria are produced in the country, and the rest of the country serves as a market for these items. Breaking up Nigeria will automatically deny such commodities access to that market. Where goods manufactured in that area cannot automatically access this large market, the factories producing them will inevitably grind to a halt, with attendant unemployment. This, coupled with the interruption of the normal supply of food, livestock, raw materials, and other necessities of life to the area, will lead to very serious hardship for its people.

What happened during the strike in Lagos and some parts of the West in August last year, when severe food shortages and liquidity problems forced people to depend on roasted maize, coconuts, and plantains for survival, is an example of what could happen to the people of that area in such an event. One question about producing the president, which many Nigerians are grumbling about, is an issue that is being unnecessarily over-flogged. Since the introduction of constitutional government in Nigeria, only two national leaders have been elected by the people of Nigeria: Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and Alhaji Shehu Shagari. Balewa became Prime Minister- courtesy of the Action Group, which denied the NCNC its victory in the Western region, after the 1951 general election. Had the NCNC enjoyed the fruit of its victory in that Region at that time, the party would have been in control of the Eastern and Western regions and could

have been the largest party in the federal parliament when the post of Prime Minister was introduced in the country.

In such an event, the party could have been the one to produce the Prime Minister for this country. As for Alhaji Shehu Shagari, he was elected president largely by the minority states in both the North and the South in the 1979 election. Going by the record of that election, Shagari came first in only two Hausa/Fulani-speaking states, against five minority states, and secured the mandatory one-quarter of the total votes needed for the required national spread from five Hausa/Fulani-speaking states. Those who talk of the election of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as president as a scheme by the Hausa/Fulani are not sincere with themselves.

Besides, it is not the person of a president alone that determines who dominates a country. There are other factors, such as the presence of people from a given area in vital sectors of public life, such as the policy-making mechanism, bureaucracy, and the control of the economy, commerce, and industry in the life of the country.

I share the popular views that military rule is an aberration. I therefore regard anything arising from such a situation as an abnormality. It is precisely for that reason that I do not take the number of military men who ruled this country into my political arithmetic anytime I come to consider the number of people who ruled Nigeria.

Besides, nations do not attain greatness by producing their leaders based on where they come from. The case of the United States of America is a shining example. According to records, the first dozen or so presidents of the United States were from the same geographical area of the country. In fact, most of the presidents of that country were elected from that section. If the citizens of the United States think of their leaders in terms of the area they come from, the nation could not be what it is today. This is not to say that people from other parts of the nation should not aspire to be president of this country.

If we consider the situation in the oil-producing states, we would find it even more untellable. The area is the most unstable and volatile part of the country, and owes its peace and stability to the rest of the larger Nigerian family. It is common knowledge that the present oil-producing states in the country's minority areas were created through the collective efforts of Nigerians from non-oil-producing areas. The fragile nature of the polity in those states up to the present moment is known to all and sundry. (980 words)

Comprehension Questions

Answer the following questions by filling in the gaps without re-reading the passage.

1. Advocates of confederation want to_____
2. The two motives for agitating for a confederacy in Nigeria are_ _____and___

3. Confederation is not feasible because of the ___ Syndrome essential for survival of all
4. (a) Two electoral National presidents, according to the passage, are_____
   (b) The last president was elected mainly by___ _____states
5. Another factor that determines who dominates a country is___
   _____

6. What is an aberration, according to the passage?
7. Nations do not attain greatness by producing their leader from

8. The first dozen presidents from___came from (a)_____
9. The situation in an oil-producing state is

What is your score out of 10? We regard you as capable of reading at an average speed if you were able to complete the reading of the passage on Inefficacy of the Confederal System in 4 minutes and score 7 out of 10 on the comprehension, without going back to the passage to re-read it.

Cross-check your performance on this comprehension task at the end of the unit.



6.4 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that reading speed should vary according to the purpose of reading, the type of material and the time available.

Specifically, you have learnt:

- how to use **skimming and scanning** when reading at the fastest speed;
- how to locate names, headings, topics and specific information quickly;
- how to read suitable materials at an **average speed**;
- the relationship between reading speed and comprehension;
- why comprehension is more important than speed alone; and
- why an efficient reader should be able to adjust reading speed to different reading situations.

This unit is the first part of the total package that instructs you on how to read and comprehend at varying levels. The next unit will treat the **slowest reading speed**, which is particularly useful in study-type situations.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

You are given 3 minutes to read the passage below entitled ‘Classroom’ and answer the questions that follow, without re-reading the passage.

Classroom

- *Method of instruction. How is the material presented? How are the students required to learn? Some charter schools allow students to decide for themselves what and how they will learn on a given day; other schools are more teacher-centered.*
- *Classroom environment. How is the classroom managed? Positive and orderly classroom are the results of clear expectations, consistent consequences and genuine, frequent praise.*
- *Curriculum. Which curricula are used? How much time is spent on each subject? In general, effective curricula are content-rich and promote academic rigour.*
- *Testing and grading. What kinds of testing and grading procedures does the school use? Do students receive letter grades or a narrative? How are tests used? They should not rate only student performance; they also should gauge the quality of instruction.*
- *Homework. What is the school's philosophy on homework? How much is assigned?*

Support Services

- *Counselling. Does the school employ a counsellor? If so, what role does he or she play?*
- *Parent and Family services. Does the school provide programmes for families, such as parenting classes or continuing education?*
- *Is extended care available before or after school hours?*
- *Are breakfast and lunch offered?*

Co-Curricular

- *Special education. What, if any, special education services does the school provide?*
- *Title programmes. Some federally funded title programmes are funded by the state.*

Source: (August; 1999). Focus on the Family.

Now answer the following questions

1. What is the role assigned to students in this passage? __
2. What makes a classroom orderly?
3. What kind of curricula is being advocated? ____
4. What promotes learning according to the passage? ____
5. What are the possible grading systems that can be used according to the passage? _____
6. What roles are assigned to parents?_____



6.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note.* London: Edward Arnold. James, K., Jordan, R.R. & Matthews, A.J. (1988). *Listening-Comprehension and Note-Taking Course.* London: Collins ELT.

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6.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. Olu Leo Ezekiel regards Bola Ige's death as a great waste to humanity and expresses sympathy for his family.
2. *Bringing Up Boys* is described as a gold mine of wisdom for raising a son.
3. *Bringing Up Boys* is available as a hardcover book, audiocassettes and compact discs.
4. The court is presented as the last hope for conflict resolution.
5. A political "war of wit" between the National Assembly and the state governors is reported.
6. The extract states that boys are distinctively and instinctively different in some ways.
7. The extract on the political conflict presents concerns about political actions affecting the Southwest and discusses the consequences of political disputes.
8. (a) Dr James Dobson.
   (b) It refers to a student planner designed to help students organise their academic and personal activities.
9. Odua Abdulfatai expresses sympathy for Bola Ige's family and condemns the resort to violence.
10. The extract explains that boys have distinctive and instinctive characteristics and that their development should be properly guided.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Students may participate actively in deciding what and how they will learn in some schools.
2. Clear expectations, consistent consequences and genuine, frequent praise.
3. A content-rich curriculum that promotes academic rigour.
4. Effective instruction, an appropriate curriculum and a positive, orderly classroom environment promote learning.
5. Letter grades or narrative assessments.
6. Parents and families may participate in family programmes such as parenting classes or continuing education.

MODULE 3

Unit 1 Reading and Comprehending at Varying Speed Levels II
Unit 2 Reading for Vocabulary Development I
Unit 3 Reading for Vocabulary Development II
Unit 4 Vocabulary Development in Various Academic Contexts Part I
Unit 5 Vocabulary Development in Various Academic Contexts Part II

UNIT 1 READING AND COMPREHENDING AT VARYING SPEED LEVELS II

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcomes
1.3 Reading at a Study Speed Level
1.3.1 Note-Making from Books
1.3.2 Practice in Determining Study-Type Reading Speed
1.4 Summary
1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



1.1 Introduction

Welcome to the second part of **Reading and Comprehending at Varying Speed Levels**. In the previous unit, you learnt about reading at the fastest and average speed levels. I hope you remember the aspects discussed in that unit.

We said that reading at the fastest speed is needed when you want to locate information quickly or gain a general impression of a reading material. Reading at an average speed involves reading materials that are not particularly difficult, and that can be read with reasonable speed and comprehension.

In this unit, you will learn the slowest type of reading, which is reading in a study-type manner. Study-type reading requires greater concentration and attention to specific details that may need to be remembered, especially during examinations.

As you work through this unit, get your paper, pencil and dictionary ready. You will undertake a number of practice activities that will help you develop your study-reading skills.

When you need to study a textbook for an examination, is reading quickly enough? What else must you be able to do? Continue reading to find out...



1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify the steps to take in reading at study-type speed
- practice reading passages in a study-type reading speed manner
- make notes from reading passages
- determine your reading speed while reading with a study-type speed.



1.3 Reading at a Study Speed Level

This unit is a continuation of the last unit in module 2, which is devoted to reading at both the fastest and average speeds. The last reading speed level that will be discussed in this course is study reading speed.

As I mentioned earlier, the slowest reading speed is the study reading speed. This reading speed requires high concentration and close attention to specific details that must be remembered, possibly during examinations.

The first exercise that must be done, while undertaking study-type reading, is note-making- putting together the important points that you read. Can you still remember what we said in the previous units about the distinctions between note-taking and note-making? If you cannot remember, turn to the relevant unit. Have you been able to make the distinction between the two activities?

Let me assist you in doing so. Note-taking is a term we reserve for taking notes during lectures, speeches, or talks. Note-making is the process of jotting down the important points from textbooks, articles, reports, and handouts.

This distinction is important because the conditions under which you take notes from a lecture are different from those under which you make notes from a book. During a lecture, the speaker continues speaking, and you may have little opportunity to return to an earlier point. When working with a textbook, however, you can stop, reread a section and reorganise your notes.

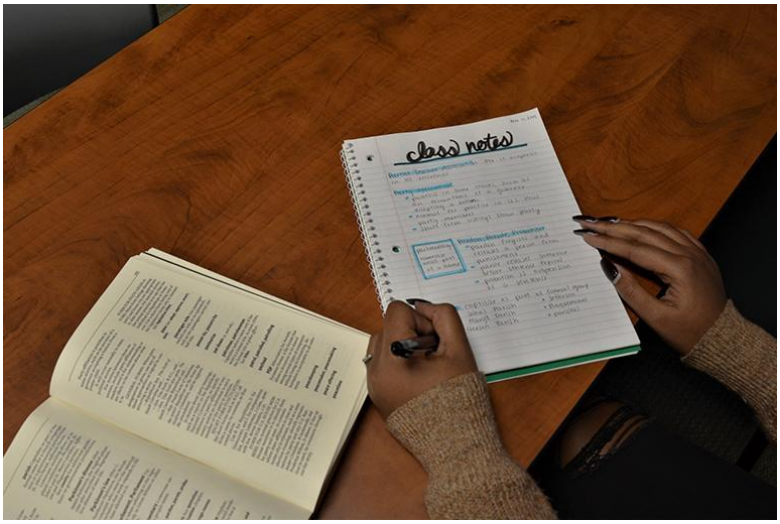


Figure 1.1: Note-making during study reading

The figure illustrates a common study-reading situation in which a learner reads a textbook and records the important points. Effective note-making helps the learner organise information for later revision and recall.

1.3.2 Note-Making from Books

Note-making from books is not the same as taking notes from lectures, although the two activities share some common elements.

What should you do before writing notes from a textbook? How can you identify the important points? Continue reading to find out...

The things that the two activities have in common are stated below.

1. You must, first of all, understand what the lecture or the textbook is saying before you start writing notes.
2. Pay attention to the headings and sub-headings of the lecture or the textbook. They can be very important in determining the major points. In most cases, the title often implies the major points that will be covered in the lectures or the reading material. This is not always the case, as I pointed out earlier. Sometimes, the title may be deceptive. It may not contain what is in the content of the lecture or the book.
3. Look for the signals in the lecture and the textbook that show that an important point or main point is about to be stated. Some of the signals are stated in the book.

Look! Important points are about to be made when you hear or see:

- firstly/first, secondly/second...
- the most important, more important, least important...
- this, therefore.., nevertheless...

- the major point...
- perhaps, the best of all
- it's worth remembering...
- consequently.../conversely
- moreover... furthermore... ...and many others...

4. Write down the major points as stated by the lecturer or the textbook. Having sorted out the major points of the lecture, the textbook or articles, you should write these points down. In the case of listening comprehension, you have to write the points down quickly, but in the case of making notes from texts, you have more time to write the points down.
5. Select, as you write down the points, the **words** or **phrases** that give maximum **information** about the major point. You should also avoid words and expressions that do not convey any meaning, except that they are needed to stick the notes together.
6. Show connections between the previous points put down as notes and the present ones. Connections can be shown by:

- leaving spaces between the first heading and the second
- underlining the major points that cut across
- conventional symbols such as ( )(=) (≠), and so on
- consistently numbering the points
- laying out the notes in a clear, fashionable, readable and attractive manner.

I think you can produce good notes from books. You will certainly do so if you follow the suggestions above.

Unlike note-taking from lectures, note-making from books can be revisited. You can read and reread the passage to ensure the correct points are noted, but in listening-comprehension note-taking, it is often difficult to get the lecturer to repeat the main points. In most cases, you find out that you cannot stop the lecturer when talking. However, in the case of note-taking from texts, you can always go back and re-read areas that are not clear to you.

Let us devote some time to practising how to make notes from the reading material.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
Read the passage titled 'Who Does What in Nigerian Agriculture' and form notes on the major points raised by the writer of the passage. Use your notes to answer the questions that follow. Use your dictionary to find the meaning of any difficult words you may come across in the passage.

Who Does What in Nigerian Agriculture
Having argued that Nigerian agriculture remains the backbone of the Nigerian nation, I would like to salute all Nigerian farmers, wherever they may be, for sustaining the nation despite the apparent neglect they have suffered over the years. The difficulties of Nigerian agriculture have arisen from poor policies and implementation strategies by

Nigerian elites, who generally lack self-confidence in their abilities and exhibit enormous corrupt tendencies. It is some of these politicians who now want to completely deny the enormous contributions our farmers have made to this nation over the decades. In their struggle for self-aggrandisement, these selfish elites have come up with fabricated lies about the economic status of the nation to the extent that they have to find someone to blame for what is largely their own failings. In the political furore of recent years, the Northern part of this country is being told, unashamedly, that it contributes nothing to the national economy. We have just established, without a doubt, the role of agriculture in the country's economy, well-being, and stability. In the remainder of this paper, I have sought to argue, with supporting statistics, how and why farmers in the North have remained the bulwark of agricultural production in the country.

Without doubt, the ecological zones that constitute the present Northern states (the accused of non-productivity) are the main sources of staple foods, animal proteins, and most of the raw materials for Nigeria's agro-based industries. The millions of peasant farmers and livestock herders in these ecological areas are the brains behind most of the food and raw materials produced to support Nigeria's needs over the years. Indeed, the export of groundnuts and cotton made its mark as a major foreign exchange earner for the country long before the discovery of oil in southern Nigeria. The significant difference between productivity through farming and 'productivity' through oil wells is often the missed point that, in agriculture, it is the sweat and toil of the farmer tending his crops and livestock that matter. The farmer, the herdsman, the fisherman and the logger all put in the labour and capital to produce the goods that dominate Nigeria's GDP.

Unlike agriculture, crude petroleum was not known by Nigerians until the European investor came with his capital, but most importantly, his technology. Even today, Nigerians are generally idle onlookers in this sector. They still do not understand the technological complexities of the oil industry, but nonetheless are happy to share in the natural underground bounty. This idle source of revenue has created a lazy Nigerian elite consumer, desperately wishing to acquire wealth without working for it. This is the calamity created by the so-called oil wealth, which Nigerians, irrespective of where they live, do not really work for.

Idle as oil revenue has always been, one cannot downplay its importance in the country's present political economy. One concedes that oil is a finite natural resource and that its exploration is fraught with appreciable danger to the earth's surface, especially where it is mined both onshore and offshore. These hazards must be part of an integrated plan for social and economic development of the areas where this mining is taking place. For example, the mines in the Jos Plateau benefited all Nigerians, but today the environmental degradation and damage to Plateau State's inhabitants are quite apparent. These lessons should be applied to the present oil fields.
It must be understood, however, that environmental degradation is not the exclusive consequence of oil exploration. An example was given of the Jos Plateau. In fact, the most extensive damage to the Nigerian environment results from agricultural activities,

which we desperately need to sustain the nation, but unfortunately take for granted in our national planning.
The intensity of farming and livestock production in the Northern Guinea Savanna and the Sahel areas of the country appears to be appreciated only by the amount of food produced and sold to Nigerians across the country. Little thought or concern is given to the short- and long-term negative consequences for the soils and vegetation cover in these intensely farmed and grazed areas. This attitude has, in the last twenty years, produced the harsh environmental conditions generally referred to as desert encroachment. These agricultural activities, vital as they are to our survival as a nation, have consequential hazards as serious as those which arise from oil exploration.
Source: NIGERIA: The State of the Nation: Arewa House

Answer the following questions on the passage you have just read. Use the notes you have made to answer the questions. Since the practice is in taking effective notes, you should not refer to the passage while answering the questions. Use the notes you have formed to answer the questions. After you have written the answers, turn to the discussion section immediately after the comprehension questions.

1. Give three reasons why Nigerian agriculture is facing difficulty……
2. According to the writer, why is the North the bulwark of agricultural production of the country? Give three reasons……
3. Give three arguments against oil as presented by the writer.
4. Why is environmental degradation not an exclusive consequence of oil? Give two reasons…….

Have you answered all four questions using the notes you have taken on the passage? If you have done so, then you are now qualified to study the discussion below:

Initially, you might have found the passage a bit difficult because of some words like:

Strategies:	efforts
Apparent:	seemingly
Aggrandisement:	elevation
Elites:	high class
Bulwark:	formidable force
Ecological zones:	land areas
Agro-based:	farm-based
Calamity:	woe
Hazards:	dangers
Encroachment:	intrusion

This may not pose much of a problem as you use context clues and your dictionary.

After you have read the passage with comprehension, you may then want to make notes on the major points raised by the writer. Compare your notes with mine as presented here. Note areas of agreement and disagreement between your notes and mine.

i. **Reasons for difficulty of agriculture**
   a. Bad policies and implementation strategies of Nigerian Elites
   b. Enormous corrupt tendencies of elites
   c. Fallacies regarding the economic status of the Nation and agriculture: not contribute national economy.

ii. **Justification to show farmers of the North as bulwark of national economy**
   a. North, the main source of staple food and animal proteins and raw materials for agro-allied industry.
   b. Groundnut, major foreign exchange earnings for long title.
   c. Produce goods that dominate the Nigerian GNP.

iii. **Arguments against oil industry**
   a. Idle source of revenue-creating lazy Nigerian elites consumer
   b. Wasting natural resource-exploration danger to the earth surface-environmental degradation.
   c. Create oil wealth-acquisition without working for it.

iv. **Environmental degradation**
   a. Not exclusive consequence of oil exploration.
   b. Mining in Jos Plateau damage the environment.
   c. Livestock and farming in the North-negative consequence on soils and vegetation cover to desert encroachment.

Are the notes you formed similar in many respects to mine? Check to see areas of difference and go back to the passage to be sure you understand better what to do.

You will realise that my notes are presented in consistent headings and sub-headings. The structure followed in the notes is presented in the box.

i. _____
(a)_____
(b)_____
(c)_____
ii. _____
(a)_____
(b)_____
(c)_____
iii. _____
(a)_____
(b)_____
(c)_____
iv. _____
(a)_____
(b)_____
(c)_____

Do you have this structure in your notes?

Remember, your notes must always follow a consistent pattern.
You have now learnt how note-making supports study reading. The next step is to determine whether you can read at an appropriate study speed while maintaining a high level of comprehension.

How can you determine whether your study-reading speed is appropriate? Continue reading to find out...

1.3.3 Practice in Determining Study-Type Reading Speed

In a slow-study-type reading, you should aim to read at least 200-300 words per minute. You should also ensure that you have a high level of comprehension while studying at this reading speed. At least, in a study on reading speed, your comprehension rate should be about 80-90% (James et al., 1979: 100 - 1). For a poor reader to achieve a comprehension rate of 80-90%, the reading speed will be as low as 60-125 words per minute.

The purpose of the exercise below is to help you determine your study-type reading speed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Read the passage on ‘Doing the Groundwork’ and perform the comprehension tasks that follow. Before you start reading, write down the time. When you end reading the passage, record the time you finish reading. Since you are expected to read 250 words per minute, this passage should not take you more than two

and a half minutes ($2^1/_2$ minutes). If you take more than that, you are still a slow reader. More practice is therefore needed.

2. After you finish reading the passage, turn to the comprehension questions that follow the passage. Attempt all the questions without turning to the passage. Record your comprehension rate. You are expected to attain at least an 80-90% comprehension rate, reading at 250 words per minute, at a study-type reading speed.

Check answers to the comprehension questions at the end of the unit.

Doing the Groundwork

Hosting a major sporting event on the African continent has often been considered more of a curse than an honour. Kenya was stripped of the 1995 African Cup of Nations after preparations were deemed inadequate, while Zimbabwe stumbled through the hosting of the All-Africa Games that same year.

But the Zimbabwe 2000 local organising committee, under the impressive leadership of tournament director Brian Harry, is determined to make the next Cup of Nations the best ever. With the tournament less than two years away, some important decisions had to be made by the visiting Confederation of African Football (CAF) delegation led by its president, Issa Hayatou. In particular, the organisers had to decide exactly which cities would host the tournament.

It's now a CAF requirement that a host nation provide four centres for the Cup of Nations. The Zimbabwe capital, Harare, will probably provide two, and the second city, Bulawayo, a third. When the decision was made in 1996 to grant Zimbabwe the tournament, several smaller cities made it clear they were keen to join the party. Zimbabwe is an ethnically divided country, so to avoid any accusations of regional bias, CAF was called in to take the decision out of the local organisers' hands. It seemed a no-lose situation, with both sides certain to be happy with the outcome.

Four centres hoped to win the approval of the CAF big-wigs- Mutare, Masvingo, Gweru and Kwekwe. They were each given the chance to present their bids and, in particular, explain exactly what they planned to do to bring their stadiums up to international specifications.

From an early stage, it was clear that most, if not all, of the aspiring hosts had severely underestimated the size of the task. Mutare, for example, had budgeted about US$300,000 for the renovation of the local stadium. In truth, it would probably need at least three times that amount. As the delegation passed from one town to another, always lavishly entertained, always treated with the reverence usually reserved

for royalty, something didn't seem quite right. The lack of realism at the heart of the bids raised several questions, although until we arrived at our third destination, Gweru, those questions remained unasked.

It was in Gweru that reality finally sank in. As the town councillors proudly explained their plans for a new stadium to be built from scratch, they added with a flourish that there would be seating for forty members of the press. "But", queried the CAF delegation, "our minimum requirement is that there must be space for at least two hundred journalists."

Source: BBC Focus on Africa

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Answer these questions to determine your study-type reading rate.
The comprehension questions are on the passage you have just finished reading. Fill in the gaps.

1. (a).....was stripped off of African nations cup after (b)……was deem (c)……...
2. (d)… .....was planning to host the 2000 African cup.
3. The tournament is less than (e)…… ….....away.
4. CAF'S requirement is that a host nation provide (f)…..... for the cup of nation
5. Who took the hosting centers decisions? (g)…… …….
6. The host have (h).....the size of the task.
7. In Gweru a (i)…….was to be built from the (j)……..……...
8. In CAF's estimation a minimum requirement is that a space is created for (k)……..……..journalists instead of the (l)… .....number booked for in Gweru.

Have you finished answering the comprehension questions? What are the problems you faced? What is your reading speed?

How many minutes did it take you to read the passage? Are you within the 250 words per minute study reading speed range? These are some of the questions that should agitate your mind as you complete this exercise. If you still find out that your reading speed is **slow**, do not be discouraged. This means you must make constant reading a habit. Practice makes perfect.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Go through the passage 'Doing the Groundwork' again and write down the **words** or **expressions** used by the writer to draw your attention to a major point. Cross-check your answer with the ones given in the box after you have attempted the exercise.

Calling attention to an important point

But Zimbabwe...
Some important decisions... It is now a CAF...
From an early stage... It is clear that most... In truth...
It was in Gweru... Finally...
But queried the CAF delegation.

You are advised to always look for the expressions that call attention to an important point in a passage. They make your comprehension task less difficult.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Read the passage below using a study-type reading speed. Since the passage is about 235 words, it should not take you more than one minute to read. After you have finished reading, answer the comprehension questions that follow without re-reading the text. Remember, you have only one minute to read the passage.

Consequences of Parent-Child Separation

Research confirms that the consequences of any parent-child separation can be severe. In one study of fathers whose jobs required them to be away from their families for long periods of time, the children tended to experience numerous negative reactions, including anger, rejection, depression, low self-esteem and, commonly, a decline in school performance.

Some of those conclusions were presented at a White House conference at which I spoke a few years ago. The other speaker was Dr. Armand Nicholi, professor of psychiatry at Harvard University. Dr. Nicholi explained how family circumstances that make parents inaccessible to their children produce some of the same effects as divorce.

Most importantly, Dr Nicholi stressed the undeniable link between the interruption of the parent-child relationship and the escalation of psychiatric problems we were then seeing and that are more pronounced today. If the number of dysfunctional families and absentee parents continued to escalate, he said, serious national health problems were inevitable.

In short, even when parent-child separation occurs for valid reasons in a loving home, a boy or girl frequently interprets parental departure as evidence of rejection. If we have any choice in the matter, we should not put them through that painful experience. (235 words).

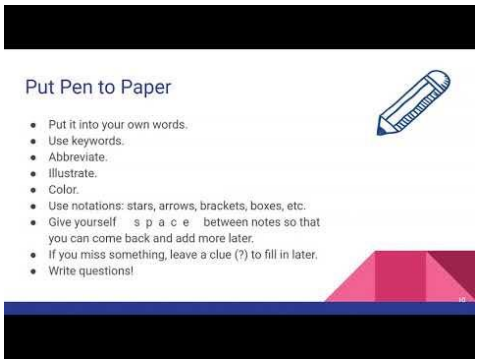
Source: Focus on the Family. Colorado Springs Co. (80920 -1051).

Comprehension Questions

1. Consequences of parent-child separation, according to the passage are (a)_____.
2. List three things children experience when their parents separate from them for a long time.
   (b) ___(c)___(d)
3. One of the speakers in the passage is a professor of (e) _
4. There is a link between (f)_and (g)_____
5. Escalation of parent-child separation will lead to serious (h) __
6. The stand of the writer of the passage is that we should not
   (i) ___

Before watching the video, review the note-making strategies and study-reading techniques discussed in this section. As you watch, pay attention to how the reader identifies important information, organises ideas and checks comprehension. Click on the link/image or scan the QR code to access the video.

https://youtu.be/ES6qabpk4ZU



1.5 Summary

This unit has provided you with opportunities to practise:

- reading at a **study speed level**, which is the slowest type of reading;
- distinguishing between **note-taking and note-making**;
- making notes from books and other reading materials;
- identifying headings, subheadings and signals of important points;
- selecting words and phrases that convey maximum information;
- showing connections between ideas in your notes;
- determining your study-type reading speed;
- measuring your comprehension rate; and
- identifying expressions that draw attention to important points in a passage.

It is hoped that you will increase your reading speed as you continue with this course. Remember, however, that **speed and accuracy are the watchwords**. Your aim should be to read efficiently while maintaining a high level of comprehension.



1.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note.* London: Edward Arnold. James, K., Jordan, R.R. & Matthews, A.J. (1988). *Listening-Comprehension and Note-Taking Course.* London: Collins ELT.

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1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

The following points represent the major ideas that should appear in a learner's notes:

Nigerian Agriculture

- Agriculture remains an important foundation of the Nigerian economy.
- Nigerian farmers contribute significantly to national food production and economic stability.

Challenges Facing Agriculture

- Poor government policies.
- Poor implementation strategies.
- Political and elite attitudes towards agriculture.

Contribution of Northern Agriculture

- Northern ecological zones produce staple foods.
- They provide animal protein.
- They supply raw materials for agro-based industries.
- Groundnuts and cotton were major foreign exchange earners before the discovery of oil.
- Farmers, herders, fishermen and loggers contribute labour and capital to production.

Oil Industry

- Oil requires external capital and technology.
- Oil is a wasting natural resource.
- Oil exploration can cause environmental damage.
- Dependence on oil revenue can discourage productive economic activity.

Environmental Degradation

- Oil exploration contributes to environmental degradation.
- Mining activities caused environmental damage in areas such as Jos, Plateau State.
- Agriculture can also cause serious environmental degradation.
- Intensive farming and livestock production contribute to soil and vegetation degradation.
- Desert encroachment is one consequence.

Answers to the Questions

1. Nigerian agriculture is facing difficulties because of poor policies, poor implementation strategies and the attitudes of political elites.
2. The North is described as a bulwark of agricultural production because it supplies staple foods, animal protein and raw materials for agro-based industries.
3. The writer argues that oil is a wasting resource, its exploration can cause environmental damage, and dependence on oil revenue can encourage unproductive attitudes.
4. Environmental degradation is not caused exclusively by oil because mining and agricultural activities can both damage the environment. Intensive farming and livestock production can contribute to soil degradation and desert encroachment.

Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise 3

The original material supplied does not include the actual comprehension questions for **"Doing the Groundwork"**. Therefore, answers should not be invented.

For the reading-speed component, learners should calculate their performance using:

Reading Speed = Number of Words ÷ Time Taken in Minutes

For example, if a learner reads 625 words in 2.5 minutes:

625 ÷ 2.5 = 250 words per minute

The learner should then compare the result with the target study-reading speed and assess whether the comprehension score meets the expected level.

Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Important expressions include:

- But Zimbabwe...
- Some important decisions...
- It is now a CAF requirement...
- From an early stage...
- It was clear that most...
- In truth...
- It was in Gweru...
- Finally...
- But, queried the CAF delegation...

These expressions signal that an important development, explanation, contrast or conclusion is about to appear.

UNIT 2 READING FOR VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT: PART 1

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Developing Word Power
2.4 Recipe for Vocabulary Development
2.5 Finding Meanings of Words by Word Attack
2.6 Finding Meanings of Words by Searching Round the Passage
2.7 Summary
2.8 References/Further Reading/Web Sources



2.1 Introduction

Words are everywhere. You use them when you speak, listen, read, write, ask questions, express your ideas, and communicate with other people. The more words you know and can use correctly, the easier it becomes to communicate effectively.

Think about the last time you came across a difficult word while reading. Did you immediately reach for a dictionary, skip the word, or try to work out its meaning from the sentence? Knowing how to deal with unfamiliar words is an important reading skill, especially when you are studying independently.

In this unit, you will begin to develop your **word power**, that is, your ability to recognise, understand and use a growing range of English words. You will learn practical ways of increasing your vocabulary through regular reading and by recording new words in context.

You will also learn that you do not have to depend on the dictionary every time you meet an unfamiliar word. Sometimes, the word itself gives you useful clues. At other times, the words and ideas surrounding it in a passage can help you work out its meaning.

As you work through this unit, you will have opportunities to test your existing vocabulary, discover new words, practise finding meanings from context, and develop habits that can strengthen your vocabulary over time. So, get your notebook and dictionary ready, and let us begin the journey towards becoming a more confident reader.

I hope that by the end of the units, you will be fully equipped to multiply your vocabulary powerhouse tremendously.



2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the importance of vocabulary development in effective communication;
- describe practical ways of developing your word power;
- apply word-attack strategies to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words;
- use contextual clues in a passage to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.



2.3 Developing Word Power

To increase your word power in English is to be proficient in the language. If you have a limited vocabulary, you will not read, speak, or write English well. Specifically, you will find reading with a thorough understanding difficult. You need English words to receive information from the texts and to produce and convey information. An inadequate store of vocabulary items can lead to your failure in examinations. During examinations, you may be short of words and expressions to use. You may also be unable to read, comprehend, summarise or write well.

Do you know what?

You can increase your word power by reading extensively. In fact, no day should go by without you gaining some new words. The great advantage of gaining new words daily is revealed in this simple poem in the next section.



2.4 Recipe for Vocabulary Development

One of the simplest ways to develop your vocabulary is to make a conscious effort to learn new words every day. Small, consistent efforts can produce impressive results over time.

Consider the following:

Gain one word a day, and you have 365 words a year.
Gain two words a day, and 730 words become yours in a year.
If you gain three words a day, you are expecting 1095 words a year. Four words a day gives you 1460 a year.

Don't try to gain five words a day, or else you'll find yourself 1825 words richer at the end of the year.

If you want to increase your word power, open up a reading diary today and record in context the new words you have gained that day. Wise men bank their words in a reading diary; it yields interest.



Figure 2.1: Developing Word Power Through Regular Reading

The figure shows that vocabulary development is a continuous process rather than a one-time activity. As you read, you encounter unfamiliar words, work out their meanings from the context, record useful words and practise using them. The more regularly you follow this process, the larger and more useful your vocabulary becomes.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Before we go any further in this unit, let's determine your entry vocabulary power with a simple exercise. In this exercise, you are expected to read these short passages and choose the best answer to complete the text from the four options given. Indicate the answer in the box at the right hand/corner of the paper. The word to focus on in the exercise is in bold letters.

Choose the alternative you think best gives the meaning of the underlined word and fits into the context.

1. The man was sure of his **acuity**
a. keeness
b. bitterness
c. dishonesty
d. skillfulness □

2. He calls the boy a mere **fritter**
a. shatter
b. Waste bag
c. foolish talker
d. bungle □

3. In this day and age, all talk of a defensive nuclear war is **preposterous,** since nobody is going to survive it.

a. unreasonable
b. coincidental
c. realistic
d. wasteful □

4. Politicians are often cautioned to avoid making **provocative** statements.
a. talkative
b. inciting
c. contradictory
d. persuasive □

5. Bala invariably turns in good assignments but he **procrastinates** a lot.
a. delays
b. tells lies
c. argues
d. tries to persuade □

6. Many people consider **celibacy** unsuited to African culture.
a. profligacy
b. promiscuity
c. remaining unmarried
d. drunkenness □
7. Danladi is a rather **loquacious** fellow

a. smooth and pleasant
b. good at languages
c. talkative
d. uninspiring □

8. Our strategy is to **adapt** to the new situation.

a. adopt
b. adhere
c adjust
d. admit □

9. Some local brewers used to describe it as **illicit.**

a. illegitimate
b. unlawful
c. prohibited
d. unlicensed □

10. We have **severed** our relationship with the opposing party.
a. strengthened
b. renewed
c. tidied up
d. broken off □

11. The prospects are rather **ominous**: there is no joking about it.
a. gloomy
b. attractive
c. tragic
d. promising □

12. The man **concocts** an excuse for not attending the party.
a. hides
b. defies
c. deciphers
d. makes-up □

13. The argument ended in **recrimination**.
a. diversion
b. re-dedication
c. mishandling
d. counter-charge □

14. The objects are **memorabilia** from the war days

a. tribute
b. memory device
c. worthy of remembering
d. meditation. □

15. The death of Musa is **admonitory** to drug addicts.

a. tricky
b. fearful
c. high-handed
d. a warning □

16. Many of his lectures are **esoteric**

a. accident
b. foreign
c. difficult
d. out of place □

17. The Nigerian presidential system is an **analogue** of the American system.

a. something identical
b. something similar
c. something related
d. detailed summary □

18. The Nigerian economy has been most **resilient** in the context of international economic fluctuation.
a. vulnerable
b. enduring
c. fragmented
d. dynamic □

19. Investment in uranium exploitation can be **hazardous**.
a. doubtful
b. handy
c. unprotected
d. risky □
Source: Olaofe. I.A. 1993. Tamaza Publishing Co., Zaria.

Check your answers before continuing. Your score is not meant to discourage you. It simply gives you an indication of your present vocabulary level and shows where you may need more practice.

Remember, vocabulary development is a continuous process. Even a learner with a large vocabulary can continue to discover new words through reading.

Do You Still Turn to the Dictionary Every Second? Yes, let me confess to you. A dictionary is good, but it should be the last resort. One way to increase your word power is to guess the meaning of a word from the context. Any word whose meaning you are able to figure out on your own without turning to the dictionary or asking somebody else, you will never forget. There are a number of ways you can deduce the meaning of a word from the context. The first one to discuss and practise is word attack.

2.5 Finding Meanings of Words by Word Attack

When you come across a long or unfamiliar word, do not immediately assume that you must consult the dictionary. Sometimes, you can work out its meaning by looking closely at the different parts that make up the word.

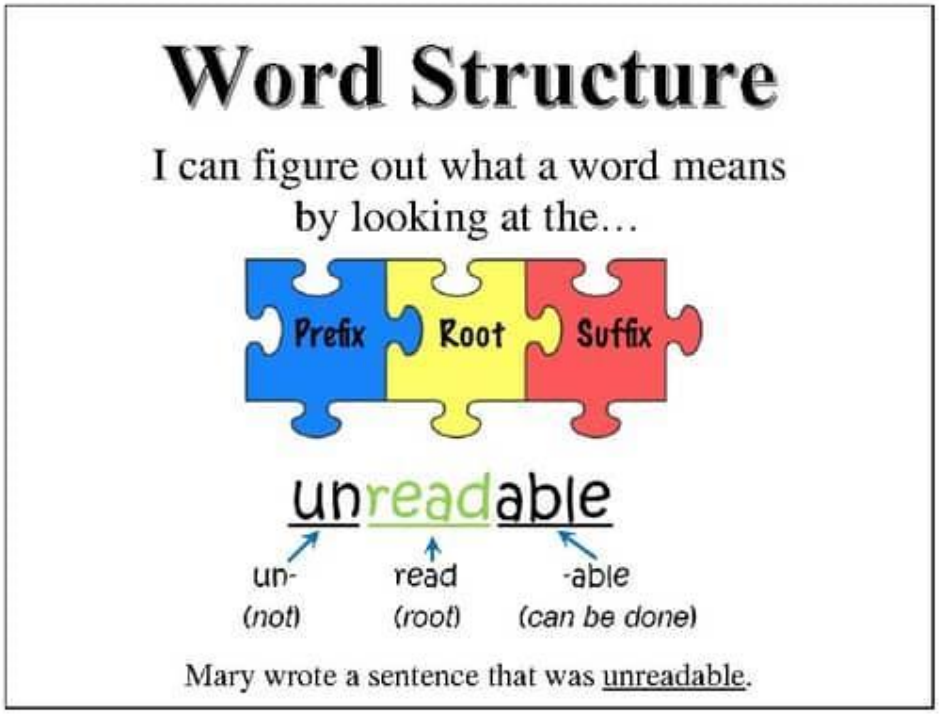

Figure 2.2: Using Word Parts to Determine Meaning

You can attack a seemingly long and difficult word by breaking it into its divisible parts, such as prefixes (attachments to a word that come before the root of the word); root (the core or the main part of the word) and suffixes (attachments after the root or main part of the word). You can find the meaning of each component and join them at the end to deduce the actual meaning of the word.

The UN in Sudan

Constantly threatened by war, air attacks and incursions by government armed militias from neighbouring Arab tribes, the Nuba are past masters at making the best of things. Everything is recycled; following air raids, pieces of bomb fragments immediately find their way onto the market, and then to the blacksmiths to be converted into knives and agricultural tools. Some of the locals joke that it is only the air raids that stand between them and the Stone Age.

The Nuba are faced with a growing dilemma; they are currently suffering from Khartoum's blockade on relief and desperately need more food, but unfettered UN access could undermine their way of life. It is ironic that the help so desperately needed could prove to be their undoing. Father Kizido, a Catholic missionary who has long worked in the area, points out that isolation is a heavy burden, but I don't think the solution lies in completely opening up to the outside world. I hope the Nuba will be clever enough to strike a balance. The big danger will come if the UN starts dumping food and upsetting traditional production techniques, and creates dependency as they have in South Sudan, where round -the-clock air-drops have become a way of life.

However, even if the UN humanitarian mission is given the go-ahead, the seemingly intractable political and military problems that underlie the starvation will still remain. The Nuba are still caught in the middle of a long-running conflict, which the international community is only now beginning to take seriously. Their leader fears that a quick-fix solution will be imposed on the margins of either side in a divided nation. A workable peace settlement that satisfies the diverse interests of the Nuba and other minorities, as well as the Southerners, would appear to be as distant as it is dim.

Source: *BBC Focus on Africa.*

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Find the meaning of the underlined words in the passage titled 'The UN and Sudan' by breaking them into their component parts and joining the meaning of the parts together to obtain the overall meaning of the words. The words to attack this way are listed below.

Complete the exercise before turning to the discussion that follows.

(1)	incursions	(8)	round-the-clock
(2)	blockade	(9)	humanitarian
(3)	unfettered	(10)	intractable
(4)	undermine	(11)	starvation
(5)	desperately	(12)	long-running
(6)	undoing		

Have you completed the exercise? Turn to the discussion below if you have done so.

Also, note that not all English words can be subjected to the word attack process of deducing meanings. You discover that some words are more prone to this kind of way of finding meaning than others. Breaking the words listed in exercise 2 yields the following components. From the smaller units of the words, the meaning of the entire word can be deduced.

Word	Parts	Meaning
unfettered	un + fettered	not restricted or restrained
undermine	under + mine	weaken or reduce gradually
desperately	desperate + ly	in a very serious or urgent manner
undoing	un + doing	the act or result of causing one's failure or downfall
dependency	depend + ency	a state of relying on something or someone
humanitarian	human + itarian	concerned with human welfare
intractable	in + tractable	difficult to control, manage or solve
starvation	starve + ation	extreme lack of food or severe hunger
long-running	long + running	continuing for a long period

The examples show that breaking unfamiliar words into smaller parts can provide useful clues to their meanings. However, always check whether the meaning you obtain fits the context in which the word appears.

Remember: word attack is a strategy for making an informed guess. It does not replace the dictionary when you need an exact definition.

Of course, even though this is not the only way to determine the meanings of words, it is one of the ways. You make the words easier to find their meanings when you break them into smaller, meaningful components.

2.6 Finding Meanings of Words by Searching Round the Passage

Many a time, you find the meaning of words by looking at the surroundings of the words in the passage. If you look at some words before, after, above or below the word in the passage, you may find the meaning of the popular word that is difficult for you. That is, some of the words or expressions surrounding the word that you find difficult may give you clues to its meaning. Again, let us practice this.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Read the passage titled 'Burying the Past'. Pay particular attention to all the words in bold letters. Use clues from the surrounding parts of the words to determine the meaning of the words. First, suggest the clues, then give the meanings of the words as brought out by the clues. Remember, your meanings must fit into the passage.
Use the table below to bring out the answers to this exercise.

Words	Clues from the passage that suggest meaning	The meaning of the words

Burying The Past

It seems as if Africa's snoring giant has woken up from deep slumber. With General Abdulsalam Abubakar's assumption of power in June, following the death of military head of state Sani Abacha, the atmosphere in Nigeria has lightened perceptibly.

***Paradoxically, the Renaissance** has sprung from death. Not simply Abacha's, but that of Moshood Abiola, the man believed by many to have won the annulled presidential election of June 12, 1993. While millions mourned his death following a fatal heart attack in prison in July 1998, many felt that it had somehow closed a chapter in the country's history, allowing the possibility of a fresh beginning.*

Some things have certainly changed. The new general appears to be a softer incarnation of the standard model Nigerian leader. He is prepared to listen, to accommodate differing opinions. He even smiles. But he is still a general, and the military fatigues remain the same shade of khaki. The giant may be stirring, but things will have to change an awful lot more -and irrevocably -before it rises.

One of Abubakar's first actions after boosting his popularity by freeing a number of political prisoners was to postpone the handover of power to civilian rule, which had been scheduled for October this year. He replaced Abacha's promise with a new one of his own. Oh dear, business as usual then…. Promises are exceedingly cheap in Nigeria, especially if they fall from the mouth of a head of state. Generals Muhammadu Buhari and Ibrahim Babangida made them and broke them. Many people, though, have accepted Abubakar's sincerity about the coming of a seismic political change, opting to give him the benefit of the doubt. But then again, they have no choice. The handover will now involve a series of elections culminating in a presidential poll on February 27, 1999.

Despite the caution and the misgivings, there is a palpable air of optimism. People are getting used to saying what they think publicly, without expecting a policeman to cart them off to prison. The media is also pushing the boundaries of freedom of speech. If a journalist wants to call a former head of state a swindler who brought the country to the brink of ruin, he or she is free to do so.

There is a sense in which Abubakar and his Provisional Ruling Council are genuinely trying to implement changes. He has started building bridges across the geopolitical

divide, inviting the mainly Lagos-based pro-democracy activists to the capital, Abuja, to hear what they have to say. The group spearheading this agitation, the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO), has grudgingly accepted the transition timetable. Abubakar has restored diplomatic relations with Canada, re-established air links with Britain and the United States, and earned Nigeria the goodwill of the international community.
An Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has been set up, with both party and voter registration beginning in earnest. So far, more than 100 political associations have been jostling for recognition. And Scores of politicians have been ***swarming*** *around Abuja. There's a real buzz.*

One of the main reasons for Abubakar's popularity, it seems, is that he happens not to be Abacha, who is now openly and roundly reviled. According to Rasheed Gbadamosi, the recently installed Minister for National Planning in Abubakar's new cabinet, the current military regime is different from those who ***wielded*** *power in the last four or five years. They thought they had a monopoly on everything. I think we are now enjoying a breath of fresh air. Of Course, someone with a smart new job is likely to say such flattering things, but it is a sentiment that echoes through many quarters.*

Source: BBC Focus on Africa (1998)

The list of words whose meanings are to be formed is given below:

1.	slumber	10.	cart
2.	paradoxically	11.	swindler
3.	renaissance	12.	geo-political divide
4.	fatal	13.	agitation
5.	incarnation	14.	jostling
6.	boosting	15.	swanning
7.	seismic	16.	wielded
8.	palpable	17.	sentiment
9.	optimism		

Do not turn to the discussion below until you have completed the exercise. You will be doing yourself no good by reading the discussion before you attempt the exercise. The exercise is meant to make you learn how to do it. The discussion is merely to let you know how well you have done.

Now that you have completed the exercise, read the discussion.

I think you will agree with me that you can use clues (or suggestions) given in the passage to determine the meanings of the words of familiar words.

Words	Clues	Meaning

Slumber	Snoring in the previous Sentence **Woken up**	Sleep
Paradoxically	The words death and sprung do not agree they contradict	Ironically
Renaissance	The word sprung from death suggests coming to life	Rebirth
Fatal	The words **mourned his death** suggest something **fatal**	Deadly
Incarnation	The words change in the second line to the top, the new general in the previous line suggest **newness**	New birth
Boosting	The word **popularity** and the many things done by Abubakar	Increasing
Seismic	The word political change unprepared for	Sudden
Palpable	The words **caution** and misgivings in the previous line suggest doubt	Probable
Optimism	The doubt expression earlier on is being changed, where the word is used	Brightness
Cart	The expression of going to prison shows they were thrown	Put, or cast
Swindler	The expression brought the country on the brink of ruin suggests a doubtful leader	Trickster
Geo-political divide	The expression building bridges across suggests a gap	Gap caused by politics and location
Agitation	Inviting people to Abuja to hear what they have to say suggests pressure	Pressure
Jostling	More than one hundred political associations, obviously, they must be struggling, since there are many	Struggling
Swarming	Scores of politicians… there's lot of buzz	Noisily roaming round
Wielded	Military regime that… holds to power in the last four years	Forcefully controlled

Sentiment	Saying that is echoed	Feeling

To find meaning of words, I advise you to always search round the words. Sometimes, the idea, the other words, expression or illustration given before or after the words you are finding the meanings, may give you clues to the meanings of such words. Practise this; you will see that it works.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Read the passage below and use the methods taught in this unit to find the meanings of the words that are written in bold letters in the passage. Write out the meaning in the space provided.

I am deeply committed to real reconciliation with justice for all, and to peaceful change to a more just and open South African society, to which the wonderful riches and wealth of our country will be shared more equitably. I write to you, Sir, to say with all the eloquence I can command that the security police are being given more draconian power to do virtually as they please without being accountable to the courts of our land, courts which have a splendid reputation throughout the world for fairness and justice. That is why we have called, and continue to call, for the release of all detainees or that they be brought before the courts where they should be punished if they have been guilty of indictable offences.

There is much disquiet in our land that people can be held for such long periods in detention and then often either released without being charged or, when charged, usually acquitted; but this does not free them from police harassment. Though declared innocent by the courts, they are often punished by being banned, placed under house arrest, or immediately re-detained. How long can a people bear such blatant injustice and suffering? Much of the White community, by and large, with all its prosperity, its privilege, its beautiful homes, its servants, its leisure, is bogged down by the fear and sense of insecurity. And this will remain the case until South Africans of all races are free.

Freedom is indivisible. The whites in this land will not be free until all sections of our community are genuinely free. Then we will have a security that does not require such astronomical sums to maintain, huge funds which could have been used in far more creative and profitable ways for the good of our whole community, demonstrating, as it will, that people of different races can live amicably together. We need one another, and Blacks have tried to assure Whites that they don't want to drive them into the sea. How long can they go on giving these assurances and have them thrown back in their faces with contempt?

Source: Desmond Tutu's Hope and Sufferings. Kenton College Press (1983)

Write out the meanings of the words as used in the passage in the space provided below.

1. reconciliation
2. equitably____

3. eloquence___
4. draconian___
5. splendid_____
6. indictable___
7. disquiet_____
8. detention____
9. harassment__
10. blatant
11. hagridden___
12. indivisible___
13. astronomical_
14. amicably____
15. assure_



2.7 Summary

This unit has introduced you to practical ways to develop your vocabulary and discover the meanings of unfamiliar words.

You have learnt that:

- Vocabulary development is important for effective listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- Regular and extensive reading is one of the best ways to increase your word power;
- keeping a reading diary can help you record, review and use new words;
- unfamiliar words can sometimes be understood by breaking them into meaningful parts such as prefixes, roots and suffixes;
- The **word-attack strategy** can help you make an informed guess about the meaning of a difficult word;
- **contextual clues** can help you determine the meaning of unfamiliar words by examining the words and sentences surrounding them; and
- The dictionary remains useful, but you should first try to determine the meaning from the word itself and its context.

Developing vocabulary is a gradual process. The more you read and practise these strategies, the more words you will recognise, understand and use confidently.



2.8 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 3 READING FOR VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT: PART II

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Learning Outcomes
3.3 Finding Meanings of Words by Identifying Lexical Familiarisation
3.4 Discussion on the Passage "Nigeria's Past and Enviable Position"
3.5 Finding Meanings of Words by Using Your Past Experiences
3.6 Discussion on the Passage "The Rich and the Poor"
3.7 Finding Meanings of Words from a Passage by Using Your Dictionary
3.8 What a Dictionary Can Provide You
3.9 Summary
3.10 References/Further Reading/Web Sources



3.1 Introduction

Welcome back! In the previous unit, you learned that you do not always need to reach for your dictionary whenever you come across an unfamiliar word. You learned how to use Word Attack and how to **search around a passage for clues** to discover the meanings of unfamiliar words.

You may have already started applying these strategies in your reading. If you have, you are doing well. However, there are still other useful ways of working out the meanings of unfamiliar words without immediately consulting a dictionary.

In this unit, you will learn three additional strategies. First, you will learn how to identify the meanings of words through **lexical familiarisation**, that is, by looking at other words in the passage that are related to the unfamiliar word. Next, you will learn how your **past experiences and knowledge** can help you determine a word's meaning. Finally, you will learn how to use a **dictionary effectively** when other strategies do not provide enough information.

As you work through the unit, do not simply read the explanations. Stop occasionally, think about the words you encounter in your everyday reading, and try to apply each strategy.

Pause for a Moment and Consider

When you come across an unfamiliar word while reading, what do you normally do first?

- Do you immediately consult a dictionary?

- Do you read the sentence again?
- Do you look at the words surrounding the unfamiliar word?
- Do you try to connect the word with something you already know?

There is no need to worry if you have always depended on your dictionary. By the end of this unit, you will have more strategies at your disposal.

Continue reading to find out how these strategies work.



3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain how lexical familiarisation can help in determining the meaning of unfamiliar words;
- use past experiences and background knowledge to infer the meanings of unfamiliar words;
- use a dictionary effectively to determine the meanings and other features of unfamiliar words.



3.3 Finding Meanings of Words by Identifying Lexical Familiarisation

Have you ever come across a difficult word in a passage but noticed that the words around it seemed familiar? Those familiar words may actually provide the clue you need. What do we mean by lexical familiarisation? By lexical familiarisation, we mean words that are similar, related, or familiar to the words that we are trying to determine their meanings.

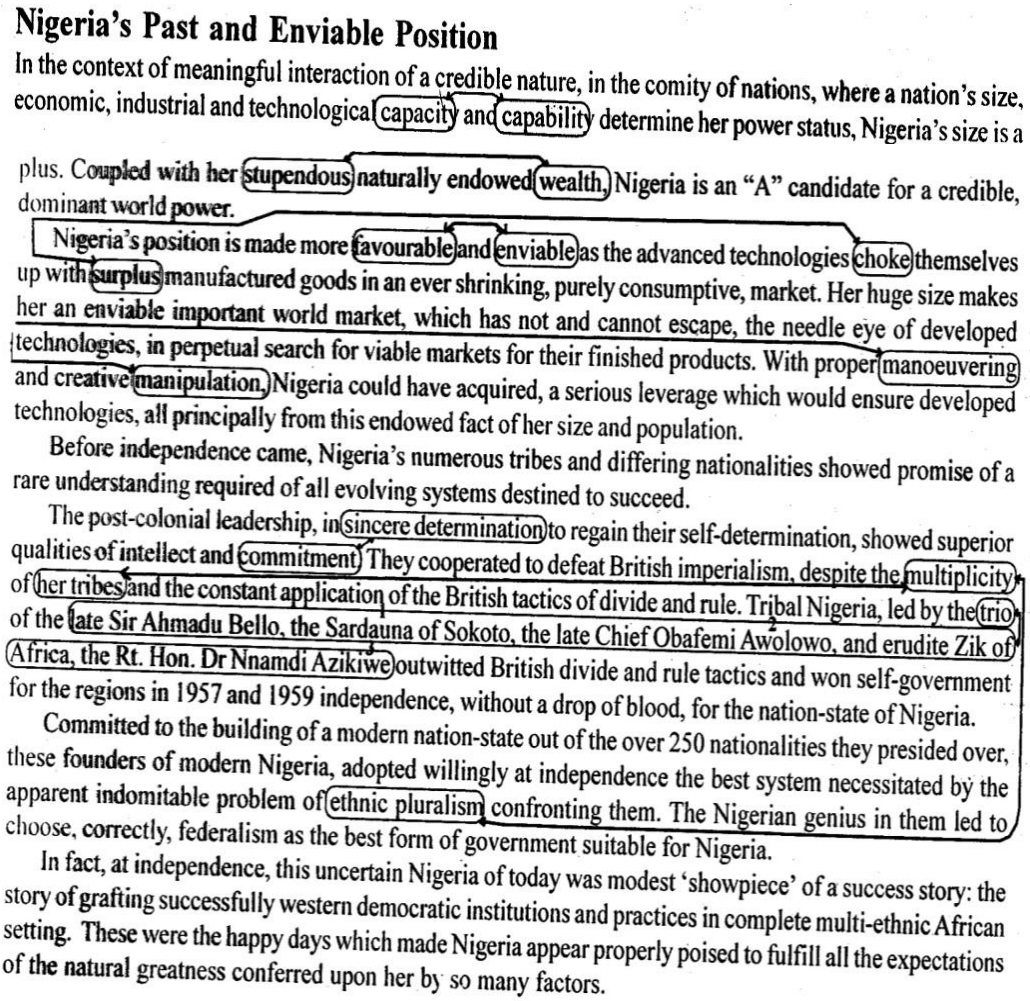
Writers, in an attempt to give the reader sufficient understanding of the meaning of a newly introduced word, supply some words around the new word that are related or belong to the same field or family as the new word. Lexical familiarisation strategy is a deliberate intention on the part of the writer to give the reader sufficient words that will lead to sufficient understanding of the meaning of the newly introduced term, in order to enable the reader to continue to read the text with confidence.

Let's practise this using a real passage.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Go through the passage titled 'Nigeria's Past and Enviable Position'. Use the clues supplied through the bubbles and arrows presented in the passage to derive the meanings of the following words. In most cases, the words that are joined together by arrows are related. Use their relationship to find the meanings of the words. Here is the list of the words.

1. Capability___
2. Stupendous__
3. Enviable____
4. Choke_
5. Maneuverin__
6. Commitment_
7. Trio___
8. Ethnic Pluralism____



Nigeria's Past and Enviable Position

In the context of meaningful interaction of a credible nature, in the comity of nations, where a nation's size, economic, industrial and technological capacity and capability determine her power status, Nigeria's size is a plus. Coupled with her stupendous naturally endowed wealth, Nigeria is an "A" candidate for a credible, dominant world power.

Nigeria's position is made more favourable and enviable as the advanced technologies choke themselves up with surplus manufactured goods in an ever shrinking, purely consumptive, market. Her huge size makes her an enviable important world market, which has not and cannot escape, the needle eye of developed technologies, in perpetual search for viable markets for their finished products. With proper manoeuvering and creative manipulation, Nigeria could have acquired, a serious leverage which would ensure developed technologies, all principally from this endowed fact of her size and population.

Before independence came, Nigeria's numerous tribes and differing nationalities showed promise of a rare understanding required of all evolving systems destined to succeed.

The post-colonial leadership, in sincere determination to regain their self-determination, showed superior qualities of intellect and commitment. They cooperated to defeat British imperialism, despite the multiplicity of her tribes and the constant application of the British tactics of divide and rule. Tribal Nigeria, led by the trio of the late Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and erudite Zik of Africa, the Rt. Hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe outwitted British divide and rule tactics and won self-government for the regions in 1957 and 1959 independence, without a drop of blood, for the nation-state of Nigeria.

Committed to the building of a modern nation-state out of the over 250 nationalities they presided over, these founders of modern Nigeria, adopted willingly at independence the best system necessitated by the apparent indomitable problem of ethnic pluralism confronting them. The Nigerian genius in them led to choose, correctly, federalism as the best form of government suitable for Nigeria.

In fact, at independence, this uncertain Nigeria of today was modest 'showpiece' of a success story: the story of grafting successfully western democratic institutions and practices in complete multi-ethnic African setting. These were the happy days which made Nigeria appear properly poised to fulfill all the expectations of the natural greatness conferred upon her by so many factors.

Source: ***NIGERIA: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward.*** **Kaduna Arewa House.**

You have just 15 minutes for this exercise. Do not turn to the discussion below until you have completed the exercise.

Have you completed the exercise? If so, turn to the discussion below.

The relationship between familiar and unfamiliar words can make it easier to infer meaning from a passage. The figure below illustrates how surrounding words can provide clues to an unfamiliar word.

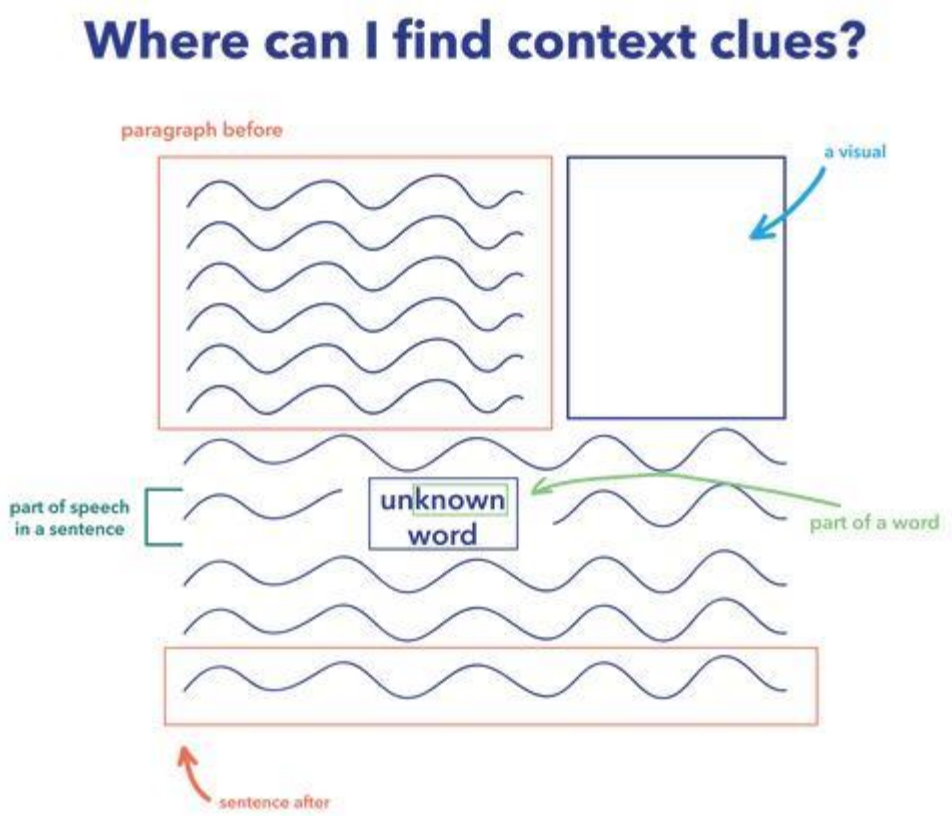


Figure 3.1: Using surrounding words to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word

The figure shows the basic process involved in lexical familiarisation. Instead of stopping immediately at an unfamiliar word, the reader looks at the words and ideas around it, identifies relationships among them and uses those relationships to infer meaning. Continue reading to see how this strategy operates in the passage “Nigeria's Past and Enviable Position”

3.4 Discussion on the Passage Titled ‘‘Nigeria's Past and Enviable Position’’

Do you find the passage interesting? Yes, you will find it interesting if you know the meanings of many of the difficult words circled in the passage. Of course, if you do not know the meanings of many of the words, understanding the passage becomes difficult. Interestingly enough, the writers used words that are related or belong to the same family. For example, the words "capacity" and "capability" are somewhat related. They all mean ability. Again, the words " stupendous and wealth are related because they all

suggest plenty. Favourable and enviable are related. What you can envy should be what is favourable to you. The words "choke" and "surplus" are quite interesting. The word choke suggests something crowded or congested.

Thus, from the word surplus that follows, you can guess the meaning of choke to mean crowd. The word maneuvering is given away by the word manipulation that follows; so also commitment is given away by the earlier suggestion of sincere determination, which can only be exhibited by somebody who is committed to a course. The word trio is followed by the names of eminent Nigerians - Sir Ahmadu Bello, Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Zik. This suggests that the word "trio" means "three". Moving across paragraphs reveals the expression of ethnic pluralism. Somewhere in the previous paragraph, the writer has referred to Nigeria as having a multiplicity of tribes. Thus, you can easily guess from the previous paragraph that ethnic pluralism suggests multiplicity of tribes.

Pause for a Moment and Consider

What would happen if you stopped reading every time you met an unfamiliar word?

You would probably lose the flow of the passage and spend too much time consulting the dictionary. Instead, first examine the surrounding words and ideas. You may discover that the writer has already provided the clue you need.

Continue reading to find out how your own experiences can also help you determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.

3.5 Finding Meanings of Words by Using Your Past Experiences

Sometimes, your experience with the ideas discussed in the passage can suggest the meaning of new words. Your experiences of the actual word, part of the word or the context in which the word is used, may suggest the meaning of the word to you. Some words you experienced in your day-to-day life, some you experienced reading about something similar in another context. You should, however, be careful. Some words may have different meanings when used in different contexts. Do not impose the meaning of one word in a particular context upon the meaning of the same word in quite a different context. However, what we are saying here is that your experience of the word in life or in a context similar to the one you are presently reading may suggest the meaning of the word.
Let's practise this

Self-Assessment Exercise 2
Read the passage entitled ‘The Rich and The Poor. ’ As you read, pay particular attention to the words listed below. Think about situations in which you have encountered these words or ideas. Then use those experiences, together with the passage's context, to determine their meanings.

The Rich and the Poor

Think of the experience you had with the words in bold. Let your imagination run wild to decide situations which you have experienced, or at least part of, the words. See whether you can transfer these situations into the passage to assist you in determining the meanings of the words. For example, think of the rich people you have seen in Nigeria, what they do, how they act and how they live. Think of the poor in Nigeria, especially the beggars. See how they behave, live and act.

Bring all of these experiences to bear on the passage. See whether the meanings of the words can he brought out through these experiences.

The Rich and the Poor

Can the rich become richer without making the poor poorer as a result? Can someone be poor and not suffer? What purpose is served by the rich showing charitable kindness towards the poor? How do people get rich?

According to one line of thinking, God has created people with differing abilities and skills; the ability to become rich is like any other special skill: and he who becomes rich does so by his own exceptional talent and also by the help of God who has blessed him with wealth; and the poor are poor because they lack innate ability to improve themselves; the rich have a moral and religious duty to promote the security and well being of the poor by giving alms generously to ease their sufferings. Poverty is, thus, hypothesised as an objective hereditary phenomenon to be pitied, and it exists because God created man in that way.

Contrary to this view, we will argue that the prosperity of the rich cannot be sustained except by the continued impoverishment of the majority; that the art of making yourself rich is also the art of keeping your neighbours poor; that whatever is obtained by one is denied to many. The only exceptional ability that the rich possess is the ability to organise labour as cheaply as possible in order to maximise profit. Labour is a threat to the rich man's profit.

The main way in which the rich fulfil their obligation to relieve suffering is by making a gift to improve the welfare of some of the poor. This is inevitably selective and discriminatory generosity, which compels the favoured few to be grateful and loyal, while the omitted majority are divided and more effectively controlled as they scramble for the master's scarce favours. This paternalistic manipulation splinters the oppressed poor into factions, each hoping and struggling to get a few more benefits than the other. Alms and aid are like a rope that ties the receiver to the donor who benefits. Gifts and welfare are merely leftovers from the master's table, superficially redistributive gestures which leave inequality intact. The exploitative social order is a source of false generosity nourished by poverty.

Source: P. Heincke, Popular Fallacies in the Nigerian Social Sciences, mimeographed.

For each of the words listed below and underlined in the passage, find their meaning as used in the passage. Also, indicate the previous experiences that assisted you in finding the meanings of the words.

This is the list of words.

1. Charitable
2. Hypothesised
3. Hereditary
4. Impoverishment
5. Maximise
6. Discriminatory
7. Scramble
8. Leftovers
9. Redistributive gestures
10. Nourished

Do not turn to the discussion until you have completed this exercise. Compare your answers with the ones presented in the discussion below.

Have you completed the exercise?

Good, if you have done so, you are now qualified to turn to the discussion.

3.6 Discussion on the Passage 'The Rich and the Poor'

Indeed, my experience of life in general has greatly helped me understand the meanings of the listed words. See the box below for my responses to the meanings of the words. Cross-check my responses with yours.

Word	**World Experience**	**Meaning**
Charitable	Charity as a name and as an action	Free gift
Hypothesised	My experience of hypothesis/theories	Assumed to be
Hereditary	Birth	In-burn
Impoverishment	The word poverty	The art of making poor
Maximise	The word maximum as opposed to minimum	Increase
Obligatory	The word oblige/obligation	Compulsory
Discriminatory	Discriminate human rights slogans	Biased
Scramble	My knowledge of history, which taught scramble	Struggle
Leftovers	Knowledge of meal: food that is uneaten	Crumbs
Redistributive Gestures	Gestures through facial expressions re-distributive from distribution	Kindness of giving back
Nourished	Feeding/eating	Fed/made to grow

Are your responses similar to mine? If they are, then our worldviews and experiences are more or less the same. What is your score on this exercise? If your score is low, try

harder. Let your imagination loose whenever you are reading any material. See how you can use your past or previous experiences to find clues to the meanings of new words in a reading passage.

3.7 Finding Meanings of Words from a Passage by Using Your Dictionary

This should be your last resort. It is a lazy student's approach to always turn to the dictionary for a word's meaning every second. It also slows down your reading speed. You waste a lot of time finding meanings of words and less time reading extensively, but by all means, when other steps suggested in units 1 and 2 of this module fail, please turn to your dictionary. A good dictionary will never fail you. It's the students' best companion. Indeed, it is your own best companion.

EXTRACT FROM *OXFORD ADVANCED LEARNERS' DICTIONARY*



embellish 376

embedded in his mind. [Vn, Vnadv] *Feelings of hatred are (deeply) embedded.*

embellish /ɪmˈbelɪʃ/ *v* ~ **sth** (with sth) **1** to make sth beautiful by adding decorations, etc: [Vnpr] *a dress embellished with lace and ribbons* (also Vn). **2** to improve a story, statement, etc by adding interesting or amusing details, often not true: [Vn] *He admits that he embellished the account of events originally given to him.* [also Vnpr]. ▶ **embellishment** *n* [U, C]: *the embellishment of a book/a building/a speech ○ a 16th-century church with 18th-century embellishments.*

ember /ˈembə(r)/ *n* (usu *pl*) a small piece of burning or glowing wood or coal in a dying fire: *Only the embers of the bonfire remained. ○ (fig) keep the embers of revolution alight.*

embezzle /ɪmˈbezl/ *v* to use money placed in one's care wrongly, esp so as to benefit oneself: [Vn] *embezzle the company's pension fund ○ The treasurer embezzled $2 000 of the club's money.* ▶ **embezzlement** *n* [C, U]: *petty embezzlements ○ He was found guilty of embezzlement.* **embezzler** /ɪmˈbezlə(r)/ *n.*

embitter /ɪmˈbɪtə(r)/ *v* (usu passive) to fill sb/sth with deep feelings of disappointment, envy, hatred, etc: [Vn] *She became embittered by repeated failures.* ▶ **embittered** *adj*: *an embittered manager ○ embittered relations between states.*

emblazon /ɪmˈbleɪzn/ *v* ~ **A with B**/~ **B on A** (usu passive) to decorate sth with a striking design or piece of writing: [Vnpr] *a T-shirt emblazoned with the band's logo ○ a slogan emblazoned on the back.*

emblem /ˈemblәm/ *n* an object that represents sth; a symbol: *a club emblem ○ The dove is an emblem of peace. ○ The thistle is the national emblem of Scotland.*
▶ **emblematic** /ˌemblɪˈmætɪk/ *adj* (*fml*) serving as an emblem; symbolic (SYNONYM): *His work is now regarded as emblematic of recent British fiction.*

embody /ɪmˈbɒdi/ *v* (*pt, pp* **-died**) (*fml*) **1** to express or give visible form to ideas, feelings, etc: [Vn] *To me he embodies all the best qualities of a teacher. ○ the principles embodied in the Declaration of Human Rights.* **2** to include or contain sth: [Vn] *The latest computer model embodies many new features.*
▶ **embodiment** /ɪmˈbɒdɪmәnt/ *n* a person or thing that represents or is a typical example of sth: *She's the embodiment of kindness.*

embolden /ɪmˈbəʊldәn/ *v* (*dated or fml*) (often passive) to give courage or confidence to sb: [Vn] *She felt emboldened by the wine and a new feeling of indimacy.* [Vn.to- inf] *His success emboldened him to expand the business.*

embossed /ɪmˈbɒst/ *adj* ~ (with sth) having a design or a piece of writing raised above the surface: *embossed stationery ○ an embossed pattern ○ a leather briefcase embossed with one's initials.*

embrace /ɪmˈbreɪs/ *v* **1** to hold a person, etc in one's arms as a sign of affection: [V, Vn] *They embraced (each other) warmly.* [Vn] *She embraced her son before leaving.* **2** (*fml*) to accept or believe an idea, etc willingly and enthusiastically: [Vn] *embrace Christianity ○ She was quick to embrace the offer/opportunity.* **3** (of things) to include sth: [Vn] *The term 'mankind' embraces all men, women and children.* ▶ **embrace** *n*: *He held her in a warm embrace. ○ She tried to avoid his embraces.*

embrasure /ɪmˈbreɪʒə(r)/ *n* (*architecture*) an opening in a wall for a door or window, wider on the inside than on the outside.

embrocation /ˌembrəˈkeɪʃn/ *n* [U] a liquid for rubbing on the body to ease sore muscles, etc: LINIMENT.

embroider /ɪmˈbrɔɪdə(r)/ *v* **1** ~ **A (on B)**/~ **B** (with A) to decorate cloth by sewing patterns onto it, esp using thread of various colours: [Vn] *an embroidered blouse* [Vnpr] *She embroidered flowers on the cushion (in gold thread). ○ She embroidered the cushion with flowers.* [also V]. **2** to add details that are not true to a story, to make it more interesting: [Vn] *He's inclined to embroider the facts.*
▶ **embroidery** /-dərɪ/ *n* **1(a)** [U, C] cloth decorated with patterns sewn in thread of various colours: *a beautiful piece of embroidery ○ Indian embroideries.* **(b)** [U] the art or activity of decorating cloth in this way: *He's good at embroidery.* **2** [U] details that are not true, but are added for effect: *One needs to strip away the embroidery from the official statement.*

embroil /ɪmˈbrɔɪl/ *v* ~ **sb/oneself** (in sth) (often passive) to involve sb/oneself deeply in an argument or a difficult situation: [Vnpr] *I don't want to become/get embroiled in their quarrels. ○ They are embroiled in a war against their will.* [Vn] *This embarrassing affair is now threatening to embroil some of the major banks.*

embryo /ˈembrɪəʊ/ *n* (*pl* **-os**) a young animal or plant in the very early stages of its development, before birth, or before coming out of its egg or seed: *human embryos ○ predetermine the sex of embryos ○ (fig) an embryo of an idea.* Compare FOETUS. IDIOM **in embryo** existing but not yet developed: *My plans are still very much in embryo at this stage.*
▶ **embryology** /ˌembrɪˈɒlədʒɪ/ *n* [U] the scientific study of the formation and development of embryos. **embryologist** /ˌembrɪˈɒlədʒɪst/ *n.*

embryonic /ˌembrɪˈɒnɪk/ *adj* [usu attrib] in an early stage of development: *When should the embryonic cells be considered a human being? ○ (fig) The scheme is still in embryonic form/at an embryonic stage.*

emend /ɪˈmend/ *v* to remove errors from a text, esp before printing: [Vn] *emend a passage in a book.*
▶ **emendation** /ˌiːmenˈdeɪʃn/ *n* **(a)** [C] a letter, word, etc that is emended: *minor emendations to the official statement.* **(b)** [U] the action of emending a text.

emerald /ˈemərәld/ *n* a bright green precious stone: *a brooch of diamonds and emeralds ○ an emerald ring.*
▶ **emerald** (also **ˌemerald ˈgreen**) *adj* of a bright green colour: *cream and emerald tiles.*
■ **the ˌEmerald ˈIsle** *n* [sing] (*rhet*) Ireland.

emerge /ɪˈmɜːdʒ/ *v* **1** ~ (from sth) to come out of a place or up from water: [Vpr] *The swimmer emerged from the lake. ○ The moon emerged from behind the clouds. ○ She finally emerged from her room at about ten.* [V] *When she emerged he hardly recognized her.* **2(a)** ~ (as sth) to develop and become noticeable, important or prominent: [V, Vn] *He emerged as leader at the age of thirty.* [V] *Opposition groups began to emerge.* **(b)** (often used in past tenses with **to**) (of facts, ideas, etc) to become known: [V.that] *It emerged that officials had taken bribes.* [V] *No new evidence emerged during the inquiry.* **3** ~ (from sth) to survive a difficult situation with the specified result: [Vpr] *They emerged from the election with a reduced majority.* [also V].
▶ **emergence** /-dʒәns/ *n* [U]: *her emergence as a major artist ○ witness the emergence of a new champion.*
emergent /-dʒәnt/ *adj* [usu attrib] new and still developing: *the emergent democracies of Eastern Europe.*

emergency /ɪˈmɜːdʒәnsɪ/ *n* **1** [C, U] a sudden serious event or situation requiring immediate action: *This door should only be used in an emergency ○ the emergency exit ○ The government has declared a state of emergency* (eg because of war, a natural disaster, etc) *○ the emergency services* (ie the police, fire, AMBULANCE and COASTGUARD services) *○ The pilot had to make an emergency landing in a field.* **2** [U] (US) = CASUALTY 3: *the emergency ward.*

emeritus /ɪˈmerɪtәs/ *adj* (often following *n*) (*abbr* **emer**) having a capital in titles) (of a university teacher

[Vnadj] = verb + noun + noun [V-adj] = verb + adjective For more help with verbs, see Study pages B4–

(**Source**: *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*: Oxford University Press, 1996)

As the figure suggests, a dictionary entry can provide several pieces of information about a word, not just its definition. When you learn to examine the whole entry, you can gain a better idea of how the word is pronounced, what grammatical category it belongs to, how it is used and what related forms it has. Continue reading to examine the information a dictionary can provide.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Look at the extract from the *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary* reproduced above/before now and list in the space provided as many things as you can observe that a dictionary can provide you. Give an example of each of the information that the dictionary provides. Use the space provided.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Have you completed the exercise? If your answer is yes, you can turn to the discussion of the use of the provided dictionary in the next section. If your answer is no, do not go to the discussion until you complete the exercise.

3. 8 What a Dictionary Can Provide You

This section outlines what we can observe from the extract as the kinds of information a dictionary can provide.

- Alphabetical order of words
- Various meanings of a word as used in various contexts (in 1,2,3)
- The way the words are pronounced; these are put in slash / / e.g./imbeli□/embellish. The part of speech of the word e.g. v = for verb;
- The context in which the word is used, e.g. (with 5th) meaning with something;
- Example of sentences in which the words can be used;
- The colloquial usage, if applicable;
- Figure of speech and idiomatic (IDM) expressions associated with the word;
- Different derivational forms of the word, e.g. embody- embodied- embodiment-

When you consider so many things that a page of a dictionary can give, you will agree with me that a dictionary is, indeed, your companion. Use it when the need arises. You will never regret it.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Read the article titled 'Development Plans as they Affect Roles of Agriculture'. Use the strategies suggested in this unit to provide meanings of the words listed after the passage.

Development Plans as they Affect Roles of Agriculture

The Ten Year Plan 1946-1956 of the colonial administration has been described as a pseudo-plan as it was designed to provide guideline to enforce administration of the colony. The first development plan after independence 1962-1968 tried to increase production of export crops through better seed distribution and more modern methods of cultivation, as well as through increased area of cultivation via farm settlements, co-operations plantations, improved farm implements such as hydraulic hand press for extraction of palm oil.

The 1970-74 Development Plan, like the previous plan, hoped to increase per capital output, curb more urban migration and develop agro-industries which were to be located in the urban area: contrary to the intention to curb rural-urban migration. Total expenditure amounted to N215, 226 million which is 20% of capital expenditure on all sectors. The continuous fall of agricultural contribution as the result of low investments, lack of executive capacity and inadequate supporting facilities led to the necessity to prepare perspective plan for agricultural development to 1985 in 1974.

The Third National Development Plan 1975-80 envisaged increased supply of food in adequate quantity and quality, expanded production of export crops and diversification of foreign exchange base as well as increased production of raw materials to support domestic industries. The plan also envisaged increased rural employment opportunities involving appropriate institutional and administrative apparatus to facilitate integrated development of agricultural potential of the whole country.

To achieve the above objective, the state and federal governments were to adopt variety of policy measures relating to price and tax incentive, processing of farm products, rehabilitation and new planting schemes, marketing, man-power training, participation in direct production, extension, use of inputs, research, credit and land use.

This is the list of the words you are to supply their meanings.

1. Pseudo-plan_
2. Extraction___
3. Curb__
4. Executive capacity__
5. Envisagd____

6. Diversification_____
7. Potential____



3.9 Summary

This unit has extended the vocabulary strategies introduced in the previous unit. You have learnt that unfamiliar words do not always require immediate consultation of a dictionary.

In this unit, you learnt how to:

- determine the meanings of unfamiliar words through **lexical familiarisation**;
- use words and ideas surrounding an unfamiliar word as clues to its meaning;
- use your **past experiences and background knowledge** to infer meanings;
- recognise that the meaning of a word depends on its **context**;
- use a **dictionary effectively** when other strategies do not provide sufficient information;
- identify the different types of information provided by a dictionary.

The main lesson is that effective vocabulary development requires **active reading and regular practice**. Whenever you encounter a new word, pause and think about it. Examine the context, relate it to what you already know and use your dictionary when necessary.

Continue practising these strategies as you read your course materials. The more you practise, the stronger your vocabulary power will become.



3.10 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Olaofe, I.A. (1991). *English and Communication Skills for Academic Purposes.* Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

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3.11 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
Possible meanings of the words in the passage "Nigeria's Past and Enviable Position" are:

1. Capability – ability or capacity to do something.
2. Stupendous – extremely large or impressive.
3. Enviable – desirable or worthy of admiration.
4. Choke – crowd or congest.
5. Manoeuvring – manipulating or carefully managing a situation.
6. Commitment – dedication or sincere determination to a course or purpose.
7. Trio – a group of three people or things.
8. Ethnic pluralism – the existence of different ethnic groups within a society.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2
Possible answers from "The Rich and the Poor" are:

Word	Meaning
Charitable	Giving help, especially to people in need
Hypothesised	Assumed or proposed as an explanation
Hereditary	Passed from parents to their children
Impoverishment	The process of becoming or making someone poor
Maximise	Increase to the highest possible level
Discriminatory	Showing unfair preference or treatment
Scramble	Struggle or compete for something
Leftovers	Things remaining after the main part have been used or consumed
Redistributive gestures	Actions intended to redistribute benefits or resources
Nourished	Fed, supported or helped to grow

Self-Assessment Exercise 3
The dictionary may provide the following information:

1. The spelling of the word.
2. The pronunciation of the word.
3. The different meanings of the word.
4. The part of speech.
5. Example sentences showing how the word is used.
6. Contexts or usage labels associated with the word.
7. Colloquial or informal uses, where applicable.
8. Idiomatic expressions associated with the word.
9. Figurative meanings.
10. Related or derived forms of the word.

UNIT 4 VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN VARIOUS ACADEMIC CONTEXTS: PART I

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Learning Outcomes
4.3 Vocabulary in Various Academic Contexts
4.3.1 Vocabulary Items Associated with Psychology
4.3.2 Vocabulary Items Associated with the Legal Field
4.3.3. Vocabulary Items Associated with the Medical and Paramedical Fields
4.3.4 Vocabulary Items Associated with Education
4.4 Summary
4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
4.6 Possible answer to Self-Assessment Exercise



4.1 Introduction

As you progress through your studies, you will notice that different academic disciplines have their own ways of expressing ideas. A student of Psychology, for example, will encounter words such as *intelligence*, *behaviour*, *assessment* and *environment*. A student studying Law will meet terms such as *defendant, settlement, infringement* and *manslaughter*. Similarly, students in the medical field will come across words such as *surgery*, *anaesthetic*, *injection* and *unconsciousness*.

You may already know some of these words because they are part of everyday English. Others, however, may be used in specialised ways within particular academic fields. This means that developing your vocabulary is not only about learning more words. It is also about learning **how words are used in different academic contexts**.

In the previous units, you learned strategies for working out the meanings of unfamiliar words from a passage. In this unit, you will apply those skills to vocabulary used in Psychology, Law, Medicine and Education.

You will not be expected to memorise every technical term in these fields. Instead, the activities will help you recognise common academic vocabulary, understand words in context and become more confident when reading texts from different disciplines.

So, as you work through this unit, do not worry if you meet unfamiliar words. **Pause, examine the surrounding words, use what you already know and continue reading.** With regular reading practice, your vocabulary will gradually become richer and more useful.



4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- **explain** the distinction between common-core vocabulary and discipline-specific vocabulary in academic contexts.
- **identify** vocabulary items associated with psychology in an academic reading passage.
- **identify** vocabulary items associated with the legal field in an academic reading passage.
- **identify** vocabulary items associated with the medical and paramedical fields in an academic reading passage.
- **identify** vocabulary items associated with Education in an academic reading passage.



4.3 Vocabulary in Various Academic Contexts

Think about the academic words you have encountered in your NOUN course materials. Which of them can be used in several academic fields, and which ones seem specific to your own discipline?

Continue reading to find out how academic vocabulary can be grouped.

As you have learned in the preceding units, words are central to all academic fields. Also, academic fields have words that are specific to each domain. In fact, the vocabulary items of the world can be classified into two broad categories. The first one is the categories of words that cut across all fields. These are called **common-core** words. The second category is the set of words specific to a particular field. This is called the field register.

It is important for you to be familiar with the broad-based categories of words that are used in most of the academic contexts you will find yourself in during this programme. More than all these, it is necessary for you to be familiar with words that are specific to your own subject area.

The aim of this unit is to expose you to broad categories of words used across various fields. Thus, you will have practice sessions on identifying the meanings of words:

- as they change from one academic field to another
- as they cut across the field
- as they are specific to a particular field.

Of course, let me stress this is a point once more- it is not possible to practise all the words that you may come across in all fields. The effort in this unit is merely to draw your attention to some of these words and leave you to discover more in your private

study and reading activities. Remember, if you want to expand your vocabulary, you must be ready to read extensively.

You have now seen that academic vocabulary may either cut across different fields or be associated with a particular discipline. We can now apply this distinction to Psychology. As you work through the next exercise, pay attention to how contextual clues help you identify vocabulary associated with psychological research and the study of intelligence.

4.3.1 Vocabulary Items Associated with Psychology

Here, you will start with an exercise. This exercise exposes you to vocabulary used in psychology and the general sciences. Use the words and expressions at the beginning of the passage to fill in gaps 1- 32. Use each word only once.

Before You Continue

What words come to mind when you hear the term *intelligence*?

Continue reading to see how the term and related vocabulary are used in an academic Psychology passage.

What is Intelligence?

Complement	Entirely	Environment	Intercultural
Competence	Mental	Conducted	Hypothesis
Assessment	Eccentric	Resemble	Numerous
Categorise	Account	Formulated	Inferred
Manipulated	Identical	Degree	Precisely
Unrelated	Discrepancies	Variation	Relevant
Deter	Reared	Accounted for	Factors
Comparative	Attributable	Experts	Adopted

What is intelligence? Even the 1_____, let alone the layman, are not 2___ _____sure about the answer to this question. Though scientists have different 3___ _____on how to interpret and 4__ intelligence, some facts, however, have been widely accepted by most of them on the basis of 5_____ studies 6_____ _____over the last decades.
It is known that intelligence is 7 both to heredity and 8____, but the genetic 9__ _____are more important than the environment ones.
The evidence for the above conclusion was obtained from kinds of studies: a study of 10_____ twins with the same 11_____of genes, 12_____ _____apart in foster homes; and a study of genetically 13___ children 14_ at birth and reared together. From the results the scientists 15_____ that the biological inheritance of genes 16_____ at least twice as much of the 17_____in IQ as the environment.

Even if the child does not 18_____ his parents in his 19____ ability, genetic theory can explain such occasional 20_____ .Therefore such expectations do not invalidate the argument that IQ is inherited more than it is 21_____ by the environment. It is also widely recognised that the 22_____ of intelligence is essentially a 23_____ affair which creates some problems. If we want to compare the intellectual 24____ _____of two individuals, we must be sure, up to a certain 25_____of confidence, that they have a similar attitude to the test and that they possess enough 26 _____ information as to what is to be done on the test.
But these are 27____ the factors that vary from culture to culture. A test question which looks simple and normal to a child in one culture might 28_____a child from another culture who might regard it as indelicate or 29_____.
Moreover, the answers expected by the tester who 30_____the questions might not be the only possible answers in a different cultural setting.

Therefore, all 31____ comparisons of intelligence should take 32____of the limitations of the standard IQ tests.

Source: Sim, D. D. *et al* (1984) *Vocabulary Development Collins ELT,* London and Glasgow.

I think by now you have completed the exercise. If you have done so, then congratulations.

Do you find the exercise difficult or easy? When this was given to students like you, about three-quarters found the exercise difficult. If you find it difficult, it means you are still not reading extensively. Some of the words illustrated are not too difficult for your level.

What is intelligence? Even experts, let alone the layman, are not entirely sure about the answer to this question. Determination to read widely is the only thing that can increase your vocabulary to the level that you will be able to carry out such a task as this without much difficulty.

The Psychology exercise has shown you how academic vocabulary can be interpreted by paying attention to context. The same strategy is useful when reading legal materials. Some legal terms are highly specialised, while others are words that educated readers may encounter in newspapers, public discussions and academic texts.

4.3.2 Vocabulary Items Associated with the Legal Field

Let's expose you to another field, quite different from the one in the exercise above. This time it is the legal field.

Read the passage below and fill in gaps 1-20 with words and expressions presented below the passage. Remember that you may not use some words in this exercise.

Vocabulary Items Associated with the Legal Field

(a) Judicial 1___punishment was 2_ in England in 194…
(b) The parties continued 3_____for several months before an/a 4__ for the 5__was finally reached.
(c) The 6_____ husband was killed in the accident she caused. It was found that she was guilty of 7__, but had not intended to kill the victim. As a result was convicted of 8____ .
(d) The crown courts 9_ him to 10__ for committing assault 11_____grievous bodily ht1rm.
(e) A state may have to grant 12_ to victims for 13_of its agents abroad.
(f) The UK government refused to 14_the accused on the grounds that she was a political offender.
(g) There can be not 15_ some of the rights protected by the European convention of Human Rights.
(h) 16____is a state of being at war.
(i) 17____is a breach of law or 18 of a right.
(g) 19____ is the discussion of terms and conditions to reach an 20_____.

List of words to choose from (You may not use some words and may use some more than once)

Infringement, negotiation, settlement, violation, agreement, extradite, concurrently, manslaughter, conspiracy, abolished, corporal, arbitration, assault, 2-year probation, 5-year imprisonment, remand, conflict, reparation, persecutions, repeal of, immunity from, charged, defendant's sentenced, damage caused by criminal acts, I causing, consensus.

I think by now you should have completed the exercise. Can you say you are familiar with general legal terms? Of course, there's no reason why you should not be familiar with the common terms related to the legal field. In fact, this familiarity is one of the ways you can be known to be well-read. Let's discuss some of the terms.

a. Judicial corporal punishment was abolished in England in 1948.
b. The parties continued negotiating for several months before a consensus on the reparation was finally reached.
c. The defendant's husband was killed in the accident she had caused. It was found that she was guilty of conspiracy but had not intended to kill the victim. As a result, she was convicted of manslaughter.

If you go by the words that you require to fill the gap, you will recognise that only a few of them are really technical. The bulk of them are words that are common to the legal profession, which educated people should really be familiar with.

4.3.3 Vocabulary Items Associated with the Medical and Paramedical Fields

Again, this is a very broad field that cannot be covered in the context of a single course unit. Like all other academic fields, the medical field has both common and technical terms. The common-core terms should be known by all educated groups like you. Of course, the technical ones must definitely be reserved for people in the field. The passage in the next exercise exposes you to some of the general terms typical of medical and paramedical sciences.

Before You Continue

Which medical words do you already know from everyday conversations or hospital experiences?

Continue reading to see how familiar and specialised medical terms occur together in an academic passage.

Anaesthetics

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read the passage below and fill in the gaps with the relevant words provided at the end of the passage.

Anesthetics are 1_____ causing 2_____ _____ or 3_ relief to pain. Their use in modern medicine permits painless 4 _____of a minutes duration. Anesthetics are divided into two broad groups 5_____ and 6 _____ones; the former causes 7_____ _____ unconsciousness by temporarily altering normal activities of 8_____; while the later temporarily deaden 9_____ _____of a particular area of the body. General anesthetics are usually administered to the patient in one of two ways; 10_____ _____ or 11_____ injection. Several important drugs are used as general anesthetics. 12_____ _____ first used by Dr Crawford W. Long (1842) is a powerful anesthetics. So also is 13_____a gas inhaled in combination with oxygen. A much weaker general anesthetics is 14_____ or 15 _____ gas. 16_____ is a new synthetic general anesthetic, more powerful and effective. It is 17_____ into the body in a 18_____ amounts with a 19_____ apparatus. Not all surgery requires that the 20_____be unconscious.

List of Words to Choose from

Fluothane, chloroform, drugs, unconsciousness, patients, surgery, hospitalisation, broad, total, temporary, central nervous system, local, inhalation, ether, sensation, intravenous, powerful liquid, cyclopropane, ethylene, nitrous oxide, smiling, laughing, calibrated, injected, inhaled, tluothene, measured, booster, general, painkilling, soft effective.

Are you familiar with many of the words? Words like unconsciousness, patients, surgery, hospitalisation, ensured, injected, and drugs are common medical terms which should be known by all educated people. Of course, there are some technical terms, such as cyclopropane, fluothene, and chloroform, that are specific to the medical and paramedical professions.

Medical vocabulary has shown you that academic and professional language may contain both familiar and specialised terms. Education provides another useful example. Many education-related words, such as *institution*, *development*, *participation* and *policy*, are also used in other academic and professional contexts.

At this point, you have examined medical vocabulary and the distinction between common and specialised terms. The following instructional video provides another opportunity to see how academic and technical vocabulary can be approached. As you watch, relate the ideas in the video to the vocabulary strategies discussed in this unit.

https://youtu.be/m0iCHuLePCw



4.3.4 Vocabulary Items Associated with Education

This section familiarises you with some common terms associated with education. In most cases, the words are common-core words in the profession. The next exercise presents this field to you.

Before You Continue

Which words do you regularly encounter in your NOUN course materials that are associated with Education?

Continue reading to identify how these words function in an academic passage.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read the passage below and fill in the gaps with the words presented at the bottom of the passage. The importance of this exercise is to introduce you to some of the vocabulary items associated with education. Do not turn to the answer until you finish performing the tasks. The title of the passage is 'Primary Education'.

Primary Education

Primary education is the 1_____ and the largest 2_____ of all levels of education which may be 3_____ 4_____ and 5_____ _____. Unfortunately, the primary schools are an eye sore. This is because of 6_____ building inadequate 7_____ and lack of meaningful 8 from public/community. The government pronouncements of 9____ _____ and 10_____ education could only be meaningful if the community is encouraged to participate in the 11 _____, 12_____, and 13_____ _____, of the 14_____. The provision of some education is not to our advantage, especially where 15_____ are the 16_____ _____of the centralising authority. Constant major 17_ _____ changes are doing a lot of havoc to the education system. We need to settle down to real business of providing sound and well 18__ _____that will facilitate growth and 19_____ of primary education that is worthy of 20_____.

List of words to choose from

Institution, counterparts, dilapidated, foundation, funding, sustained, policy, secondary, expenditure, free, tertiary, statistics, participation, equipment, furniture, maintenance, compulsory, synonymous, finances, centralised; appointments, policy, initiative, emulation, sector, prerogative, primary, equipping, development.

Have you completed the exercise? Now turn to the end of the unit for the answers. As you go through the passage, you would have noticed some common words like institution, funding, development, tertiary, secondary, participation, foundation, etc., are commonly used in relation to education. Also, there are some words, such as counterparts, free, equipping, centralised, equipment, etc., which are not restricted to the field of education but can be used across academic fields.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Complete the following exercise with words from the list below. Use each word only once.

Affirmed undisciplined function interest dormant Regimen compel liable promote extent Restricted cultivate designed applied,

suppressed Rigorously devise disguises deliberately challenged Advocating refining contends deprived seductive Discounting enduring

Philosophers and educationists have been 1_____ different approaches to the role of art in education. Plato 2_____that since art is an expression of the emotional and 3___ part of our nature, it must be 4___ control1ed and even 5___ _____ discouraged in the 6_____ of rational ideals. According to Plato's rational philosophy of life, education was 7_____ _____ to constrain and direct youth towards what has been 8_____ by the law as right, to develop youth's super-ego. Art, being sensuous and 9_,would be a deviation from the rational regimen.

Plato does not, however, compel the educator to ban art altogether. Art is useful to children who are incapable of 10_____ serious training and are 11____ to revolt against it. Art will 12___ as a sweet that 13_____ the bitterness of a necessary medicine.

Plato's philosophy has often been 14_____by educators who have tried to 15_____all for its own sake. They have claimed that though the number of professional artists should be 16_, almost no person should be 17_____ of training in the appreciation of the arts. Anesthetic impulses, they say, are possessed by children and merely 18_____in educated people. Therefore, the educator can 19_____ means of preserving and 20_____ _____these instincts and thus develop the person's emotional responses to beauty. Educating the instincts implies 21_the basic values of the classical.

Source: Sim, D. D. *et al.* (1984). *Vocabulary Development.* London, Glasgow: Collins ELT.

4.4 Summary

You have learnt in this unit that different academic disciplines have their own ways of expressing ideas. Some vocabulary items occur across several fields and can be regarded as common-core academic vocabulary, while others are closely associated with particular disciplines.

You examined vocabulary related to psychology using a passage on intelligence. You were encouraged to use contextual clues and surrounding information when working out the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary.

You also examined vocabulary associated with the legal field. Terms such as *defendant, settlement, infringement, extradite*, and manslaughter illustrated how specialised and common academic vocabulary can co-occur in legal texts.

The medical and paramedical section introduced vocabulary such as *anaesthetic, surgery, patient, injected* and *unconsciousness*. You learnt that medical texts contain both common words and specialised terminology.

The final section focused on Education. Words such as *institution, funding, participation, development, policy, equipment*, and tertiary demonstrated that education-related vocabulary may include both discipline-specific and common-core academic words.

The most important lesson is that vocabulary development is not simply the memorisation of isolated words. Reading extensively, examining words in context, keeping a personal vocabulary record and encountering words repeatedly across different academic contexts can gradually improve your academic vocabulary.

As you continue with your studies, make a deliberate effort to notice unfamiliar words, investigate their meanings and observe how they are used. The more widely you read, the more confident you will become in dealing with academic vocabulary.



4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Olaofe, I. A. (1991). *English and Communication Skills* for Academic Purposes. Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

Olaofe, I. A. (1993). *Communicate English Skills.* Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

Sim, D. D. & Laufer-Dvorkin, B. (1987). *Vocabulary Development.* London: Collins ELT.

4.11 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. b
2. a
3. c
4. a
5. c

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. a
5. a

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. a
5. b

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

1. a
2. b
3. c
4. a
5. b

Self-Assessment Exercise 5

1. a
2. a
3. b
4. a
5. c

UNIT 5 VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT IN VARIOUS ACADEMIC CONTEXTS: PART II

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Vocabulary Development Across Selected Academic Fields
5.3.1 Vocabulary Items Associated with the Arts
5.3.2 Vocabulary Items Associated with Accounting
5.3.3 Vocabulary Items Associated with Natural Science
5.4 Summary
5.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
5.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



5.1 Introduction

Welcome to Unit 5. This unit continues the discussion of vocabulary development in various academic contexts that you began in Unit 4. In the previous unit, you were introduced to vocabulary associated with Psychology, Law, Medicine and Paramedical fields. In this unit, you will extend that knowledge to three other broad academic areas: the Arts, Accounting and Natural Science.

As you progress through your studies at the National Open University of Nigeria, you will encounter reading materials from different academic disciplines. Some words may appear familiar because they are part of general English, while others may have meanings that are more closely associated with a particular field. Developing your vocabulary, therefore, involves more than learning new words. It also involves recognising how words function within different academic contexts.

The activities in this unit will expose you to vocabulary used in the Arts, Accounting and Natural Science. Through the passages and exercises, you will have opportunities to identify words from different fields and examine how some words can operate across more than one discipline.

The unit also continues to emphasise the importance of extensive reading. The more widely you read, the more familiar you become with academic vocabulary, expressions and patterns of usage. This is particularly important for an ODL learner, because you will often encounter new concepts and terminology while studying independently.

Think About It

Think about the different academic materials you have encountered in your studies. Which words have you come across that seemed unfamiliar at first but became clearer after you read the surrounding sentences?

As you work through this unit, pay attention not only to the words you know, but also to **how their meanings are determined by the context in which they occur**.



5.1 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- **Identify** vocabulary items associated with the Arts.
- **Identify** vocabulary items associated with Accounting.
- **Identify** vocabulary items associated with Natural Science



5.3 Vocabulary Development Across Selected Academic Fields

Vocabulary is an important part of academic communication. As you learned in Unit 4, different disciplines use combinations of common-core vocabulary and field-specific vocabulary. Some words are strongly associated with a particular discipline, while others can occur across several fields and take on slightly different meanings depending on context.

The three areas considered in this unit provide further opportunities for you to develop this skill. You will begin with vocabulary associated with the Arts, move to Accounting, and then examine vocabulary used in Natural Science.

As you work through each section, try to identify the words that are specific to the field and those that can be used more generally.

5.3.1 Vocabulary Items Associated with the Arts

Have you ever read a history text and noticed that some words seem especially suited to describing events, evidence, records and interpretations of the past?

Let's start this unit with an academic field that is quite different from the ones discussed in Unit 4. This is the field of the arts, or humanities, as some people call it. Generally speaking, the arts have a few vocabulary items that are restricted to the field. In most cases, the vocabulary can be used across other academic fields. Thus, we can say that the arts contain many common-core vocabulary items.

History is taken as a representative sample of the field. The self- assessment exercise below requires you to complete the passage with some of the terms that are supplied at the beginning of the passage.

The relationship between common-core vocabulary and field-specific vocabulary can be represented visually. As you examine the figure, notice that some words remain useful across several academic disciplines, while others become more closely associated with a particular field.

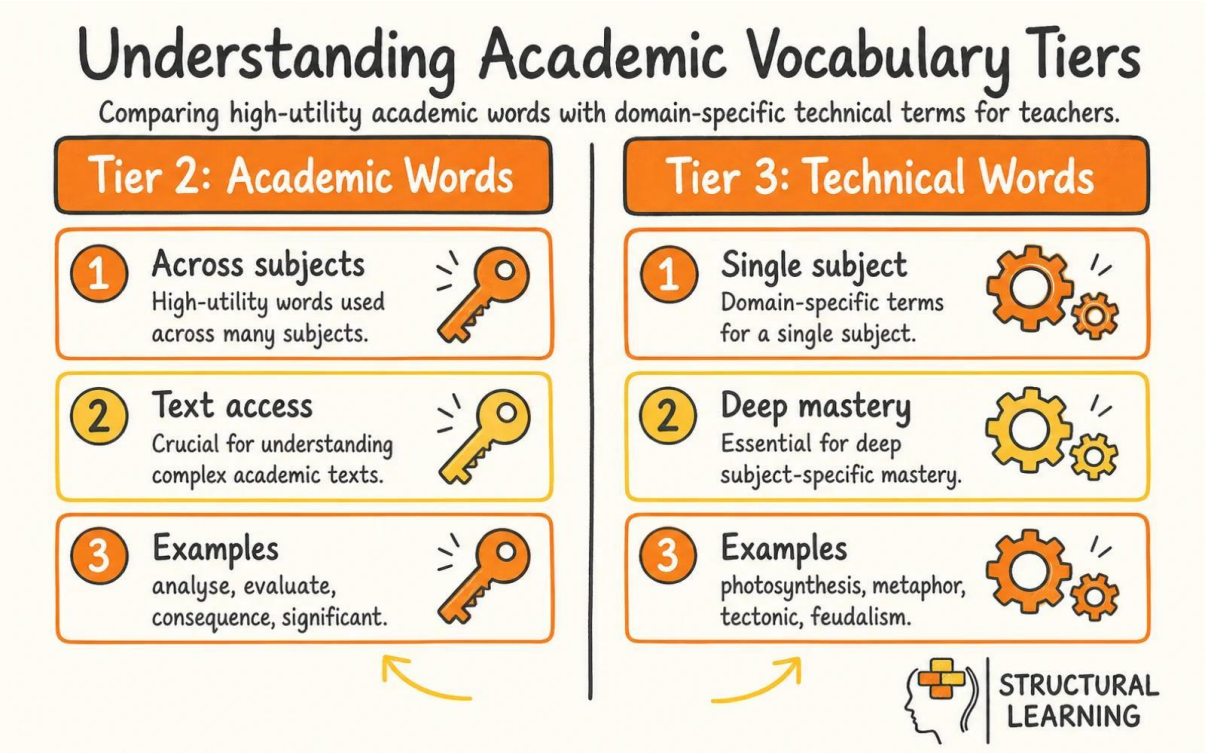

Figure 5.1: Vocabulary Across Academic Contexts

The figure highlights an important point for this unit: knowing general academic vocabulary gives you a useful foundation for approaching texts from unfamiliar disciplines. You should therefore use both your existing vocabulary knowledge and the surrounding context when you encounter unfamiliar words.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Complete the following passage with the appropriate words from the list supplied before the passage. Use each word only once. The title of the passage is ‘History and the Historians’.

History and the Historians

arbitrary	however	unavailable	defective
take it for granted	raw	recorded	pattern
survived	particular	lacunae	supremely
accuracy	subjectivity	determined	preserving
attribution	appeal	indestructible	available

It is true that 1_____is a necessary condition of the historian's work, but it is not his essential function. The basic facts belong to the category of 2_____ materials of the historian than of history itself. Besides, the necessity to establish these basic facts rests on an 3__decision of the historian.

Let us take ancient history as an example. We 4_____that al1 the facts about this period are recorded in 5_____literature. The truth is, 6_____ that this is only a selection of facts which 7____ by accident or process of 8_____ and the historical picture, seen as a whole, may be inaccurate.
The problem of this 9____ picture consists not only of the 10_____ which start ancient history, but also of the 11_____ of historians, scribes and chroniclers. These people 12____facts they thought were worth 13_____ .Those facts supported their 14_____ views and were 15_____ important to them, but were not necessarily so to other people in those times.

A mass of other facts relevant to the picture of history is simply 16 to us today: .Therefore the 17_____of the past is 18_____ it has been 19____ for us beyond the possibility of 20_____.

Have you completed the filling in the gaps? If you have, I congratulate you. Now turn to the end of the unit to compare your answers with those provided there. Mark your work and determine how well you perform in the exercise.

Did you find the passage difficult? If you did, I would advise you to read more extensively. You will agree with me that some of the words are common core words you should have read extensively. Let me fill the first three gaps of the passage for illustration.

> It is true that accuracy is a necessary condition of the historians work, but it is not his essential function. The basic facts belong to the category of raw materials of the historian than of history itself. Besides, the necessity to establish these basic facts rests on an arbitrary decision of the historian.

You will notice that although words like accuracy, raw, and arbitrary may be associated with history or art-based courses, they can also be used in other fields. This means that if you are well-read, you are likely to be fully equipped to tackle all arts-based reading materials.

5.3.2 Vocabulary Items Associated with Accounting

You may have encountered terms such as *revenue, assets, expenditure, debtors* and *creditors* in newspapers, business reports or discussions about organisations. Before continuing, think about where you have seen such words used and what they meant in those contexts.

As with the other academic fields discussed so far, accounting is broad and far-reaching. The exercise you are going to perform in this section will only give you a slight touch of the field. You need to read extensively to grasp the field's vocabulary, especially the highly technical terms.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read the passage below and fill in gaps 1-20 with appropriate words and expressions listed below the passage. The title of the passage is 'The Role of Accountants'.

The Role of Accountants

The 1_____ function of the Chief Accountant is to ensure that 2_ funds available for such capital 3_____ on new plant and equipment as is required in the corporate plan. Adequate working capital will also be required to meet 4_____expenditure such as 5_____salaries, purchase of raw materials and inevitable administrative expenses. Whenever 6_____or salaries are made 7 _____will need to be kept. In many ways, the accountants are like a 8___ _____ telling you what has happened since the 9____ commenced. On 3rd April, we 10_____ a new mainframe 11 _____ for N75,000 and so on. The data tells the 12_____ what 13_____ are at their disposal and what 14_____ _____they have to be prepared to meet. By 15_____ the accountant, managers can see how much 16_____ is available, how much they owe to their 17_____ and how much they are owed by their 18_____ They must also be in the position to meet their commitments if 19_____is to be avoided. The accountants make a 20___ contribution to the decision-making process.

Lists of words to choose from

records,	business,	corporate,	purchase,	expenditure,
revenue	mechanism,	adequate,	cheaper,	statistical,
continuous,	corrective,	primary,	wages,	debtors,
vital,	accuracy,	solutions,	assets,	purchases,
storybook,	examining,	computer,	insolvency,	deduction,
possible,	answered,	problems,	creditors.	

Source: Chilver, J.C. (1998). *English for Business.* London: D.P. Publications Ltd.

I hope you enjoyed going through the exercise. If you did, it means that you are already displaying your extensive reading ability. If you are finding this exercise difficult, you need to read more widely.

Some of the words that are somehow typical of accounting procedures are corporate, revenue, purchase, insolvency, debtors and creditors. Words like continuous, corrective,

vital, primary, records, and so on can be used in fields other than accounting; in most cases, their meanings may change.

Accounting vocabulary becomes easier to recognise when you see how related terms function together. Before you examine the figure, think about how *assets*, *revenue*, *expenditure*, *debtors* and *creditors* are connected when a business records its financial activities.



Figure 5.2: Vocabulary Used in an Accounting Context

The figure demonstrates that accounting vocabulary is often connected to practical business activities. When you encounter these words in a passage, the surrounding information can help you determine their meanings and relationships.

5.3.3 Vocabulary Items Associated with Natural Science

Science is another broad-based field that you must be conversant with. This is because the entire world is becoming increasingly scientifically and technologically oriented. No matter your area of specialisation, a rudimentary knowledge of science is demanded of you. In the next exercise, you will be introduced to some scientific terms.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Read the passage titled 'The Importance of Mathematics' and fill in the gaps 1-20.

The Importance of Mathematics
(a) Not only physics but every 1___ depends on the 2. _____of mathematics. For every science required the exact 3_____ _____and the ability to work out 4_____and find 5___ _____whether you are interested in 6_____, discovering the structure of 7_____learning what causes 8____ and prosperity in 9_____, finding new 10_____ for disease, 11____ _____swifter airplanes or learning the 12_____ _____of the stars, you will need the language of mathematics.
(b) The process of 13_____ consists of a series of steps: 14_ water to a boiling point 15___it and collecting the 16_____in a container for 17_____.
(c) Civil engineering deals with the design and 18_____of 19__that are intended to be 20___.

Lists of words to choose from

distillation, fermenting, condensing, purification,
hydraulic, environmental, construction, fluids,
stationary, objects structure, system, science,
measurement, rules, problems, molecules, cunes, splitting, atoms depressions,
designing business life story, heating product, modification, and conclusion.

Now that you have completed the exercise, I can share my experience of working with the passage with you. Like you, I found words like distillation, depression, environmental, fluids, fermenting, etc., scientific, but they can also assume other meanings in some fields. Words like conclusion, business, heating, condensing and so on, can have scientific and non-scientific meanings, depending on the contexts in which they are used.



5.4 Summary

In this unit, you have continued the vocabulary development work introduced in Unit 4. You have examined vocabulary associated with three broad academic areas: the Arts, Accounting and Natural Science.

In the first section, you encountered vocabulary related to History as a representative area within the Arts. You learned that many words used in Arts-based disciplines are common core words that also occur in other academic fields.

In the second section, you examined accounting-related vocabulary. Terms such as *corporate, revenue, purchase, insolvency, debtors* and *creditors* were used to illustrate vocabulary that frequently occurs in accounting contexts.

In the third section, you explored vocabulary associated with Natural Science. You encountered terms such as *distillation, environmental, fluids* and *fermenting*. You also learned that some words can occur in both scientific and non-scientific contexts, with their meanings determined by how they are used.

The major lesson from this unit and the previous one is that vocabulary development requires extensive reading. You should therefore cultivate the habit of reading materials from different academic fields, not only those directly related to your programme.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Complete the following passage with words from the list provided at the beginning of the passage. Use each word only once.

prestige	erratic	dehumanising	inadequate
anxieties	susceptible	appreciation	intangible
displayed	superstructure	opportunity	renders
uncongenial	terms	growth	conditions
menial	dead-end	voluntarily	enriching
degrading	expectations	amelioration	adapt
promotion	specialised	alienates	running
routine	equip	resentment	contribute
appreciation			

Can one impose an occupation upon oneself or one's partner when no positive interest in this occupation is 1_____? Can one come to 2_ with work that seems 3____ _____ or even 4 _____.
Some people argue that women are drawn into housework in spite of their 5_____ _____of such work. Sociologists have been pointing out that even though the

housewife's effort support the entire 6__ of the economy, her job is status 7 _____ because of its impaired nature. It is also a 8_____ since it provides no chance of 9_____ some psychologists claim that housework has a negative effect on the woman's personality. It is 10_____ her from her husband, who develops and acquires 11_____ while the wife feels 12____ . Her isolation, moreover, leads to 13__ judgments and 14_____ her 15_____ _____ to psychoses.

But it can also be argued that being a mother and a home-builder is an 16__ experience which provides the woman with 17__ rewards such as the 18____ _____of the family, protection from 19_____ over promotions of bad working 20__ and freedom in planning her own daily 21____ . It should also be remembered that many men or women do not choose their occupation outside the home either. Social conventions force them to provide a home, 22_____ _____ it and even 23_____ towards the labour or 24_____ it and raising the children. Many workers might find their work non- 25___ with little 26_____ for promotion and personal 27_____. Yet they have to 28_____ themselves to the 29_____ _____ of their society, including their own family.

Source: Sim, D. D. *et al*. *Vocabulary Development.* London: Collins ELT.

5.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Olaofe, I. A. (1991). *English and Communication Skills for Academic Purposes.* Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

Olaofe, I. A. (1993). *Communicate English Skill.* Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

Sim, D. D. & Laufer-Dvorkin, B. (1987). *Vocabulary Development.* London: Collins ELT.

5.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercises 1

1. b
2. c
3. b
4. b
5. c

Self-Assessment Exercises 2

1. a
2. b
3. a
4. b
5. c

Self-Assessment Exercises.3

1. a
2. b
3. b
4. b
5. c

MODULE 4

Unit 1 Reading Diverse Texts: Narratives
Unit 2 Reading Diverse Texts: Expository Texts
Unit 3 Reading and Comprehending Passages with Tables
Unit 4 Reading Scientific Texts
Unit 5 Reading for Interpretation and Critical Evaluation

UNIT 1 READING DIVERSE TEXTS: NARRATIVES

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcome
1.3 Reading and Analysing Narrative Texts
1.3.1 Narrative Texts
1.3.2 Characteristics of Narrative Texts
1.3.3 Discussion of *I Have Found You a Girl*
1.4 Summary
1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



1.1 Introduction

Welcome to the first unit in a new series on reading diverse texts. As you progress through this course, you will encounter different kinds of texts that require you to read for different purposes. This unit begins with **narrative texts**, which are among the most familiar forms of reading because they tell stories about people, events and experiences. Narrative texts can entertain you, but their value goes beyond entertainment. They can expose you to different life experiences, introduce you to new words and expressions, and help you improve your reading speed and comprehension. As you read a story, you also learn to pay attention to characters, events, sequence, suspense, description and the central ideas presented by the writer.

In this unit, you will first examine what narrative texts are and consider their major characteristics. You will then apply these features in reading and analysing Gideon Tseja's *I Have Found You a Girl*. The activities in the unit will require you to read carefully, identify important details and interpret what you have read.

To study this unit successfully, you will need a dictionary, paper and a writing instrument. You should also be prepared to read the selected narrative more than once. Your first reading should help you obtain the general meaning, while subsequent readings should help you notice specific details and features of the narrative.

Before you continue, pause for a moment and reflect on this question:

What makes you continue reading a story even when you have other things to do? Think about a story, novel or film that held your attention. Was it the characters, the events, the suspense, the setting or the way the story was told? Keep your thoughts in mind as you study the characteristics of narrative texts.



1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define narrative texts
- identify the features of narrative texts
- read and analyse clearly some selected narrative texts.



1.3 Reading and Analysing Narrative Texts

Narrative texts are an important part of reading because they present experiences through stories and sequences of events. In this section, you will examine what makes a text a narrative and then apply those characteristics to a selected story.

As you read, pay attention not only to what happens in the story but also to how the writer presents the characters, events, suspense and ideas. These features will help you move from simply reading a story to analysing it.

1.3.1 Narrative Texts

Before You Continue

When you read a story, what features help you recognise immediately that it is a narrative?

Perhaps the most common of all the texts you will find yourself reading from time to time are narrative texts. Narrative texts are common because they tell stories, and many people enjoy them. This section introduces you to narrative texts. Of course, there are different types of narrative texts. Some tell a sad (or tragic) story, while some make you laugh. Some stories are written as novels; these are called long stories. Some are also written in short forms. They are called short stories.

You need to read stories to increase your reading speed and comprehension. Stories also give you a variety of life experiences. Such experiences include joy, sadness, conflict, destruction, suffering, affluence, greed, avarice, and so on. The experiences portrayed in stories often develop into the story's or novel's theme.

Reading stories can also increase your vocabulary. From stories, you come across many words and expressions which become part and parcel of you as you read extensively.

Consider a NOUN learner who reads a Nigerian novel about family relationships, education, migration or community life. Although the learner is reading for pleasure, the story may also introduce new vocabulary, cultural experiences and ways of expressing ideas. The learner can therefore improve both reading ability and vocabulary through the same activity.

The same principle applies when you read narratives from other societies. The experiences may be different from those you encounter in your immediate environment, but they can broaden your knowledge and help you become a more confident reader.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Answer the following questions.

1. What is a narrative text?
2. Mention two forms in which stories may be written.
3. State two benefits of reading stories.
4. How can reading stories improve vocabulary?
5. Mention two experiences that stories may portray.
6. You have seen that narrative texts tell stories and can provide readers with experiences, vocabulary and opportunities to improve reading skills. However, simply telling a story does not explain everything that makes a narrative effective.
7. A narrative has identifiable features that help the reader follow events and remain interested in the story. Let us now examine these characteristics before applying them to a complete narrative text.

1.3.2 Characteristics of Narrative Text

Before You Continue

When a story keeps you reading because you want to know what happens next, which feature of the story do you think is responsible?

1. Narrative texts range from the ones written in an extremely informal style, full of slang and colloquialisms, to the semi- formal or less formal ones. In most cases, narratives are informal, except that a role is assigned to a character who speaks in a formal style.
2. All narratives are to follow a storyline, starting with the background to the story, the plot, i.e. the unfolding of the plan or an outline of events in a novel; the climax, which is the most exciting or important event or point in the story. The climax is often referred to as the most exciting part of a story. A storyline ends with the fall or the final part of the story, where all events have been fully unfolded and nothing more exciting.
3. A good narrative keeps the reader in suspense. Thus, when you become accustomed to reading an interesting story, you hardly want to drop the book

until you finish reading it. This is because you want the suspense created to unfold. For example, a story may start with a mystery surrounding a particular episode or event. As you go through the storyline, the mystery is gradually unfolded until you come to the end, and it becomes no mystery again.

4. A narrative follows a sequential order. The events may be organised in chronological order (of time), order of importance or the order of seriousness of the event.
5. Explanation does not form the major part of a story, except when a particular character is invited into the story to give an explanation of a particular event or situation.
6. Vividness (making all characters and events real), clarity, interesting episodes, and imagination are all qualities of a story.
7. In storytelling, exaggerations, untrue events, and fables are acceptable.

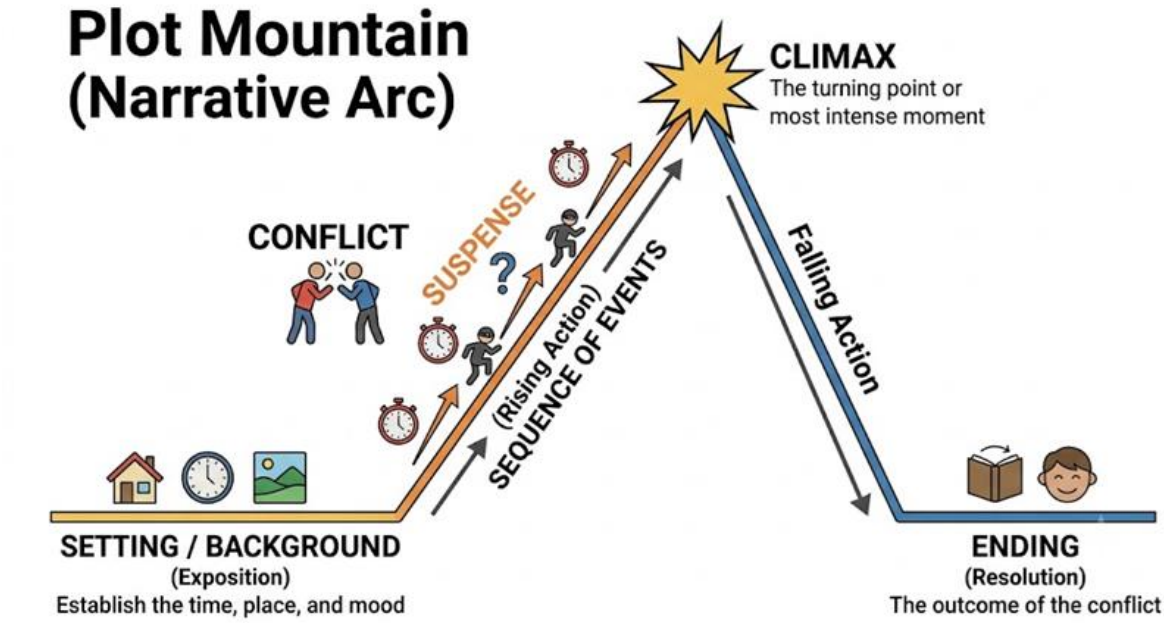

Figure 1.1: Major Characteristics of a Narrative Text

The figure above brings together the characteristics you have just studied. Notice that the features are connected. A storyline provides the sequence of events, while suspense encourages the reader to continue. A vivid description helps the reader imagine the characters and events, while the climax marks an important point in the story's development.

Now that we have briefly outlined the narrative's major characteristics, we will introduce you to some narratives. Our aim is to analyse some of these stories to highlight the characteristics we have outlined above.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read the story titled '*I Have Found You a Girl'* by Gideon Tseja and answer the questions that follow. Remember, you are supposed to read this story at an average reading speed.

The characteristics you have examined provide a useful framework for reading narratives critically. Rather than reading only for the sequence of events, you can now ask questions such as: Who are the characters? How are they presented? Where is the suspense? How are events arranged? What ideas does the story communicate?

We shall now apply these questions to Gideon Tseja's *I Have Found You a Girl*. As you read, try to identify the narrative features discussed above.

1.3.3 I Have Found You a Girl

Before You Continue

As you begin reading the story, what would you look for to decide whether it has the characteristics of a narrative text?

The following story gives you an opportunity to apply what you have learnt about narrative texts. Read it carefully. Remember that you are expected to read the story at an average reading speed. Do not rush through it. Pay attention to the characters, sequence of events, suspense, descriptions and ideas.

It was Silas who walked up to Steven one day and said unceremoniously, "I have found you a girl".

"You have found me a girl? I did not tell you that I wanted a girl," said Steven without much enthusiasm. "Every boy needs a girl," replied Silas dismissively. "You will like her. She is beautiful. Fair-skinned, like you." When Steven did not make further comments, he continues. "Her name is Margaret. She is also called Linda. She is going to form one at WTC, Kabba; same school with my girl, Becky. I tell you, you will like her. Pretty, young." The boisterous Silas left as abruptly as he had come, to chase some more girls, no doubt.

Steven did not dwell on what his cousin had told him. Instead, he wondered about him. He was always like this. He always had a way with women. Considerably shorter than him, stocky and dark skinned, Silas had always been attractive to women. He was like a magnet that pulled them irresistibly to him. As to the girl he said he had found for him, well,he would have to see. It might turn out that the girl was not his type at all.

At Silas's insistence, Steven agreed to, at least, see the girl. But there was no question of his going to her family house. How was he going to explain his presence in a house he was not used to visiting?

One day Steven was walking towards his house in the company of Silas. Suddenly Silas grabbed his arm excitedly and pointed. There at a road junction near the motor park, and talking with another girl whom Steven recognised as Christie Alaaga, was a beautiful girl about fifteen years old.
'
'That's the girl I was telling you about'' said Silas conspiratorially. His cousin was right, thought Steven. She was very beautiful, petit and fair- skinned. He noticed his heart was beating faster. By now they had caught up with the girls, and Silas in that characteristically easy way he had with women, introduced Steven to the young women. Turning his attention to Margaret, he said, "this fine boy is going to be your husband''. Margaret giggled with some embarrassment, and Steven, while keeping a calm exterior, felt awkward and was all jelly inside. His tongue suddenly felt dry as he muttered something to the effect that it was nice to meet her. Silas kept the foursome together for a while with his witty, mischievous jokes, and the girls finally left after a promise to see Steven again was extracted from the giggling little girl. She was on her way to see her uncle to inform him that she was going to college at Kabba.

''Now, what do you think?'' enquired Silas triumphantly. ''She's o.k.'' answered Steven, feigning lack of interest.
''She's o.k.' that's all you can say? Come on. Admit it. She is beautiful, and you know it''
Silas winked at his cousin mischievously. Steven merely smiled, but did not contradict him. Yes, Steven would definitely like to see her again. With Silas' help, a meeting was arranged for them in a friend's house - there was still no question of his visiting her in her house. In spite of the new ideas about romantic love, Steven felt more comfortable in the traditional way of courtship where the role of the families was of paramount importance. One wrong step in the way the parents were brought into the picture and the courtship was over even before it had a chance to get under way.

At the next meeting, Silas and others made discreet exits, leaving Steven and Margaret alone for the first time in their lives. There was awkward silence, as Margaret kept her eyes fixed on the floor while the eighteen- year-old boy stole furtive glances at her. He was the man and was expected to take charge of the situation.

He cleared his throat which had suddenly developed a lump in it. 'Em
...I must ask you one question, and please answer me truthfully.' Margaret kept her gaze on the floor. ''Do you ...do you have a boyfriend?''
''No, I do not have a boyfriend,'' answered Margaret faintly but without hesitation. She, too, had developed a lump in her throat.

''I am asking because ...because, I am not in the business of competing with anybody for a girl'' Suddenly, he was no longer bashful. ''I have no time for this boyfriend - girlfriend business. I want to marry you, so if you already have a boyfriend, I am out!'' Nothing in her younger life had prepared her for this kind of blunt wooing. Already, she had read some romantic novels. Modern courtship was supposed to be gentle and dream-like. But this man ...straight to the point If you have a boyfriend, then that's it!

What sort of men is this? These thoughts went through Margaret's mind. Strangely, as she might have expected, she was not revolted by the approach. She was rather intrigued. She discovered she liked a man who knew exactly what he wanted. She stole a quick glance at him before resuming her fixed gaze on the floor. What a handsome man! She thought.

Barely audibly, he repeated herself, "No, I do not have a boyfriend." "That's settled then. I'll marry you", concluded Steven with a finality that left no room for any contradiction.

For the rest of the holidays, they occupied each other's attention and time. Margaret would visit Steven's house, at first in the company of friends and then more and more on her own. But she did not go there to stay with Steven. Rather she stayed with Ma Mary and helped her with chores around the house. She went because of Steven, but she stayed with the mother. That is the way of African traditional courtship -the best way to a man's heart is through the mother. Steven still did not, at first, visit her in her family house, but his sisters and female relations did frequently. By the next holidays, Ma Mary had become very fond of Margaret. One day, she called her son and said. "That girl is a very good girl. I think she is right for you". Steven merely smiled.

"I know the family. They are very good people. I will start talking to them," concluded Mama Mary. Steven did not say anything which was another way of saying yes. Meanwhile, Steven had decided by the end of 1996 to stay on in St. Paul's and do the sixth form. From now he would spend the bulk of his holidays in Gboko. Now, this town had become the centre of his life after spending his early childhood in northern towns. It held the two great loves of his life -his mother and his wife-to-be.
Source: *Gideon Tseja (2001). My Unfortunate Brothers and Sisters Zaria: Tamaza.*

Have you been able to get the main points of the story? If you have not, I will advise you to read the story again, carefully and possibly at a slower pace to get all the details. You should also consult your dictionary for the meanings of unfamiliar words. Besides, try to guess the meaning of the words or phrases from the contexts in which they occur. If you think you have understood the passage, you can now answer the comprehension questions. Your answers will later be cross-checked against those given in the discussion. You should not turn to the discussion until you have completed the assignment.

Comprehension Questions EXERCISE 1

1. What type of boy is Silas?_

   _____

   _____

2. What type of a boy is Steven?____

_____
_____

3. What makes the narration informal in style?____
_____
_____
_____
_____

EXERCISE 2

1. Briefly map out the storyline, starting from the beginning to the end_
_____
_____
_____

2. List, if any, elements of the suspense in the story
_____
_____
_____

3. Identify the sequential order followed in the story_____
_____
_____

EXERCISE 3

1. Give examples of vividness of description, interesting episode and imagination in the story__
_____
_____
_____

a. Vividness___
_____
_____
_____

b. Interesting episodes_
_____
_____
_____

c. Imagination__

_____

_____

2. Are there elements of exaggeration in the story? List them____

_____

_____

_____

If you have completed the exercises, then turn to the discussion that follows.

Discussion of '*I Have Found You a Girl'*

You will agree with me that this story contains all the elements of a narrative. Characterisation is vivid and real, portrayed with considerable intensity. From the behaviours, utterances, and interactions with other characters, Silas could be said to be a womaniser- attractive to women- a boy who will never give up (insisting Steven meet the girl), and *cunning* (his witty, mischievous jokes).

It is also possible to determine Steven's character in the story: Steven is a bit *timid, tough inside;* he is a *pretender* (likes Margaret but does not want to show it); poor at wooing a girl: started wooing with '*Do you have a boyfriend?'*

The narration is informal because of the use of phrases like "now she's ok," "that's all," and a conversational style. All these are typical of a narrative essay. The storyline of 'I have Found You a Girl' starts with Silas tempting Steven with a girl□, Steven gradually succumbing,□Steven wooing the girl□ , and□parental interference. Remember, all narratives must have a storyline.

Suspense- we are in suspense as to what will happen to the relationship between Steven and Margaret. Will it be cordial or break? Suspense is, indeed, a characteristic feature of a narrative.
Sequential order- this is clearly defined in the story. The order is: insinuation of a girl by Silas

- Steven meets the girl
- Steven wooing the girl
- Acceptance
- Intimacy
- The coming of the mother into the affair.

Again, all narratives should follow a particular sequential order of events.

Stylistic features of '*I have Found You a Girl'*

- Vividness- *she is beautiful, fair-skinned, and one* can easily visualise Margaret through the description.
- *Interesting episode*- Margaret meeting Silas and Steven, and the mischievous way Silas hands over Margaret to Steven.
- The romantic episode- where Steven woos Margaret.

Imagination- the whole story may be largely imaginative. There might not have been a situation like the one described here in real life.
Judging from all of the analyses done above, you will agree with me that '*I have Found You a Girl'* qualifies for an interesting narrative.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Narrative should always have a theme, that is, the central idea being pursued, read *I have Found You a Girl* again and suggest a theme for the story.

I know you are finding the story more interesting as you read it the second time. What theme can you work into the story? How do you determine the theme of a story? You look for ideas, expressions, or words that recur several times in the story or novel. In this story, you will agree with me that the idea of love occurs at different times.

Let's look at the story for this:

- found a girl
- needs a girl
- my girl
- had a way with women
- do you have a boyfriend? And many more.

All of these suggest *lust* or *love* for women. Thus, we can call the theme of the story the *feeling of love, the romantic life of youthful days, and a youthful, exuberant love affair.*

A final word for you- one of the greatest benefits of reading extensively is to gain new words. Read the story again and search for the meaning of words that are new to you. Get their meanings and use them when necessary. Let them become part and parcel of your life.

Self-Assessment Exercise 5

Enemies Everywhere

William Wallis

WE HAD FALLEN ASLEEP under a mango tree watching the dawn rise over the River Congo. The long grass whispering in a breeze, as the river lumbered by in golden light, had provided an irresistible lullaby. The soldiers on frontier duty were too busy receiving rations to find us a worry and we were too seduced by the larger picture to find them threatening.

But recruits from the Presidential Guard who swung by on patrol saw in the admittedly unusual sight of two white men sleeping on the river banks, the making of a subversive mission to destroy Laurent Kabila's first anniversary in power. It was hopeless to explain that we were just two friends profiting from the quiet of dawn to prepare for the stress of another day in Kinshasa. We were labeled 'suspect' -an excuse for unlimited prison terms in President Kabila's Congo-and carted off in an army pick-up. It used to be, in the latter days of the former Mobutu regime, that if a soldier barked at you, you could bark back or growl the name of a general: five times out often he would withdraw. If not, a bank-note would usually send him off in search of other prey. But something less predictable had got hold of Kinshasa. It had become impossible to tell if the gun in your face was just for show. Often man with the gun saw a conspiracy in your helpful smile and felt inclined to blow it away. The tolerance and humour which always seemed to characterise life under Mobutu's rule - even at the toughest time -had evaporated.

And so it was that we - two journalists short of a story -got an exclusive tour of one of the more sinister detention centers that had sprung up in the mansions deserted last year when Mobutu and his henchmen fled a successful bid to end their rule.

Once a luxury apartment block belonging to Mobutu's uncle Litho, the building now housed an assortment of security services and prisoners ranging from simple 'suspects' to ministers fallen from favour and aid workers deemed spies. Outside there was a rabble of men in track-suits armed with pistols, red-eyed teenage soldiers and sharp-suited officials with the glint of sadists. From under closed doors, the smell of torture and deprivation seeped out. And there was the inevitable interrogation: a humourless young man probing every aspect of our dawn excursion and the lives that led up to it.

Luckily, he decided he had other more important detainees to deal with and let us leave, equipped with a new impression of how things were falling apart. The scene, we decided, smacked more of a regime in its death throes than the year-old administration of a president who had overthrown his predecessor to almost universal applause. Instead of building on consensus, they were recruiting misfits to beat the people into line. Where a problem emerged, their answer was to lock up its perceived author. Sooner or later things were going to explode. Now they have.

Several of President Kabila's senior aides told me how, in the late stages of their rebellion, a debate had raged over the relative merits of marching on Kinshasa and

seeing off Mobutu, or holding back in the territory they had already won with ease. From Lubumbashi in the south, some advised, they could have f negotiated a more solid political entry into the troublesome capital than the military one they ultimately chose. 'We were afraid Kinshasa, which had a reputation as viper's nest of political squabbles and corruption, could unravel our alliance,' said one of them. Their fears were well-founded. Once in Kinshasa, it proved impossible to combine the interests of a nation on the bread-line with those of regional backers such as the Rwandans, who were perceived by the local population as having expansionist designs. Fractious politicians, with irreconcilable agendas, added to a growing sense of paranoia. And if you imagine enemies everywhere, eventually they become real. It is a symbolic blow to President Kabila that a man he imprisoned for holding a news conference, emerged as one of the leaders of a new revolt. When Z'Ahidi Ngoma was shown on state television after being captured following a prison escape last year, the Congolese were truly shocked. The new government was not only failing to distinguish itself from its predecessor, but it was brazen enough to display the evidence: the former law professor was manacled, close to starving and showed visible signs of having been tortured. It was another public relations disaster in a country thirsty for freedom.

I have often wondered whether Kabila decided it was easier to copy Mobutu than to create a new style of leadership. The personality cult, the repression and corruption, the juggling of foreign alliances, even the same advisor who gave Mobutu his image as emperor-none of it seemed to have changed. And now, the same consequences. It is almost surreal to be watching Kabila face a Rwandan-backed rebellion starting in the east as Mobutu did when I first arrived in Kinshasa two years ago, to hear the same Rwandan denials of involvement and to witness the same xenophobic government-inspired witch-hunts. It is a time to settle scores and there are enough of them to ensure that the dream of a rosy dawn for Congo remains just that.

Source: ***BBC Focus on Africa, (August 2001).***

You have now examined the major characteristics of narrative texts and applied them to a selected narrative. To reinforce these ideas, watch a short instructional video on narrative texts, particularly the relationship among characters, setting, plot, conflict, climax and resolution.

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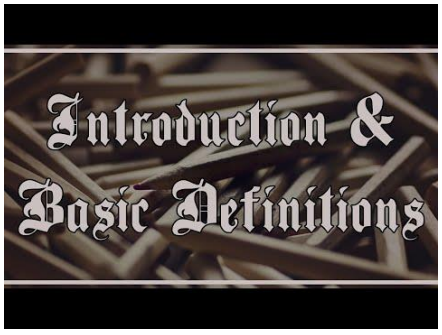



1.4 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to narrative texts as one of the diverse types of texts you will encounter in your academic and general reading.

You have learnt:

- what narratives are;
- the characteristics of narratives;
- the importance of storyline and sequential order;
- how suspense operates in a narrative;
- how characterisation contributes to a story;
- how vividness, interesting episodes and imagination make narratives engaging; and
- how to analyse a narrative work using *I Have Found You a Girl* as an example.

The unit has also emphasised the importance of extensive reading. As you read more stories, you will encounter new vocabulary, different experiences and different ways of presenting ideas. These experiences can strengthen your reading ability and prepare you for other forms of academic texts in subsequent units



1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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1.6 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise

Self-Assessment Exercise 1: Narrative Texts

1. A narrative text is a text that tells a story or presents a sequence of events.
2. Novels and short stories.
3. Reading stories can improve reading speed and comprehension and expose learners to different life experiences.
4. Stories expose readers to new words and expressions through meaningful contexts.
5. Possible answers include joy, sadness, conflict, destruction, suffering, affluence, greed and avarice.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2: Characteristics of Narrative Texts

1. a
2. b
3. a
4. c
5. a

Exercise 1: *I Have Found You a Girl*

1. Silas is presented as outgoing, confident, sociable, witty, mischievous and attractive to women. He is persistent in helping Steven meet Margaret.
2. Steven is presented as relatively timid or reserved, although he is determined and direct when he finally speaks to Margaret. He initially pretends not to be interested in her.
3. The conversational language, informal expressions and dialogue contribute to the informal style of the narration.

Exercise 2: Story Structure

1. The storyline begins with Silas telling Steven that he has found a girl for him. Steven eventually meets Margaret, becomes interested in her, woos her and begins a relationship with her. Margaret becomes familiar with Steven's family, and his mother eventually approves of the relationship.
2. Suspense is created by uncertainty about whether Steven and Margaret will accept each other and whether their relationship will develop successfully.
3. The story follows a chronological sequence from the introduction of Margaret through the meetings, courtship and increasing involvement of the family.

Exercise 3: Narrative Features

1. a. **Vividness:** Margaret is described as beautiful, petite and fair-skinned.
   b. **Interesting episodes:** Silas introduces Steven to Margaret and tells her that Steven will be her husband.

c. **Imagination:** The story presents a detailed romantic courtship that may be fictionalised.

2. Yes. Some descriptions and expressions contain elements of exaggeration, such as Silas being described as a magnet that irresistibly attracts women.

Self-Assessment Exercise: Theme

1. The theme is the central idea or main idea developed throughout a narrative.
2. A possible theme is youthful love and romantic courtship.
3. Examples include “I have found you a girl”, “Every boy needs a girl”, “my girl” and “Do you have a boyfriend?”
4. The story reflects traditional courtship through family involvement, Steven's reluctance to visit Margaret's family house initially, Margaret's relationship with Steven's mother, and the mother's eventual involvement in the relationship.

Self-Assessment Exercise: Narrative Features

1. **Characterisation** presents the personalities and behaviours of the people in the story.
2. **Storyline** provides the sequence of events.
3. **Suspense** creates uncertainty that encourages the reader to continue reading.
4. **Sequential order** organises events in a logical or chronological pattern.

UNIT 2 READING DIVERSE TEXTS: EXPOSITORY TEXTS

Unit Structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Understanding Expository Texts
2.3.1 Features of Expository Texts
2.3.2 Analysis of a Sample Expository Text
2.3.3 Discussion of the Sample Expository Text
2.4 Summary
2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Resource
2.6 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise



2.1 Introduction

In the previous unit, you were introduced to **narrative texts**, which present events and experiences as stories. In this unit, you will continue your study of diverse texts by examining **expository texts**.

Expository texts are particularly important in academic reading because they explain ideas, concepts, processes, issues and viewpoints rather than simply telling stories. As a student, you will encounter expository texts in textbooks, course materials, journal articles, reports, essays, examination questions and other academic documents.

To read an expository text effectively, you need to pay attention to how ideas are organised, how explanations are developed and how evidence is used to support particular points. These features can help you identify the writer's main idea and follow the development of the discussion.

As you work through this unit, compare the features of expository texts with those of narrative texts that you studied in Unit 1. This comparison will help you recognise the differences between texts that tell stories and texts that explain ideas.

You will also analyse a sample expository passage on the importance of education. Through the passage and the activities that follow, you will practise identifying main ideas, supporting details, textual organisation and meanings of words from context.

As you read, keep your dictionary, notebook and writing materials nearby. You may also need to make brief notes as you read. These practices will help you develop the reading skills required for successful academic study.



2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define expository texts;
- identify the major features of expository texts;
- distinguish expository texts from narrative texts;
- analyse a sample expository text.



2.3 Understanding Expository Texts

In the previous unit, you learnt that narrative texts tell stories. You examined features such as storyline, suspense, sequential order, vivid description and imagination.

Expository texts are different. Rather than presenting a sequence of events as a story, they are primarily concerned with explaining, describing, informing or clarifying an issue, concept, process or viewpoint.

2.3.1 Features of Expository Texts

In the last unit, you were introduced to narrative texts. Can you still remember the characteristic features of narrative reading texts? I think you can remember. Narrative texts are informal; they follow a particular storyline; they keep the reader in suspense; they are ordered sequentially; and they can be very vivid and imaginative. In this section of the unit, I will introduce you to expository texts. By expository texts, we mean reading texts that explain an issue, a theory, a concept, or a plan, using a good work of art. Expository reading materials do not tell a story; they explain concepts.

Now that you know what we mean by expository texts, let's outline as briefly as possible their characteristics.

1. Expository texts are more formal than narrative texts. In most cases, abbreviations, contractions (such as don't, isn't, and haven't), conversational style, and colloquialisms, which may appear in narrative texts, are limited in expository texts.
2. Expository texts do not tell stories. They discuss issues, concepts and plans and give reasons to support any viewpoint.
3. Expository texts are organised in logical, sequential order. The order is usually determined by the sequence of ideas being discussed.
4. Expository texts explain. The explanations are in clear-cut terms. They are vivid, interesting and well thought out. Some good writers present ideas like an onion. They unfold them bit by bit, one after the other.

5. Expository texts are supposed to be factual. Truths are to be guarded very jealously. All points are to be supported with concrete evidence. In most cases, you avoid exaggerations, lies, illogicality and clumsiness in expository texts.

Can you still remember the five points given about expository texts? They are points that you must bear in mind as you read this kind of text.

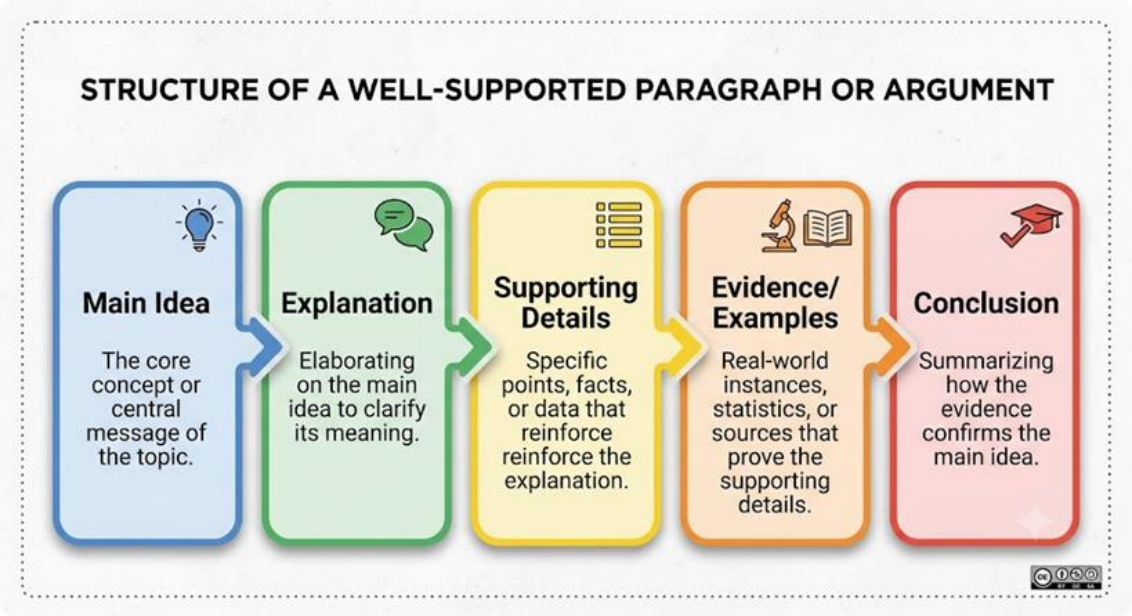

Figure 2.2: How an Expository Text Develops an Idea

Figure 2.2 shows the basic movement of ideas in an expository text. The writer usually begins with a central idea and then develops it through explanation, evidence and examples before drawing a conclusion or moving to another related point.

As you read the sample passage in the next section, look for this pattern. Notice how the writer introduces the importance of education, explains its functions at different levels and then discusses problems and possible responses. Reading in this way will make it easier for you to identify the structure of the passage.

2.3.2Analysis of Sample Expository Texts

Let's analyse some expository texts, using the characteristic features presented in the previous section.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Read the passage entitled ‘The Importance of Education’ and answer the comprehension questions that follow. Do not turn to the discussion on the passage until you have completed the exercise. You can form notes as you read the passage using the note-making format suggested in module 1, unit 3.

The Importance of Education

The importance of education in the socio-economic development of Nigeria, indeed of all nations, cannot be over-emphasised. In its broadest sense, education is indispensable for the building and sustenance of a modem nation state. It prepares enlightened citizens capable of communicating among themselves at an intelligent level, thus making it possible for them to work out their social and economic relationships. Education is, in fact, a necessary ingredient for national unity, stability and development, for it not only prepares an individual citizen for living and personal fulfillment, but also makes it possible for him to contribute effectively to the development of his community and the nation generally. No wonder then that every country devotes a substantial part of its resources to the education of its citizens, using it as an instrument for national integration and development.

The various levels and types of education prepare citizens and confer on them cel1ain abilities and competence that have profound effect on their future roles in and contribution to the society. The philosophy of Nigerian education, as well as its aims and objectives, has been clearly spelt out in the National Policy on Education, with each level of education given a role in contributing to the unity and development of this country. Education at the primary level confers on the individual the ability to read and write, thus increasing his communication ability with other citizens as well as between various communities. The post-primary level is made up of the secondary schools and technical colleges.

The secondary schools generally prepare students for admission into higher education, while technical colleges impart skill and professional training for direct, on-the-job employment; higher education is broadly classified in this country as the education given in the universities, polytechnics and monotechnics, and colleges of education. This level of education equips individuals with the necessary physical and intellectual skills to develop them into useful members of the community, as stated clearly in the National Policy on Education.

The role of education in promoting national unity and development is generally accepted. The level and type of education acquired by an individual generally determines the nature of his job and his place in society. Competition is thus intense for educational opportunities, and factors which limit any part of the country from effectively competing for education, be they historical, circumstantial or even as a result of self-imposed apathy, generate negative political and social consequences. In order to reduce these problems to the minimum, the various governments must ensure adequate and equal educational opportunities for all citizens who need it. Each part of the country must have equal access to education both in terms of location and proper funding of institutions as well as staffing and student enrolment.

That is why successive federal governments have made efforts to put in place policies that would ensure that educational opportunities are available to all and federal educational facilities are reasonably spread throughout the federation. The main

problem is to ensure that every state and local government is taking advantage of these federal facilities virtually at their door-steps to enhance their educational problems and then take conscious effort and sacrifice to provide the necessary resources to solve them. Most of the Northern States already have identifiable educational problems. One of the most urgent is how to increase the quantity and quality of output from the secondary schools for admissions into the tertiary institutions. At the moments, less than 15% of those who sit for the WAEC and JAMB matriculation exams in all public schools pass and obtain the necessary credits for direct admission into the universities and polytechnics?

These problems call for massive financial investment in the primary and secondary school levels of education, accompanied by stringent quality control measures. A successful example of how a state government can identify and solve a problem is the development of six science secondary schools by Kano State. This has enabled the state to utilise all available places offered to it and go even further to take up unused openings for other states.

Source: Mahdi, A.et al. NIGERIA: The Way Forward.

Comprehension Questions

After reading the passage, answer the following questions. You can turn to the passage and re-read it as you answer the questions.

1. List six importance of education brought out by the author in the space below.
2. What are the problems education in Nigeria is encountering, as pointed out by the writer?
3. What are the roles assigned to education?

(a) At primary level
(b) At secondary level
(c) At tertiary level

4. Give one evidence each to support the fact that the passage titled 'Importance of Education' contains the following characteristic features:

(a) Formal style
(b) Explanatory feature
(c) Absence of storytelling
(d) Lack of suspense
(e) Logical organisation
(f) Factual

Use your knowledge of finding the meaning of words in context, learnt earlier in this course, to find the meanings of the following words as used in the passage:

(a)	integration	(b)	confers	(c)	monotechnics
(d)	apathy	(e)	stringent		

2.3.3 Discussion of Sample Expository Text

I think you have completed the exercise by now. Do you find the passage difficult? If you have been reading extensively, I don't think you should find the passage difficult. If you have finished the exercise, start reading the discussion that follows.

Do you find it difficult to list the importance of education from the passage? The importance of education was well presented in paragraphs one and two of the passage.

Cross-check your answers with mine: Education is important for:

1. social-economic development of Nigeria
2. building and sustaining the modern state
3. promoting communication in an intelligent manner
4. national unity and stability
5. promoting self-fulfillment in the individual
6. providing jobs
7. Providing status in the society.

Also, the second question, which asks for the problems faced by education in Nigeria, is not very problematic:

1. the main problem is the need to make sure that every state and local government takes advantage of education
2. the problem of how to increase the quantity and quality of output of secondary education to meet the demand of tertiary education.

The roles assigned to education at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels are clearly listed in the passage.

Primary education-- read, write and increase communication. **Secondary education** prepares students for admission into higher education.

Tertiary education equips individuals with physical and intellectual skills to develop themselves and their community.

Do you feel that the passage represents the features of expository texts very well? I think the passage is a good representation of an expository text. My evidence is presented in the box below. Cross-check them with yours.

EXPOSITORY CHARACTERISTICS IN THE PASSAGE TITLED "IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION"

- **Formal Style:** no abbreviations and contractions in the passage e.g. The importance of education in socio-economic development of Nigeria... cannot be over-emphasized is a formal style.
- **Explanatory features:** The passage gives a point and explains it with supporting sentences.

THE POINT

e.g. Education is, in fact, a necessary ingredient for national unity.

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE POINT

...for it not only prepares an individual citizen for living and personal fulfillment, but also Makes it possible for him to contribute effectively to development.

Absence of storytelling: only facts and supporting points are given, no story for illustration,
Lack of suspense: The writer gives the point and goes straight to prove it.
Logical presentation: The ideas are presented logically as importance of education → points in support → role of education at primary, secondary and tertiary → points to support the roles → problem of education → points to support the problems.
Factual: the writer presents facts about education, its importance, its roles and its problems.

Can you guess the meanings of the words? Do you have to turn to your dictionary for the meanings of the words? I can easily guess the meaning of the words from the passage.

1.	Integration	=	cohesion, unity
2.	Confers	=	places
3.	Monotechnics	=	a single technical school
4.	Apathy	=	dislike
5	Stringent	=	strict

Now that you have cross-checked your answers with mine, what do you think of your performance? Do we agree on most of the answers? If we do not, re-read the page to confirm all observations I have made.

What are the things that can make the comprehension of an expository passage difficult?

List some of these on a piece of paper. Compare your list with mine.

- **Lack of vocabulary of the field-** expository passages can be difficult if you are not familiar with the words used in the passage. Some words used are central to the passage, and you must know them.
- **Lack of organisation-** if the expository passage is not well- organised, you may become confused as you read it. All expository passages should start with the *introduction, main body* and *conclusion.*

- **Lack of familiarity** with the concept being discussed. If you have never heard the concept being discussed in the passage, you may find the comprehension of that passage difficult.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

How then do you overcome all these problems? Answer this in your notebook.

Let's discuss it. The ways to overcome the reading problems associated with expository texts are to read widely, accumulate a large vocabulary, and be conversant with as many topics and life experiences as possible.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

What are some of the tools that you must possess in tackling expository texts? List them in the space below.

_____

_____

_____

Cross-check your list with mine.

- Reading speed and accuracy
- Vocabulary power
- Thinking along with the writer as you read
- Prior knowledge of experiences that are being discussed
- Note-making ability
- Interest

You need all these skills to tackle expository texts. Possess them.

Self-assessment Exercise

Overpopulation Retards Economic Development

We are being daily exposed to a stream of ideological propaganda to the effect that the world is threatened by an unprecedented demographic crisis known as rampant overpopulation. We are told that countries whose populations are growing at an annual rate of 4% are creating serious problems for themselves because this 'excessive' growth causes poverty, overcrowding, food shortages and overuse of scarce public utilities and of other inevitably limited resources. Poor countries are causing their own poverty! We are made to believe that any society has a 'natural' limit to its capacity to produce more of the goods essential to provide decent living standards for all its people; that a fast expanding population severely strains a society's productive ability because an excessive proportion of its population is young children who, being unable to work, are a dependent burden; that the small section of society which does work productively is

dragged down by the weight of too many mouths to feed; that the poor are an embarrassing burden on the backs of the rich; that high fertility and large family size depress living standards by eroding ability to save and by reducing investment per person in physical capital and human skills, that had it not been for Nigeria's relentless demographic explosion, the country's meager resources could have provided a more satisfactory rise in overall living standards; that the possibility of self-improvement through abstaining from procreation means that the poor do have the opportunity to raise their own income level.

Finally, we are told that every effort should be made to convince the poor that lowering their fertility rate would be in their own interests as a means to improve their welfare, and that the only solution is for governments to take all possible steps to reduce population growth rate in order to avert the impending catastrophe.

This fallacy first gained academic respectability in the person of Thomas Malthus who wrote a book, 'Essay on the Principle of Population' in 1798. He argued that while the economy and per capita income increase by arithmetic progression (1, 2, 3, 4,5 ...), population grows by geometric progression (1, 2, 4,8, 16...); that the masses are unable to exercise moral restraint and therefore are doomed to linger perpetually at bare subsistence level. Inevitably, famines must periodically occur, destroying millions of lives, in order to bring population back into line with society's capacity to produce. Since Malthus's time, the theory has continued to raise its ugly head, and it is now a central theme of the World Bank and the U.S.A.

Malthusianism should be discredited as it shows gross misunderstanding of and lack of respect for the majority of people. To tell hungry people that the greatest obstacle to their development is their own animal sexual desires is identical to the theory that underdevelopment is due to racial inferiority, laziness and stupidity of the natives. Fortunately, the Nigerian Federal Government took a sober and reasonable line when it stated in the Third National Development Plan that a large and rapidly growing population does not 'constitute a serious or significant obstacle to domestic economic progress.' Population explosion does not cause poverty, but rather it is a rational defence mechanism of the poor against the threat of their extinction.

All living creatures perform their functions with a rhythm and energy most favourable to the survival of their species. Birds tend to lay more eggs after a natural disaster. Human fertility rises sharply when war has caused widespread loss of life. Population growth, far from continuing by geometrical progression to infinity, conforms to cycles connected with structures in the natural and cultural environment. Temporarily, high birth rates in poor countries are an expression of dynamism, maturity and vitality -a higher and healthier condition than the almost zero fertility of some industrialized nations.

Source: P. Heineche, Population Fallacies in the Nigerian Social Sciences Mimeographed.

Read the passage titled "Overpopulation Retards Economic Development" and answer the following questions based on the passage.

i. Give EIGHT fallacies that the writer recognised in the passage regarding overpopulation and economic development.
ii. Give the writer's defence against each of the fallacies you have identified.
iii. What are the characteristic features of expository text, brought out in the passage



2.4 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- expository texts explain, describe, inform or discuss ideas and issues;
- expository texts are generally more formal than narrative texts;
- expository texts do not primarily tell stories;
- expository texts organise ideas logically;
- explanation is a major feature of expository writing;
- factual information and supporting evidence are important in expository texts;
- vocabulary, organisation and familiarity with a subject can affect comprehension;
- meanings of unfamiliar words can often be inferred from context; and
- reading widely, developing vocabulary, making notes and thinking along with the writer can improve comprehension of expository texts.



2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note.* London: Edward Arnold. James, K., Jordan, R.R. & Mathews, A.J. (1988). *Listening-Comprehension and Note-Taking Course.* London: Collins ELT.

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UNIT 3 READING AND COMPREHENSION PASSAGES WITH TABLES

Unit structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Learning Outcomes
3.3 Reading Tables in Academic Contexts
3.4 Discussion on Reading and Interpreting Tables
3.5 Applying Table-Reading Skills to Food Production Data
3.6 Summary
3.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
3.8 Possible answer to Self-Assessment Exercise



3.1 Introduction

Reading comprehension does not always involve words alone. In your academic work, you will often encounter reading materials that combine written passages with tables, figures, percentages, statistics and other forms of non-verbal information. To comprehend such materials effectively, you need to read the written information and interpret the data presented in the accompanying tables.

A table can present a large amount of information in a compact form. For example, figures on production, population, income, agricultural output, or environmental resources may be difficult to describe in several paragraphs, but a well-organised table can present the same information clearly and concisely.

This unit, therefore, focuses on how to read and comprehend passages containing tables. You will learn how to identify information in tables, relate numerical data to written explanations, compare figures, identify patterns and trends, and draw appropriate conclusions from the information presented.

As you study the unit, pay attention to both the verbal and non-verbal information. The ability to connect the two is an important academic reading skill.

Before you begin, have your notebook and writing materials ready. You should also have access to a dictionary where necessary.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- read and comprehend passages containing tables;
- identify relevant information presented in tables;
- relate numerical information in tables to written explanations;
- analyse and interpret data presented in tables; and
- identify patterns, trends and comparisons from tabulated information.

3.3 Reading Tables in Academic Contexts

In the previous unit, you were introduced to expository texts. Such texts are mainly presented through words and paragraphs. However, academic reading often requires you to interpret information presented in other forms.

Reading -comprehension activities that you performed so far in the previous unit are based on verbal forms. That is, the use of words. Reading is not only about words. Sometimes you read figures, formulae, tables and so on. These are called non-verbal or concrete reading materials. In this section of the unit, you are introduced to reading passages with tables. In some cases, tables are presented in the body of reading materials, possibly as illustrations, as vivid presentations of facts, and for brevity's sake. What a table can say may be more than what two or three paragraphs can illustrate.

Consider a passage that discusses fish production in different parts of Nigeria and then presents the production figures in a table. Reading only the paragraph would give you a general idea of the subject, but studying the table would enable you to identify the actual quantities and compare the different sources of production.

The figure below illustrates the relationship between the written passage and the table.

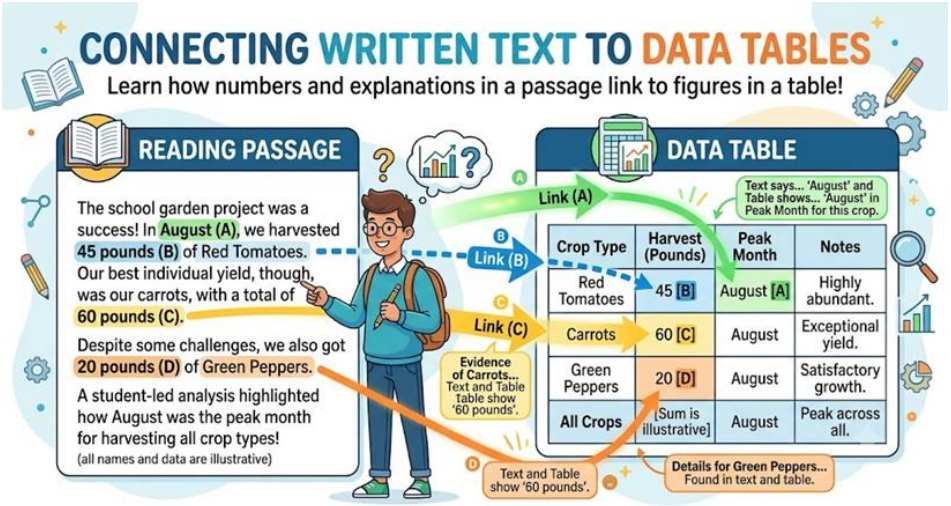

Figure 3.1: Reading a Passage Together with Its Table

As the figure shows, effective comprehension requires you to move between the written explanation and the numerical information. When the passage states that production increased, for example, you should look at the relevant figures in the table to confirm the increase. In this way, the table becomes part of the reading text rather than an additional piece of information to be ignored.

Let's practice this skill of reading and interpreting tables.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read the passage on "Fish Production in Nigeria" and answer the following questions. After you have attempted the exercise, turn to the discussion part of this unit and cross-check your answers and responses with the ones given there.

Fish Production in Nigeria

Table 1: *Fish Production in Nigeria (1989)*

Artisanal	***Tonnes***
Coastal and Brackish Water	*171,332*
Inland Rivers and Lakes	*132,122*
Fish farm *Industrial (Commercial Trawler)*	*25,607*
Fish	*28,411*
Shrimp	*5,231*
Distant (Imports)	*313,987*
Total	***676,693 Tonnes***

The table above shows that about 25% of the country's total fish production comes from coastal states. However, about 19.5% of the total fish comes from inland rivers and lakes. Of the total from inland rivers, more than 94% comes from Northern states, mostly Borno and Sokoto. Information from the Federal Department of Fisheries shows that from 1980 to 1982, fish production rose from 597,342 tonnes to 1,920,482 tonnes. It dropped in 1983 to 694,280 tonnes and continued to decline to 1985 when only 304)22 tonnes were produced. From 1986 to 1989, the production increased to 676,693 tonnes.

Forestry in Nigeria

Of the total land area of 98,33 hectare, the total area declined from 14.9 million hectares in 1980 to 10. 1 million in 1990, according to FAO. The national vegetation is an important source of nuts, honey, fruits, meat, fish, fodder, fibre, spices, resins, gum, tenain, fuel and other cash crops. About 150 indigenous woody plants have been identified.

FAO estimated that, in 1980, the High Forest Zone, which includes Oyo, Ogun, Lagos, Ondo, Bendel, Anambra, Imo, Rivers, Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers states, had a timber

volume of 165m3, unproductive forest had 120m3 and the savannah forest and grassland had 20m per family.

Table 2: *Forest Reserves*

Zone	***Reserve Area (km²)***	***% of Total Reserve Area***
Sahel Savannah	*2,571*	*2.7*
Sudan Savannah	*31,247*	*32.4*
Guinea Savannah	*38,271*	*39.7*
Derived Savannah	*3,208*	*3.3*
Moist Forest	*20,443*	*21.2*
Mangrove	*522*	*0.5*
Fresh Water Swamps	*256*	*0.3*

Source: *World Bank (1992).*

From Table 2, Sudan Savannah has a forest reserve area of 31,247 km², which is 32.4%; Guinea Savannah, 38,271 km², which is 39.7%; and moist forest, 20,443 km², which is 21.2% of the total area.

It has been estimated that annual fuel consumption per capita varies from 1.2 m3 in the South to 0.5 m3 in the North. A recent study of fuel demand in Northern Nigeria showed consumption of 620kg of wood, 120kg of grain stalk, 48 litres of kerosene, and 37kg. L.P.G. per adult, equivalent on average of both rural and urban households.

Bush meat is estimated to provide 20% of protein in rural areas. (Ajayi, 1979).

Fill in the gaps

1. Table l: Fish Production in Nigeria (1989) shows that 25% of (a)_ comes from (b)_____ and (c)_____ total fish comes from (d)_____the total from inland rivers and lakes (e)_____comes from the Northern states. From (f)_____ to (g)_____fish production rose from (h) _____to (i)_____
2. The language used to describe Table 1 includes_

   _____

3. The language used to interpret Table 1 includes_

   _____

   _____

4. What is the weakness of the presentation and interpretation of Table 1?

Have you completed this exercise? If you have done so, you can then turn to the discussion below. If you have not, go through the exercise and complete every question before you turn to the discussion. Now turn to the discussion.

3.3 Discussion on Reading and Interpreting Tables

In reading and interpreting tables, you should pay particular attention, not only to the language or words used in the passage but also to the figures, percentages and the items presented both on the table and in the body of passage. That is, just as your eyes are on the passage, so also must they be on the table presented. If you pay specific and close attention to the table and the passage, you will realise that the following are the figures and words that can fill the gaps in question 1 of the exercise.

1. The total; fish available in the country
2. Coastal states
3. About 19.5%
4. Inland river and lakes
5. More than 94%
6. Northern states
7. 1980 to 1982
8. 597,342tonnes
9. 920,482 tonnes

From the passage, we can identify the language used to describe the table. This answers question 2 of the exercise. The expression mainly used in the passage is-

The above table shows...
Other structures that can be used are presented in the box below.

The above table indicates...
The table specifies...
The table describes...
The table presents...
The table denotes...
From the table...

The language to interpret the table as presented in the passage includes:

- about 25% of the total fish
- about 19.5% of the total fish
- of the total from inland rivers
- more than 94% comes
- from 1980to 1982

- dropped in 1983 to…..
- continue *to* decline *to* 1985.
- from 1986 *to* 1989, the production.

The passage has some weaknesses in data presentation. The passage refers to data (e.g., 25%, 19.5%, and 94%) that are not shown in the table. It means the writer wants you to figure them out, maybe by finding the percentages yourself.

What did you learn from all of the above analyses? In reading tables, you should pay attention to both the verbal form of language used and the non-verbal form in the form of figures and percentages. You should be able to follow both the words and the data presented in the passage. You should also learn the skill of relating the figures to the words.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Go back to the passage read in the above self-assessment exercise, and read the second passage on 'Forestry in Nigeria'. Answer the following questions after reading the passage.

Comprehension Questions

1. What trends could be observed in the forest area according *to* the passage?
2. What are the views of FAO regarding Forest Zones in Nigeria?
3. What pattern can emerge in terms of forest reserve distribution in Nigeria?
4. Which Zone has the highest, the lowest and the second-highest forest reserve area?

Turn to the discussion below once you have finished answering the questions.

In passage two-' Forestry' in Nigeria**,** the writer loaded the passage with a lot of data. Almost every line contains one form of data or the other. Thus, comprehending such a passage demands absolute concentration and the ability to relate figures to words. Let's try to answer the questions raised. Cross-check your answers with the ones presented here.

Questions: What trends could be observed in the forest area according to the passage?

Answer: The writer suggested a declining trend: from 14.9 million hectares in 1980 to 10.1 million hectares in 1990.

Question: What are the views of FAO regarding the forest zone in Nigeria?

Answer: The high Forest zone had a timber volume area greater than the

combined volume of the unproductive forest, the savannah forest, and the grassland.

Question: What pattern can emerge in terms of forest reserve distribution in Nigeria?

Question: Guinea savannah tops the list of forest reserves, followed by Sudan Savannah, with the fewest being the freshwater swamp reserves.

Question: Which zone has the highest, lowest and second-highest forest reserve areas?

Answer: Guinea Savannah has the highest, fresh water swamp has the lowest and Sudan Savannah is next to the highest.

Going through the analyses above, you will realise that reading passages loaded with data information can be very demanding. There is a need to relate many figures to the ideas presented in the passage.

You can now work on your own to read, observe and analyse data from tables in the series of passages presented in exercise 4.

3.4 Applying Table-Reading Skills to Food Production Data

You have now examined tables relating to fish production and forestry. The same skills can be applied to agricultural information. The table below presents estimated food production in Nigeria in 1990.

Before reading the table, consider what you will need to do. You will compare production between the Northern and Southern states, identify commodities with significant regional differences, and use numerical evidence to support your answers.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read table 3 presented here, and answer the questions that follow, cross-check your answers with the ones presented at the end of the unit. The title of Table 3 is Estimated Supply of Food, 1990 ('000 Tonnes).

Table 3: *Estimated Supply of Food, 1990 ('000 tonnes)*

Food Item	Total Supply	Northern States	Southern States
Maize	2,192.64	723.36	1,364.68
Millet	8,648.51	8,648.51	0
Sorghum	6,871.11	6,829.77	41.34

Rice	1,729.68	551.55	1,168.13
Wheat	500.00	500.00	0
Acha	137.08	137.08	0
Cassava	10,000.00	1,720.00	8,280.00
Yam	11,025.16	4,365.90	6,759.26
Cocoyam	529.30	28.57	500.73
Plantain	744.28	37.20	707.08
Groundnut	350.00	344.75	5.25
Cowpea	1,955.18	1,833.79	121.39
Soyabeans	50.00	49.50	0.50
Benniseed	9.70	9.60	0.10

Source: Adapted from Mahadi, A. et al. (1994), *Nigeria: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward*, Kaduna: Arewa House

Table 3 above shows that in 1990, a total of over two million tonnes of maize were produced in the country, of which 1,364,680 tonnes were produced in the Southern states, while the Northern states produced slightly over 700,000 tonnes.

All the millet, wheat and acha, amounting to over 9 million, 500,00 and 137,000 tonnes, respectively, were grown only in the Northern states. In fact, acha was grown in Plateau State in the Northern states.

According to Wudiri (1993), sorghum grows in 20 states, but in 1990, of the 6.8 million tonnes grown, only 41,000 tonnes were grown in Southern states.

The Northern states produced more than 90% of the cowpea, soyabean and benniseed grown in the country in 1990. Similarly, more than 90% of plantain and cocoyam grown in 1990 were produced in the Southern states.

Questions on Table 3

1. a. Going by the data presented on the Table, which states produced more food in 1990, Northern or Southern states?
   b. Support your answer with evidence from the Table

2. According to the Table, which supply is higher?
   a. Maize or millet____
   b. Sorghum or cassava_
   c. Cocoyam or groundnut____
   d. Yam or millet _____
3. What trends are observable regarding food production patterns in Nigeria, according to the Table?
   Give two trends.

Now that you have completed the exercise, what do you think of reading passages with tables? My feeling may be similar to yours. I feel it is a challenging and interesting

exercise. You need a keen ability to observe, compare and relate many things together before you can find the exercise interesting.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What difficulties can you encounter while reading passages with tables? Your difficulties may be similar to the ones I will list below.

- Distractions that the tables and the figures may pose to reading and comprehension;
- Language may be complex and tedious to interpret;
- Lack of familiarity with the concept being discussed. For example, arts students may find scientific texts with many tables difficult to read;
- Interwoven connections with the tables and the passage. Sometimes these connections are not so clear.

Can you overcome these problems? Yes, I think you can by reading widely, being highly patient as you read the texts, and being keenly observant of details. Your language must also be highly developed to be able to grasp the complexities of reading passages with tables.

To read and comprehend passages with tables, let's offer brief suggestions to follow. Take these suggestions with you wherever you go.

- Read the passage very carefully
- Relate the table and the content of the passage together
- Observe details where necessary
- Be patient as you read and study the table
- Face the task with high proficiency in the English language
- Be able to bring out patterns, trends, conflicting views and contrasting views from the passage.



3.5 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt how to read and comprehend passages containing tables. You have seen that academic reading involves more than words alone. Tables, figures, percentages and other forms of non-verbal information can form an important part of a reading passage.

You have learnt that effective table reading involves:

- identifying the title and headings of a table;
- understanding the units used;
- locating specific information;
- comparing figures;
- identifying the highest and lowest values;

- identifying increases and decreases;
- recognising patterns and trends; and
- relating numerical information to the written passage.

You have also practised these skills using examples relating to fish production, forestry and food production in Nigeria.

The ability to read tables is particularly important in academic study because many textbooks, research reports, examination materials and other scholarly documents present information in tabulated form.



3.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

Adkins, A. & McKean, J. (1983). *Text to Note.* London: Edward Arnold. James, K., Jordan, R.R. & Mathews, A.J. (1988). *Listening-Comprehension and Note-Taking Course.* London: Collins ELT.

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3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. 676,693 tonnes
2. Distant sources/imports
3. 171,332 tonnes
4. 132,122 tonnes
5. More than 94% of the inland river and lake production was from the Northern states.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. The forest area declined from approximately 14.9 million hectares in 1980 to 10.1 million hectares in 1990.
2. Guinea Savannah
3. Freshwater Swamps
4. Sudan Savannah
5. 39.7%
6. Forest reserves are unevenly distributed across the different zones.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

1. Guinea Savannah
2. Freshwater Swamps
3. Sudan Savannah
4. 72.1%
5. The distribution is uneven, with the Guinea and Sudan Savannah zones accounting for a substantial proportion of the total reserve area.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

1. The answers should be supported directly from the figures in Table 3.
2. a. Millet
   b. Cassava
   c. Cocoyam
   d. Yam
3. Two observable trends are that some crops are concentrated in the Northern states, while others are concentrated in the Southern states.
4. Millet, wheat and acha.
5. Cassava, cocoyam and plantain are predominantly produced in the Southern states.
6. Food production shows a clear geographical pattern, with some crops concentrated mainly in the Northern states, and others concentrated mainly in the Southern states.

UNIT 4 READING SCIENTIFIC TEXTS

Unit structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Learning Outcomes
4.3 Reading and Analysing Scientific Texts
4.3.1 Why Scientific Texts?
4.3.2 Characteristics of Scientific Texts
4.3.3 Discussion on the Passage Titled "Periodic Table"
4.3.4 Do You Have Anything to Learn from Analysing Scientific Texts?
4.4 Summary
4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



4.1 Introduction

In the previous units, you have been introduced to different types of reading texts, including narrative and expository texts, as well as passages containing tables and other forms of non-verbal information. In this unit, the focus shifts to **scientific texts**.

Science and technology influence almost every aspect of modern life. Areas such as transportation, telecommunications, information technology, engineering, construction, medicine, agriculture and environmental management depend on scientific knowledge. Consequently, students in virtually every field of study encounter scientific information at some point.

Scientific texts may differ from ordinary reading texts in their vocabulary, organisation, presentation of information and use of technical terms, measurements, formulae, symbols and other non-verbal forms. For this reason, effective reading of scientific texts requires particular attention to both the language and the information being presented.

In this unit, you will examine the reasons for reading scientific texts and identify their major characteristics. You will also read and analyse selected scientific passages. The activities will help you develop the ability to identify important information, interpret scientific vocabulary and recognise how scientific ideas are presented.

As you study this unit, keep a dictionary, a notebook, and a writing instrument available. Where necessary, consult appropriate reference materials to clarify unfamiliar scientific terms.

Think About It
Have you ever read a scientific passage and found it difficult because of unfamiliar terms, symbols or formulae? What did you do to understand it?

Continue reading to find out how knowledge of the features of scientific texts can make such passages easier to read.



4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define scientific texts
- state very clearly the reasons why scientific texts should be read
- read and comprehend sample scientific texts
- analyse sample scientific texts with some measure of accuracy.



4.3 Reading and Analysing Scientific Texts

Scientific texts are used to communicate information about scientific concepts, principles, processes, discoveries and observations. They may appear in textbooks, journals, manuals, reports, laboratory instructions, research publications and other academic materials.

Unlike narrative texts, which mainly tell stories, scientific texts primarily present and explain information. They may therefore require the reader to pay close attention to definitions, measurements, relationships, classifications, formulae and technical vocabulary.

4.3.1 Why Scientific Texts?

As you probably know, the world is scientific. This age is popularly referred to as a scientific age. Science has dominated all spheres of life: transport, telecommunications, information technology, research,
engineering, building, medicine, agriculture, and many more. These fields all base their operations on scientific principles. The bulk of academic activities is science-based. It means justice is not done to reading if the reading of scientific texts is not given due consideration.

- You read scientific text to gain knowledge of the world around you.
- You read scientific texts in order to understand the by-products of scientific inventions.
- You read scientific texts to be able to utilise scientific knowledge for growth and development.
- If you are a science student, you need to read scientific texts for understanding of scientific principles, theories, laws and operations.

In this unit, we will expose you to some scientific texts and help you appreciate science better.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Answer the following questions in your notebook.

1. State four reasons why students should develop the ability to read scientific texts.
2. Mention three areas of everyday life that depend on scientific knowledge.
3. Explain one way in which scientific reading can be useful to a student who is not studying a science subject.

4.3.2 Characteristics of Scientific Texts

Reading scientific texts can become more effective if you know what to look for in the materials. Reading also becomes more interesting if one knows the characteristics of scientific texts. You need the knowledge of the characteristics of scientific texts to be able to read the texts with greater understanding. In order to expose you to the characteristic features of scientific texts, a sample text will be analysed.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Read the passage titled 'Newton's Second Law: Gravitation' and answer the questions that follow. By the time you go through this exercise, the features of the scientific texts will be unfolded to you.

Newton's Second Law: Gravitation

There are two other systems of units in which, as in the engineering system, the unit of force rather than of mass is arbitrarily defined. These systems take as their units of force the weights of the standard kilogram and a gram. The former force is called "one kilogram of force" and the latter "one gram of force is about 0.0022 1b or 980 dynes. The "gram of force" is commonly used as a force unit in elementary physics texts, where the reader has probably met it. The kilogram force is used as a unit of force in engineering work in countries that use the metric system exclusively. We shall use neither of these units in this book, and "gram" and "kilogram" will refer to mass only.

Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation

Throughout our study of mechanics, we have continually encountered forces due to gravitational attraction between the Earth and bodies on its surface, which are called the bodies' weights. We now wish to study this phenomenon of gravitation in somewhat more detail.

The law of universal gravitation was discovered by Sir Isaac Newton and first announced in 1686. It may be stated:

Every particle of matter in the universe attracts every other particle with a force which is directly proportional to the product of the masses of the particles and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them.

$F \propto mm^{1}$

$\overline{r^2}$

The proportion above may be converted into an equation by multiplying by a constant G, called the gravitational constant.

$$F \propto G\frac{mm^1}{r^2}$$

(5 – 5)

There seems to be some evidence that Newton deduced this law from speculations about an apple falling to Earth. However, his first published calculations to justify its correctness concerned the motion of the moon around the Earth.
The numerical value of the constant G depends on the units in which force, mass, and distance are expressed. Its magnitude can be determined experimentally by measuring the gravitational force of attraction between two bodies of known masses m and ml at a known separation. For bodies of moderate size, the force is extremely small, but it can be measured with an instrument which was invented by the Rev. John Michell, although it was first used for this purpose by Sir Henry Cavendish in 1798. The same type of instrument was also used by Coulomb for studying forces of electrical and magnetic attraction and repulsion.

Source: Richards, J. et al. (1977). Modern University Physics. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.

Questions

1. Give three examples to show that scientific writing is precise.
2. What suggests in the passage that scientific writing is a mixture of verbal and non-verbal forms of writing?
3. What does the passage mean by metric system, exclusively, directly proportional and inversely proportional?
4. Give three examples each of highly technical terms, technical and common terms in the passage.
5. Give examples of each of the following from the passage.

(a) Use of modification
(b) Use of passive
(c) Use of measurement
(d) Use of laws
(e) Use of calculation
(f) Use of formulae
(g) Use of definition
(h) Use of compare and contrast

By the time you go through this exercise, you will be able to specify the characteristic features of scientific texts.

Now that you have completed the exercise, let's discuss the questions. But remember, you are not helping yourself by reading this discussion before attempting and completing exercise 1.

1. Perhaps one of the greatest features of a scientific text is precision. Scientific writing avoids ambiguity (double meaning or interpretation), exaggerations, circumlocution (going round and round before making a point), sentiments (feelings) and tries to be impersonal (avoids the use of I, we, me, mine, you, etc.).

Straightforwardness, precision, and directness are the features of a scientific text.

Let's illustrate all these in the text.

Precision is shown by the following expressions drawn from the passage:

> The former is called one kilogram of force and the latter one gram of force.

The sentence in the box is specific and precise. It will not be precise if the sentence is rewritten as: The former is probably called one kilogram of force, and the latter is likely *called one gram of force*.

Other precise statements in the passage include: -

- The gram of force is commonly used
- The kilogram of force is used as..
- The law of universal gravitation was discovered by...

2. Scientific texts are usually a mixture of verbal and non-verbal forms. Verbal suggests words. Non-verbal forms are figures, diagrams, formulae, tables, etc. In most cases, the non-verbal forms are integrated or synthesised into the verbal form. Examples in the passage include.

3. Scientific texts are full of different kinds of measuring scales e.g.
The metric system: kilograms, grams Pound system (1 b).

- Is about 2.2 1b of force
- Is about 0.002216 or 980 dynes ⇒ figures or numbers
  $F = G\frac{mm^1}{r^2}$ ⇒ formula
- The numerical value of the constant G depends on the units.

4. Relationship is also very important in scientific texts. For example, the passage shows a relationship by words such as:

- directly proportional, which means a relationship between quantities whose ratio is constant
- inversely proportional means a relationship between two quantities such that one increases in proportion as the other decreases.

5. Technical terms are also common features of scientific texts. Some terms are highly technical, e.g. dynes and gravitational constant. Some terms are just technical, such as kilogram of force, mass, gram of force, particle, etc. Of course, there are also common words in scientific texts. Words such as universe, arbitrary, systems, standard, etc., are common in scientific texts.

All the words underlined above modify or qualify the nouns that are cycled.

(b) Use of measurement, e.g. kilogram, gram, lbs, dynes, etc.
(c) Use of laws, e.g. the law of universal gravitation stated in the passage.
(d) Use of calculation- e.g. the proportion above may be converted to an equation on multiplication by a constant G, which is called the gravitational constant.
(e) Use of formulae: e.g. $F = G$
(f) Use of definition: $\frac{mm^1}{r^2}$

The gram-force is commonly used as a unit of force in elementary physics. The kilogram force is used as a unit of force in engineering work.
(g) Comparison and contrast are expressed by expressions such as: The former force is... and the latter one gram.

You can see from the analyses and the discussions that scientific texts have their own peculiar ways of presenting materials. Your knowledge of these ways should assist you as you read these texts.

Let's work on another scientific text in order to establish the characteristics of scientific texts.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Read the passage titled 'Periodic Table' and answer the questions that follow. Do not turn to the discussion on the periodic table until you have completed answering the questions.

Periodic Table

Probably the most significant discovery in all chemistry, aside from the atomic nature of matter, was that of the periodic properties of the elements, now depicted in the familiar periodic table of the elements. The chemical properties of this table are probably familiar to most readers; the physical properties will be discussed later. The table was proposed independently by Meyer and by Mendeleev in 1869. Its usefulness lay both in its regularities and in its irregularities. One interesting irregularity in the original table was that, to place the elements in positions consistent with their chemical properties, it was necessary to leave numerous spaces unoccupied. Mendeleev suggested that these spaces would be filled with as-yet-undiscovered elements. Using his table, he was able to describe in considerable detail the properties these elements could be expected to have when they were discovered. It was nearly one hundred years before all these predictions of Mendeleev were fulfilled.

Reflect, for a moment, on the vast simplification that the atomic view of matter provides. Looking about us, we see innumerable kinds of materials. The atomic view indicates that these materials are of discrete kinds whose number, however large, is not infinite. The discovery of elements is a further simplification in that the many materials we encounter are composed of only about 100 chemically distinct elements, many of which are rare. It turns out that even these elements are not a heterogeneous group but are subject to further classification into a periodic table. The problems of chemistry are many, but it is easy to see that things are much simpler than they might at first appear.

Source: Richards, J. et.al. (1977). Modern University Physics. Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.

Questions

1. Identify the components of a periodic table_____

   _____
   _____
   _____

2. Why is the periodic table a useful chemical tool?

   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Describe the periodic table as presented in the passage.

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Comment on the language of science as presented in the article titled Periodic Table. _____

_____

Now that you have completed that exercise, you can turn to the discussion on the passage, titled 'Periodic Table'.

4.3.3 **Discussion on the Passage Titled 'Periodic Table'**

The passage on the 'Periodic Table' shows another side of scientific texts. Unlike the previous passage titled 'Newton's Second Law: Gravitation', this passage does not mix verbal with non-verbal forms. That is, there are no tables, charts, diagrams, figures or formulae in this passage.

Let's attempt to answer the questions posed in Exercise 2.

Question 1 Identify the components of a Periodic Table.

Answer: A Periodic table contains the periodic properties of elements, which are made up of physical and chemical properties.

Question 2 Why is the Periodic Table a useful tool?

Answer: It is because of its regularities and its irregularities-- Regular in terms of its elements falling in positions consistent with their chemical properties and irregular in that many spaces are left unoccupied to be filled by undiscovered elements.

Question 3: Describe the Periodic Table as presented in the passage.

Answer: A Periodic table describes the properties of elements. It views atoms as discrete, not infinite in number. It shows that the materials we encounter consist of about 100 chemically distinct substances.

Question 4 Comment on the language of science as presented in the article titled 'Periodic Table'

As indicated earlier, the language of science displayed in this article is a bit different from the one shown in the earlier article, i.e. 'Newton's Second Law: Gravitation'. No figures, tables and diagrams in this article. 'Periodic Table article' is more descriptive in outlook, less precise (e.g. the use of probably the most significant discovery... and more of an introduction to the topic.)
But like the 'Newton's Second Law: Gravitation article', this article has some characteristics of scientific texts. These include:

- use of passive forms

- …the physical properties will be discussed later
- the table was proposed independently by.
- …these spaces will be filled...
- use of technical terms -technical terms such as chemical properties, elements, atomic view, atomic nature, etc., portray the passage as a scientific passage.
- use of common terms that cut across all fields.

There are, however, some terms that are not technical but common and not limited to the scientific field alone; e.g. depicted, usefulness, positions, consistent, etc.
In terms of formal or informal style, this passage is less formal than the one on 'Newton's Second Law: Gravitation'. The present passage allows the use of personal pronouns such as he, we, us, and so on.

4.3.4 What Can You Learn from Analysing Scientific Texts?

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

What do you learn from all the foregoing analyses of scientific texts? Put your answers down on a piece of paper.

Compare your answers with mine; in all the analyses, it is possible for you to learn that:
- Scientific texts have their own peculiar structure and style
- scientific texts integrate verbal and non-verbal forms
- Some scientific texts are more formal than others
- Scientific texts can be loaded with information; you need high proficiency in English to be able to unfold these forms
- Some scientific texts are more highly technical than others.

If you are in the arts or humanities, you probably do not need to read complex scientific texts with highly loaded technical terms; but those in science and technology definitely cannot avoid them.



4.4 Summary

In this unit, you have studied scientific texts and the skills required to read them effectively.

You have learnt that scientific texts are important because science and technology influence almost every aspect of modern life. Scientific texts provide information about scientific principles, theories, discoveries, processes and applications.

You have also examined important characteristics of scientific texts. These include precision, formal and objective presentation, technical vocabulary, measurements,

definitions, scientific laws, calculations, formulae, comparisons and the combination of verbal and non-verbal information.

The analysis of the passages on **Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation** and the **Periodic Table** has shown that scientific texts do not all have the same level of technicality. Some may contain complex formulae, measurements and specialised terminology, while others may be mainly descriptive.

To read scientific texts effectively, you should pay attention to the title, technical vocabulary, definitions, measurements, symbols, formulae and relationships among ideas. You should also use context, dictionaries and other reference materials when necessary.

The skills developed in this unit will help you read scientific and technical materials more confidently in your academic work.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Read the extract from a medical book titled '*Sporozoa'*, carefully. You may want to form notes as you read the passage. After reading the passage, answer the following questions.

Questions

1. Describe in three sentences malaria parasites as presented in the passage.

   _____
   _____
   _____

2. Specify in the form of processes and stages, the life cycle of malaria parasites.

   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Describe in four sentences only the laboratory diagnosis of malaria.

   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Comment on the characteristic features of scientific texts exhibited in this passage.

   _____
   _____

Sporozoa

This group includes malaria parasites and related coccidia. These parasites exhibit a complex life cycle involving alternating cycles of asexual division (schizogony) and sexual development (sporogony). In malaria parasites, the sexual cycle occurs in the female Anopheles mosquito (Fig. 1).

Malaria Parasites Description

Four species of malaria parasite are encountered in human disease: Plasmodium falciparum, which is responsible for most fatalities; P. vivax and P.ovale, both of which cause benign tertian malaria (febrile episodes typically occurring at 48h intervals); and P. malaria, which causes quartan malaria (febrile episodes typically occurring at 72h intervals).

Life cycle

When an infected mosquito bites, sporozoites present in the salivary glands enter the bloodstream and are carried to the liver, where they invade liver parenchyma cells. They undergo multiple nuclear divisions, followed by cytoplasmic division (schizogony), and, when this is complete, the liver cell ruptures, releasing hundreds of individual parasites (merozoites) into the bloodstream. The merozoites invade red blood cells and assume a characteristic 'signet-ring' morphology.

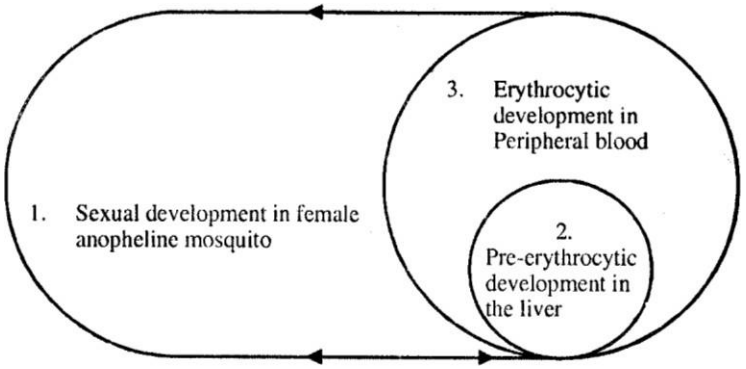

Fig. 1: Schematic representation of the life cycle of malaria parasites.

In the case of P. vivax and P. ovale, some parasites in the liver remain dormant, and the cycle of pre-erythrocytic schizogony is completed only after a long delay. Such parasites are responsible for relapses of tertian malaria, which may occur up to 2 years after the initial infection.

In the bloodstream, the young ring forms (trophozoites) develop and begin nuclear division (erythrocytic schizogony). Depending on the species, about 8 -24 nuclei are produced before cytoplasmic division occurs and the red cell ruptures to release the individual merozoites, which then infect fresh red blood cells.

Instead of entering the cycle of erythrocytic schizogony, some Vlerozoites develop within red cells into male or female gametocytes. These do not develop further in the

human host, but when the blood is ingested by the insect vector, the nuclear material and cytoplasm of the male gametocytes differentiate to produce several individual gametes, which give the gametocyte the appearance of a flagellate body (exflagellating male gametocyte).

The gametes become detached and penetrate the female gametocyte, which elongates to form the ookinete, the zygotic form. This penetrates the mid-gut wall of the mosquito and settles on the body cavity side as an oocyst, which is yet another multiplicatory phase within which numerous sporozoites are formed. When mature, the oocyst ruptures, releasing the sporozoites into the body cavity, from where some find their way to the salivary glands.

Erythrocytic cycle of P. falciparum- P.falciparum differs from the other forms of malaria parasite in that it develops erythrocytic schizonts from aggregates in the capillaries of the brain and other internal organs, so that only relatively young ring forms are found in peripheral blood.

The cycle of erythrocytic schizogony lasts 48 h, except in P. malariae, which takes 72 h. Since febrile episodes occur shortly after red cell ruptures, this explains the characteristic periodic fevers. However, with P. falciparum, the cycle of different parasite broods does not become synchronised as it does in other forms of malaria, and the typical tertian fever pattern is not seen in falciparum malaria.

Laboratory diagnosis

Acute falciparum malaria is a medical emergency that demands immediate diagnosis and treatment. To establish the diagnosis, a drop of peripheral blood is spread over a 2cm area on a glass slide. The smear should not be too thick; a useful criterion is that print should be just visible through it. The smear is allowed to dry thoroughly and stained by Field's method. This is an aqueous Romanowsky stain, which rapidly stains the parasites and haemolyzes the red cells, making the parasites easy to detect despite the thickness of the film.

With experience, the species of malaria can usually be determined from a thick blood film, but some of the characteristic features that assist in establishing the identity of the parasites, such as the typical stippling of the red cell that accompanies infection with P vivax or P. ovate, are better observed in a conventional thin blood film. This is stained with one of the many modifications of Giemsa's or Leishman's stain, but the water used to dilute the stain should be at pH 7.2 (not 6.8, as used for haematological purposes) to optimally demonstrate parasite morphology and associated red cell changes. Several serodiagnostic tests for malaria have been devised, notably the indirect immunofluorescence test, but these are of limited value.

Treatment -for many years, the standard treatment for acute malaria was chloroquine. However, resistance to that drug in P. falciparum (but not other species) is now widespread, and alternative agents often have to be used. The most reliable alternative

to chloroquine is quinine, a traditional remedy derived from cinchona bark for centuries.

Newer antimalarials include mefloquine and halofantrine. Although these compounds are active against chloroquine-resistant strains, resistance to them has already been described, and there are fears that this will become widespread with indiscriminate use.

Treatment of acute malaria with chloroquine, quinine or other antimalarials will not eliminate exo-erythrocytic parasites in the liver. For this purpose, the 8-aminoquinoline drug primaquine must be used. This agent carries the risk of precipitating haemolysis in individuals deficient in the enzyme glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase.



4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. Scientific texts are read to acquire knowledge, understand scientific inventions, apply scientific knowledge and understand scientific principles and theories.
2. Examples include medicine, agriculture, transportation, telecommunications, engineering and information technology.
3. Students in non-science disciplines may encounter scientific information in their academic materials and need to understand it for effective study.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Measurement
2. Use of scientific laws
3. Technical vocabulary
4. Use of formulae and non-verbal information
5. Comparison and contrast

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Answers should identify precise numerical statements, measurements, technical terms, verbal and non-verbal forms, scientific laws, definitions, passive constructions and comparisons from the passage.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

1. The periodic table classifies chemical elements according to their properties.
2. It reveals regularities and relationships among elements and can help predict properties of undiscovered elements.
3. Mendeleev developed the table and used it to predict undiscovered elements and their properties.
4. The spaces represented elements that had not yet been discovered.
5. Examples include *chemical properties, physical properties, elements, atomic nature* and the *periodic table*.
6. The passage is moderately technical because it uses scientific terminology but remains largely descriptive and explanatory.

UNIT 5 READING FOR INTERPRETATION AND CRITICAL EVALUATION

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Approaches to Reading for Deeper Comprehension
5.3.1 Reading for Interpretation
5.3.2 Reading for Critical Analysis and Evaluation
5.4 Discussion of the Passage Titled *"Nigeria: the Good"*
5.5 Discussion of the Passage Titled *"Nigeria: the Bad and the Ugly"*
5.6 Summary
5.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources



5.1 Introduction

This is the last unit in the reading comprehension component of this course. In terms of the reading comprehension tasks you may be required to perform in academic contexts, reading for interpretation and critical evaluation is probably one of the most demanding. This is why its treatment comes towards the end of the reading comprehension component of the course.

Reading for interpretation and critical evaluation requires you to understand a passage thoroughly. It also requires you to identify both the stated and unstated intentions of the writer. In many cases, you are expected to make judgments about the ideas, arguments, or viewpoints presented in a passage. This requires careful reading, thoughtful analysis, and the ability to distinguish facts from opinions.

As you study this unit, pay particular attention to how you can read within and between the lines of a passage. You will learn how to identify meanings that are directly stated and infer meanings that are not explicitly stated. You will also learn how to examine the strengths and weaknesses of a writer's arguments and form your own reasoned judgement.

These skills are important in academic reading because you will often encounter texts that require more than simply identifying information. You may need to interpret the writer's position, assess the evidence provided, compare different viewpoints, and decide whether an argument is convincing.

As you settle down to study this unit, approach the activities with an open and critical mind. The skills you develop here will help you deal more effectively with demanding reading tasks in your academic work.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning and purpose of reading for interpretation;
- apply appropriate strategies to interpret stated and implied ideas in a passage;
- analyse passages critically by identifying their strengths, weaknesses, arguments and underlying assumptions;
- evaluate writers' viewpoints and formulate reasoned judgements based on textual evidence;

5.3 Approaches to Reading for Deeper Comprehension

Reading for interpretation and critical evaluation requires more than simply identifying information stated directly in a passage. As a reader, you need to understand the writer's ideas, identify what is stated and implied, examine how ideas are presented, and make reasoned judgments about the writer's position.

Interpretation involves going beyond the surface meaning of a passage to identify implied ideas, intentions, relationships and viewpoints. Critical analysis and evaluation require you to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the writer's arguments, consider evidence, identify gaps or inconsistencies, and form your own reasoned judgement.

5.3.1 Reading for Interpretation

As you read a passage for interpretation, you need to move beyond the literal meaning of the words. The figure below presents the relationship between the information stated by the writer and the meanings that a reader can infer from the passage.

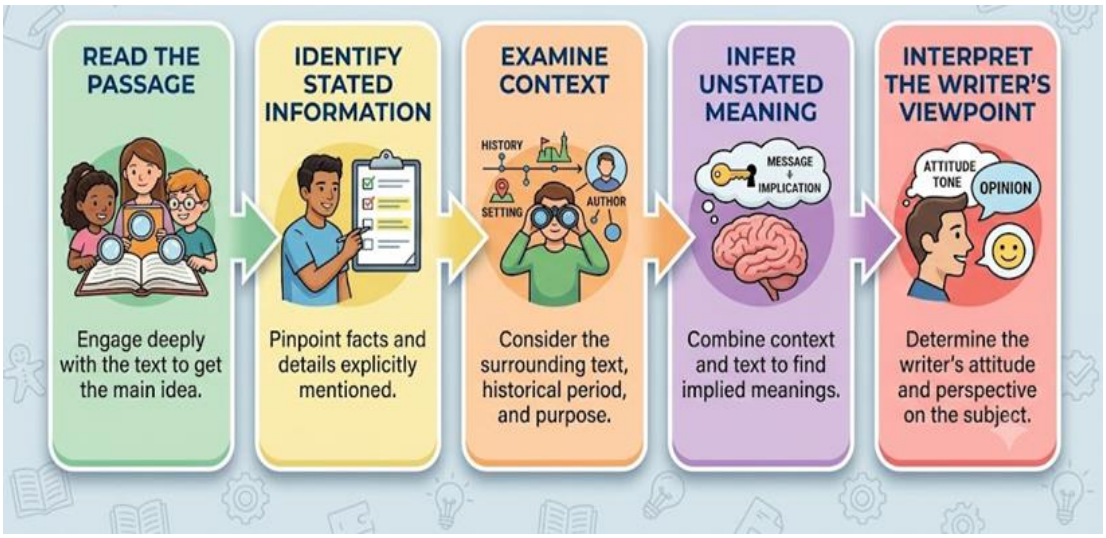

Figure 5.1: Reading for Interpretation

Reading for interpretation is in stages. The first stage is to read and understand the passage very well. Without a basic understanding of the passage, you cannot interpret the writer's stated and unstated views. The second stage is reading between the lines and above the lines to determine what the writer has stated, to infer what he has not explicitly stated, and to discern what he has implicitly stated. Interpretive tasks involve you answering the following questions.

- What does the passage give? What has the passage not given?
- Why is what the writer stated or not stated this way or that way?
- Why is the situation stated in the passage developed or operated?
- How is it determined?
- What trends are noticed in the writer's statements, presentations or points of view

5.3.2 Reading for Critical Analysis and Evaluation

A critical mind is an intelligent mind.

This captures what I have in mind for you in this section. In order to read for critical analysis and evaluation:

- you must read the passage carefully, usually at a study reading speed
- you must understand the passage in and out
- you must be able to provide answers to questions like:
- to what extent?
- how important or relevant?
- what are the areas of strength and weakness?
- how effective or successful?

In the exercises that you will do in this unit, you will need to think critically, understand what the writer says and fill in gaps that are not filled in the passages using your own past or prior experiences. You will also need the ability to see both sides of the coin (pros and cons), merits and the demerits of the writer's views or arguments. After all these, you will then be able to relate together the merits, demerits, gaps yet unfilled and contradictory views expressed to formulate your own value judgements, or your own opinions of the writer of the passage.

Let's go into action by practising all that we have discussed so far.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Reading the passage titled ‘Nigeria: The Good carefully’. As you read the passage, try to give interpretations to some of the issues that will be raised in this exercise. Also, think critically about some of the views of the writer. Come out with some judgments regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the passage, and your stand regarding what the writer refers to as ‘Nigeria: The Good’.

Nigeria: the Good Literally, all who believe in God must conclude that God loves this Nigeria dearly. Those who do not may simply say, at least, that nature is very fair to Nigeria.

Modern Nigeria today is endowed with stupendous potentials for economic, political and technological-cum-industrial greatness. Her huge size makes her one of the biggest nations of the world. In fact, Nigeria is the biggest nation in Africa, with the potential of being the true giant of Africa.

Her geography is arranged perfectly for her to have stupendous agricultural potential. Stretching from the Tropical rain forests on her coastline to the alluvial and excessively fertile Savannah grasslands of the hinterland, with all the numerous rivers and fresh water reservoirs which criss-cross the country, Nigeria is a natural candidate for rapid agricultural industrialisation.

These God-given potentials which we did not work to produce could, with very little creative self-efforts make Nigeria the true food basket of Africa and perhaps the world. From this 'free' gift, Nigeria has also a guaranteed position as an industrial giant, a technological power that could be very wealthy, if only she would develop this natural endowment alone.

When you add to this, the huge mineral resources, which abound in plentiful supply under the soils of Nigeria, quite naturally, minerals such as coal, columbite, limestone, marble, lead, zinc, salt, uranium, gold, tin and many others, such as the much sought after 'black gold' -petroleum - all of which God Almighty just literally dumped here, not through any effort of ours, you can, in the context of what obtains in the world today, conclude that Nigeria indeed is destined by God to be one of the wealthiest, most endowed, and perhaps the happiest places to live in; a self-sufficient industrial and technological giant a real world power. Only a very little creative effort is required of Nigerians to actualise this tremendous potential. Through the colonial fiat of nation creation, often solely for the convenience of the administering colonial power, Nigeria again found herself conferred with potential greatness, not through any conscious actions of the colonising power to so endow Nigeria.

In the process, of the amalgamation of the British Colony of Lagos, and the British Protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria, the nation- state of Nigeria acquired a huge population. This population is rumoured to be standing today at between 100 and 150 million people, thus making Nigeria the biggest black nation on earth. In fact, it is rumoured that every fourth black person on earth is a Nigerian!

In the context of meaningful interaction of a credible nature, in the comity of nation, where a nation's size, economic, industrial and technological capacity and capability determine her power status, Nigeria's size is a plus. Coupled with her stupendous naturally endowed wealth, Nigeria is an "A" candidate for a credible, dominant world power.

Nigeria's position is made even favourable and enviable as the advanced technologies choke themselves up with surplus manufactured goods in an ever shrinking, purely consumptive, market. Her huge size makes her an enviable important world market, which has not and cannot escape, the needle eye products. With proper maneuvering and creative manipulation, Nigeria could have acquired and can still acquire, a serious leverage which would ensure serious power status for her, as well as make her derive tremendous benefits from developed technologies, all principally from this endowed fact of her size and population.

Before independence came, Nigeria's numerous tribes and differing nationalities showed promise of a rare understanding required of all evolving systems destined to succeed. The post-colonial leadership, in sincere determination to regain their self-determination, showed superior qualities of intellect and commitment. They cooperated to defeat British imperialism, despite the multiplicity of her tribes and the constant application of the British tactics of divide and rule. Tribal Nigeria, led by the trio of the late Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and erudite Zik of Africa, the Rt. Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, outwitted British divide and rule tactics and won self-government for the regions in 1957 and 1959 and independence, without a drop of blood, for the nation-state of Nigeria.

Committed to the building of a modern nation-state out of the over 250 nationalities they presided over, these founders of modern Nigeria, adopted willingly at independence the best system necessitated by the apparent indomitable problem of ethnic pluralism confronting them. The Nigerian genius in them led them to choose, correctly, federalism as the best form of government suitable for Nigeria.

In fact, at independence, this uncertain Nigeria of today was a modest 'showpiece' of a success story: the story of grafting successfully Western democratic institutions and practices in complete multi-ethnic African setting. These were the happy days which made Nigeria appear properly poised to fulfill all the expectations of the natural greatness conferred upon her by so many factors.

Source: *NIGERIA: The State of the Nation and the Way Forward. Kaduna: Arewa House.*

Comprehension Questions

1. What is the relevance of the title of this passage (Nigeria: the Good) to the contents of the passage?

Is ‘the true giant of Africa’ a good assessment of Nigeria in this passage?

_____

_____

_____

2. Is it true that all that is stated in the passage "are God -given"_

_____
_____

3. Assess the strengths and the weaknesses of the passage_

_____

_____

4. What is the significance of the following expressions in the context of the passage?

a) Free gift _____

b) Little creative effort_____

c) Nigeria's size is a plus____

_____
_____

5. According to the passage, what is the relevance of the past to the present?

_____
_____
_____

Do you know what? The five questions above are not to test you. They are to make you learn how to read between the lines, read critically and interpret issues as raised by a writer. Therefore, do not turn to the discussion on this passage until you have finished exercise 1.

Now that you have completed exercise 1, let's discuss it.

5.4 Discussion of the Passage Titled ''Nigeria: the Good''

What is your general impression of the passage? I think it is a well-written passage. It has convinced the reader that Nigeria indeed has its good aspects. Let's discuss each of the comprehension questions.

1. **The relevance of the title to the contents of the passage-** this question suggests your ability to be able to relate the title to the contents of a reading passage. You need to be able to interpret the passage in the context of the title. Do you think the contents of the passage are related to the title? I think so. In fact, the passage spreads all efforts to outline what is good in Nigeria:
   - her geography is good for agriculture and agricultural industrialisation

- mineral resources in abundance
- her huge size, which makes for an important world market
- early post-colonial leadership, which was without bloodshed.

With all of these facts, you can say that the passage is relevant to the title '*Nigeria: the Good'.*

2. The second question requires you to interpret the passage in the light of the statement made by the writer, *the true giant of Africa*. In this interpretation, you should be able to gather all things said by the writer to show that Nigeria is really a giant. These include *stupendous potentials, huge size, the biggest in Africa, stupendous agricultural potential, numerous rivers, an industrial giant, huge mineral resources, the biggest black nation on earth, an important world market,* etc. All of these are overwhelming evidence that Nigeria is indeed a true giant of Africa.

3. Question 3- assesses the strength and the weakness of the passage; this question is a critical assessment type of question. You need to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the passage.

I think the strength is easy to assess. The writer is able to:

- bring out the good in Nigeria
- support all good points with concrete and convincing evidences
- relate the past (colonial days) with the present (population in Nigeria presently)
- present the success stories of Nigeria in a convincing manner and
- choose appropriate words to reveal what is good in Nigeria.

Perhaps the article's weakness may be a bit difficult to assess. You need to think deeply, possibly beyond the article's context, to identify its weakness. Some of the weaknesses I can think of are listed below.

(a) The article is a bit sensational; it excessively glorifies Nigeria.
(b) The writer takes good to mean what is naturally given.

I think what is naturally given by God can only be good when they are utilised well.

4. Question 4 requires you to interpret the expressions in the light of the contents of the passage.

(a) Free gift- to suggest Nigeria's natural endowments are not being worked for;
(b) Little creative effort- to show that Nigeria needs very little initiative and power to develop its natural resources.
(c) Nigeria's size is a plus, to show that size is on the positive side of Nigeria. With her size, she can tap into products emerging from her natural resources.

5. The past is related to the present through references to colonial, post-colonial and Nigeria today. Colonial days witnessed amalgamation; post-colonial days suggest

qualitative leadership, and today, the expected showpiece of Nigeria's success story under democratic rule.

Self-Assessment Exercise
Briefly outline what the analysis of '*Nigeria: the Good'* means to you in **three sentences**. Cross-check your answer with the ones given below.

What do all these analyses mean to you? That's a good question. It means that in reading for interpretation and critical evaluation, you must understand the passage very well. You must be able to relate part of the passage to the whole. You must be able to think beyond the passage, through inferencing. You must be able to come up with your own opinions and pass value judgments.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Reading the passage 'Nigeria: The Bad and the Ugly' and comparing it with the previous passage 'Nigeria: The Good'. Bring out similarities and differences between the two passages.

Turn to the next discussion after completing this exercise.

Nigeria: the Bad and the Ugly

She was founded on the concept of federalism, negotiated, bloodlessly, by her founding fathers: the Rt. Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo and the late Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto. Rare breeds and real gentlemen indeed, who appeared to have imbibed the moderate spirit of British parliamentary democracy through the ,artfully, adopted strategy of compromise, learned through the crucible of primal experience gained from, and demanded by, the peculiarity of the multiplicity of Nigeria's fiercely proud ethnic nationalities. There was a real success story during the period of the struggle for independence. The beginning was also full of hope and promise.

The question then to be posed is- why has Nigeria, with all these potentials and promising beginning, not realised, up till now, her potential greatness? What went wrong?

The why, and non-realisation of Nigeria's greatness constitute principally, the BAD. Some of the terrible consequences are with us today. Our mode of reacting to the consequences which followed the non-realisation of Nigeria's potential and some of the destructive and divisive policies and actions and action tendencies which we indulge in, some blatantly, actions which appear objectively capable of destroying us and our nation-state, and yet we continue with same, constitute the UGLY. The rest of the presentation represents a mere exemplification of what is contended here, through a monotonous narration of a few selected such indulgent divisive policies, actions and action tendencies with potential capabilities for the total destruction of the nation-state of Nigeria.

Soon after Colonial Britain expanded the participation of the Nigerian African in the governance of the emerging nation-state of Nigeria, there appeared to be palpable ethnic ripples which crippled Nigerian leadership. These ripples quickly gravitated to the position of infusing all kinds of fears and mutual suspicions, which reached the state of outright distrust of other nationalities other than 'mine', soon after independence. This development, which Nigerian leaders became incapable of controlling, having handled the same phenomenon to snatch independence, was most unfortunate and showed graphically the BAD and the UGLY face of the Nigerian situation.

An unfortunate example which will illustrate the evolution and development of this terrible phenomenon which was later to cripple Nigeria, and now objectively threatens to tear her apart, will be presented from the salvo fired during the hey days of the founding fathers. If you cast your mind to the trauma that was Zik's in the Western House of Assembly in 1954, and go from there to evaluate the consequences of Zik's primordial response, you will feel sorry for us hapless Nigerians, and mourn the unwitting institution of the era of recurring lost opportunists of making the Nigerian nation-state a great edifice.

In that fateful year of 1954, the NCNC, of the then great Nigerian patriot, Zik, a man who throughout his life had argued strongly for a Nigerian nationalism as opposed to ethnic particularism, won a majority of seats in the Regional elections into the Western House of Assembly.

When this great nationalistic Zik, the leader of NCNC, the Party which had won the majority of seats in the Western House of Assembly, arrived in Ibadan, the capital of the West, from Lagos to be sworn in as Premier of the Western Region, Zik discovered, to his consternation, that his victory and majority had vaporised overnight!

The leader and founder of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa, a nationalist pan- Yoruba organisation, which had metamorphosed into the Action Group (AG) Party, had successfully convinced his Yoruba brothers of the NCNC not to allow an Ibo to be Premier in the West, the home of the Yoruba.

Bewildered, confused, humiliated and frustrated, the father of pan- Nigerian ism (and perhaps pan- Africanism), the great Zik of Africa, an avowed Nigerian nationalist, quickly withdrew into his 'tribal cocoon', and moved out of the Yoruba West and went 'home' to the East, settling firmly amongst his own tribesmen, the Ibo, who promptly rewarded him with premiership of the Eastern Region. This was really BAD and UGLY. The chain reaction set off by this BAD and UGLY happening had, and still continues to have, critical effect on how the Ibo Nigerian generally perceives his Yoruba brother. This enduring perception had had profound consequences on some critical political developments in Nigeria, and also on the manner of general developments and the evolution of the Nigerian nation-state.

In the upsurge of the aggressive ethnic nationalism which ensued, the North formulated her Northemisation policy, and the East became an 'East for Easterners', while the West merely consolidated her policy of 'West is Yoruba and Yoruba is West'. Everyone appeared to be so engrossed in the delineation, pursuit and protection of various regional interests that no serious energies were directed at developing the great potentials of Nigeria. As this BAD and the UGLY aspect of sectional nationalism waxed stronger, the GOOD atrophied, until we were almost paying only lip service to the development of the mega interests of the macro structure called the nation-state of Nigeria.

All other activities and interactions, whether they be in the economic, social and political spheres of the life of the nation-state of Nigeria, became primed, or appear to be primed, or at least to be substantially affected, by this perilous phenomenon now properly called ethnicity, or ethnic particularism.

Source: *Mahdi, A, et al. (ed) Nigeria: the Way Forward. Kaduna: Arewa House.*

5.5 Discussion of the Passage titled "Nigeria: the Bad and the Ugly"

Let us discuss Exercise 2. In order to be able to compare and contrast, or bring out similarities and differences, you need to understand the two passages very well. You also need the skill of relating one part of an issue or idea expressed in one passage to the ones expressed in the other passage.

Let's try to do this with the two passages.

Nigeria: the Good	Nigeria: the Bad and the Ugly
Similarities: The article is on Nigeria Listed points to support the argument Sees Nigeria as promising one-sided in his argument	The article is also on Nigeria Listed points to support the argument Sees Nigeria as promising at the beginning of the article One-sided in his argument
Differences Deals with the good aspects of Nigeria Sees natural endowments as the major source of the good Sees unity of political leadership during the struggle for independence	Deals mainly with the bad and the ugly aspects Sees ethnicity as the root cause of the ugly and the bad of Nigeria. Sees disunity in political leadership after independence, e.g. East versus West.

5.6 Summary

This unit examined reading for interpretation and critical evaluation. It explained that interpretation requires the reader to understand both stated and implied meanings and to make reasonable inferences from a passage.

The unit also examined critical analysis and evaluation. Critical reading requires careful examination of a writer's arguments, evidence, assumptions, strengths, weaknesses and conclusions. It also requires the reader to consider alternative viewpoints before forming a judgement.

The two passages, *"Nigeria: the Good"* and *"Nigeria: the Bad and the Ugly"*, were used to demonstrate how the same subject can be presented from different perspectives. The first passage focuses on Nigeria's natural, geographical, demographic and historical advantages, while the second focuses on ethnic divisions, political problems and other factors that have hindered national development.

The major skills developed in this unit include interpreting stated and implied ideas, making inferences, identifying arguments, comparing viewpoints, assessing strengths and weaknesses, and forming evidence-based judgements.

5.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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Unit 6: Art of Public Speaking

Unit Structure

6.1 Introduction
6.2 Learning Outcomes
6.3 Foundations and Skills of Public Speaking
 6.3.1 Public Speaking
 6.3.2 Mastering the Art of Public Speaking
6.4 Techniques for Effective Public Speaking
 6.4.1 Practice brings Perfection
 6.4.2 Impactful Display and Presentation
 6.4.3 Becoming the Storyteller
6.5 Overcoming the Fear of Public Speaking
6.6 Why Engaging the Audience is Important
6.7 Summary
6.8 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
6.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



6.1 Introduction

Public speaking is an important communication skill that you will need in many academic, professional and social situations. As a university student, you may be required to present an assignment, defend a project, participate in a seminar, address a group or deliver a formal speech. In each of these situations, your ability to organise your ideas and communicate them clearly to an audience can influence how effectively your message is received.

Public speaking involves more than standing before an audience and talking. An effective speaker needs to understand the purpose of the speech, consider the audience's needs, organise relevant ideas, select appropriate language, and deliver the message with confidence. The speaker also needs to use appropriate voice modulation, eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and pauses.

The good news is that effective public speaking is a skill that can be developed through learning and practice. Although some people may appear naturally confident when speaking before an audience, confidence and competence can be improved through preparation and repeated practice.

In this unit, you will examine the meaning and importance of public speaking, the qualities of an effective public speaker, techniques for preparing and delivering a speech, ways to overcome the fear of public speaking, and strategies for engaging an audience. You will also have an opportunity to prepare and practise a speech of your own.

As you study the unit, think about situations in which you may need to speak before an audience. These may include a class presentation, seminar, project defence, student association meeting, professional meeting or community gathering



6.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning and importance of public speaking;
- identify the qualities of an effective public speaker;
- apply appropriate techniques for preparing and delivering a speech;
- describe strategies for overcoming fear of public speaking; and
- demonstrate appropriate strategies for engaging an audience during a speech.



6.3 Foundations and Skills of Public Speaking

Public speaking is a form of oral communication in which a speaker presents ideas, information, opinions or arguments to an audience. It may occur before a small group of students, a professional gathering, a community meeting or a large public audience. The effectiveness of a public speech depends not only on what the speaker says but also on how the message is organised and delivered. A speaker with good ideas but poor communication may fail to achieve the speech's purpose. Similarly, a speaker who communicates confidently but has poorly organised ideas may confuse the audience.

The following subsections introduce you to the meaning of public speaking and the qualities required for effective public speaking

6.3.1 Public Speaking

Public speaking is an oral presentation in which a speaker addresses an audience.

Public speaking is the act of presenting an idea to the public, using your voice. The ‘public’ can range from a very small group of people to a huge audience. For most people, a bigger audience means more fear, but some people are just as terrified of presenting to a small group. When we think about public speaking, the first thing that comes to mind is someone giving an inspirational or educational speech, TED-talk style, but the definition isn’t actually that narrow. Public speaking can take the form of giving a work presentation, pitching an idea to an investor, leading a school assembly, or even taking part in a job interview.

Public speaking is inevitable; in reality, everyone will have to speak in front of an audience at multiple points in their lives. Therefore, it is important to learn the art of

public speaking and work on the skills of public speaking so you don't feel restricted by anxiety and are able to thrive in different circumstances.



Figure 6.1: A Student Delivering an Academic Presentation

Public speaking occurs in many academic situations. The speaker must combine clear speech, appropriate body language, and audience awareness to communicate the intended message effectively.

From a broader perspective, public speaking is important because it allows us to use our voices as a force for good. Talking about diverse and interesting topics is an educational tool, and a good speech can be very powerful.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. What is public speaking?
2. Mention four situations in which you may need public-speaking skills.
3. Explain two reasons public speaking is important to a university student.

Continue reading to find out the qualities that can help you become an effective public speaker.

6.3.2 Mastering the Art of Public Speaking

Great public speakers are not born, they are made. There are qualities that you need to focus on if you want to become an excellent public speaker:

Confidence: Confidence is key to the success of any presentation, as you will need to seem comfortable with the information you are presenting and assured of your expertise in the field.

Enthusiasm: Your excitement about the topic will resonate with the audience. If you are enthusiastic and energetic, your audience will feed off that and feel the same way about the information.

Authenticity: Your authenticity is key to earning your audience's trust. They must feel confident that you are providing them with accurate information.

Professionalism: The way that you dress and the way that you present yourself will also factor into your audience's ability to trust and respect you.

Adaptability: No matter how much you prepare for a public speaking engagement, you need to be prepared for the unexpected. Being able to read the room and adapt or pivot as necessary will help you navigate any event successfully.

Awareness: At all times, you need to be aware of your surroundings. Keep a pulse on the audience—are they interested and engaged? Monitor your own actions; be mindful of your voice level, enunciation, and ability to present the information at hand concisely.

An effective public speaker combines personal qualities with appropriate communication skills. Confidence, enthusiasm, authenticity, professionalism, adaptability and awareness work together to improve the quality of a presentation.

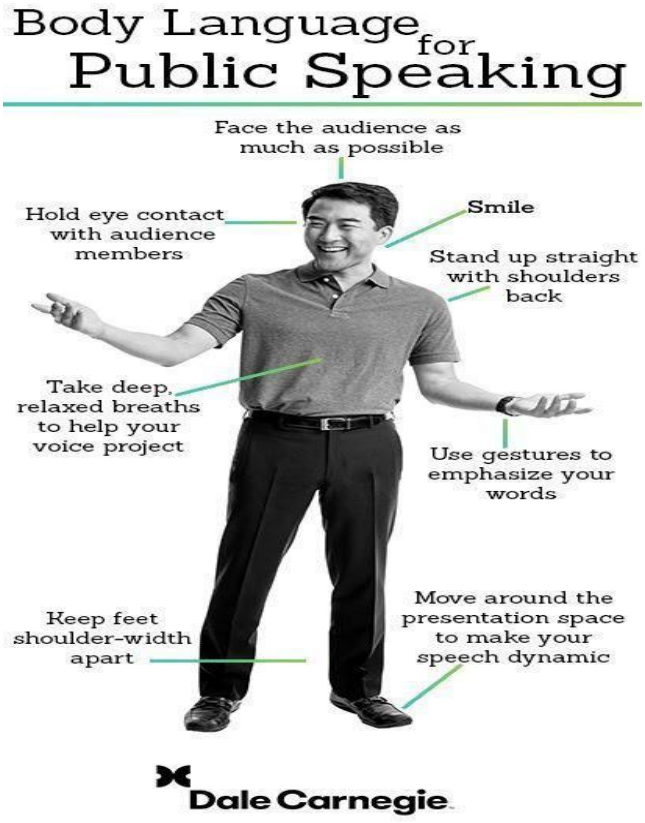


Figure 6.2: Qualities of an Effective Public Speaker

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. What is public speaking?
2. Explain any 4 qualities that should be possessed by a good public speaker?

Continue reading to examine practical techniques that can help you improve your public-speaking performance.

6.4 Techniques for Effective Public Speaking

Fortunately, even if you feel that you do not naturally possess all the traits of a captivating public speaker, you can work to hone and define these qualities to improve your public speaking skills.

These are some of the proven techniques that you can implement to become a more powerful public speaker:

6.4.1 Practice brings Perfection

Practice is one of the most effective techniques to improve your public speaking abilities. After you have come up with your presentation ideas and compiled them in an outline, the best thing you can do is practice your presentation as much as possible.

Many public speakers start by running through their speech or presentation in front of a mirror. By practising in an isolated or private environment, you will feel less intimidated by your surroundings as you begin to master your words and improve your body language. The mirror provides you with visual feedback and allows you to assess your demeanour as you deliver your speech.

After you have practised plenty of times in front of the mirror, you can move on to practising in front of a select audience. You could practice in front of your partner, who can give you honest yet trusted feedback, or you may set up a smaller presentation in front of a few co-workers who can help you fine-tune your message. By creating a focus group of trusted individuals, you can improve your presentation in terms of content, clarity, and time.

Ultimately, practice is the best way to build the confidence required to deliver a presentation that resonates with your audience.

6.4.2 Impactful Display and Presentation

In the world of public speaking, sometimes words alone are insufficient. By creating a presentation design that includes visual aids and other multimedia tools, you can supplement the information you are presenting and better connect with the audience.

Visual aids that are commonly used as part of the presentation design include:

A. Slideshow Presentations: These digital presentations can help the audience move from one idea to the next, ultimately serving as an outline of your speech.
B. Photographs: Photographs are compelling props that allow your audience to connect with your presentation on a deeper level.
C. Physical Props: In some cases, physical props can be used to highlight your point or showcase the product you are presenting.
D. Visual aids are a powerful tool, but they need to be used as a supplement and not become a distraction to your speech as a whole. In many cases, less is more when it comes to visual aids and design presentation.

6.4.3 Becoming the Storyteller

By transforming your speech into a story, you can connect with your audience more powerfully. Storytelling has long been a part of the human experience, and crafting a narrative will naturally encourage your audience to listen and stay alert throughout the entire presentation.

These are a few of the benefits of using a storytelling approach when speaking in public: It allows you to connect with your audience on an emotional level, making your content more relatable to their lives.

It adds a sense of authenticity to your speech, which is key to earning your audience's trust.

It allows you to be more persuasive throughout your speech or presentation.
You can become a storyteller by sharing personal anecdotes from your life or giving your audience real-life examples they can relate to more easily. By adding a human element to your speech, you are sure to make a lasting impression on those you are speaking to.

Other Tips to consider when preparing for public speaking
Know your audience and meet them at their level.
Know your first line and your last line by heart. Do not reference notes during these pivotal moments.

Always make eye contact with your audience when delivering your speech.
Strategically pause to give your audience a chance to absorb the information and connect with it.

Be kind to yourself. Your speech may not always be perfect, but you can focus on the progress you have made along the way.

Effective public speaking begins before the speaker stands before the audience. Careful preparation, rehearsal and appropriate delivery techniques contribute to a successful presentation. The process below shows the major stages involved.

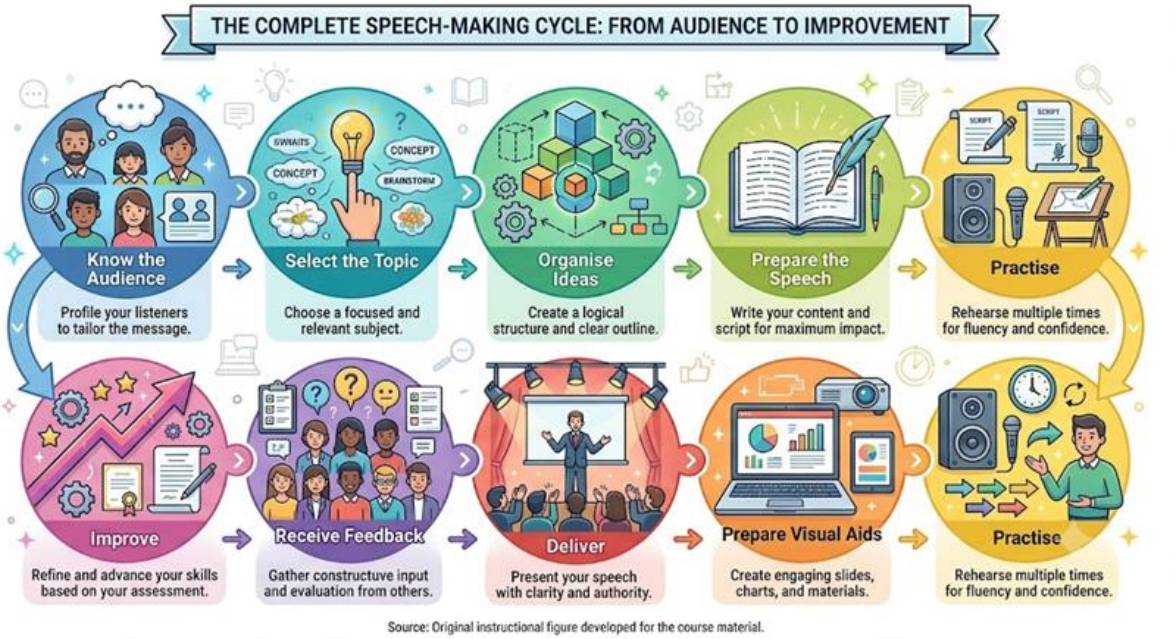


Figure 6.3: Preparing and Delivering an Effective Speech

6.5 Overcoming the Fear of Public Speaking

It is believed that more than 75 per cent of people fear public speaking, and that this fear can manifest in various ways. Symptoms people experience when they are nervous about public speaking include dry mouth, sweating, increased heart rate, nausea, and muscle tension, all of which are uncomfortable and negatively impact the presentation as a whole.

Yet most people will at some point have to stand in front of a crowd and deliver a presentation, so it's essential to work toward overcoming that fear.

You can get over your fear of public speaking by:

1. Organising your thoughts and presentation ideas well in advance.
2. Practising as much as possible.
3. Enrolling in a public speaking course.
4. Taking advantage of opportunities to speak in front of a group of people.
5. Visualising yourself doing an amazing job throughout your presentation.
6. Connecting with familiar faces in the audience to calm your nerves and centre yourself.

6.6 Why Engaging the Audience is Important

When you give an effective, impactful presentation, your audience will remain engaged from the moment you begin to the end. Keeping your audience engaged is critical to the overall success of your presentation, as it's the only way to ensure that you've communicated your message effectively.

Adding an interactive element to your presentation is one of the best ways to keep your audience engaged. Interactive sessions help break up the presentation and provide you with an opportunity to collect feedback and refine it in real time.
You can increase audience engagement by:

1. Adding a question-and-answer session at the end of your presentation.
2. Taking a short break for a small group discussion, giving the audience an opportunity to digest what has been said and discuss their thoughts.
3. Incorporating volunteers into the presentation.
4. Conducting polls during the presentation to receive and react to live feedback.

In today's world, building an inclusive and welcoming presentation is critical. In most cases, you will be presenting to a diverse audience of people of all ages, cultures, backgrounds, and traditions. As a result, you must always avoid making assumptions about your audience. One wrong assumption will leave a portion of your audience feeling alienated or even offended. As you work to build your presentation, be mindful of the language you use and verify that it is respectful and inclusive of your entire audience.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Write a speech on any topic of your choice. You are to make your presentation in class.

The following video reinforces the practical skills discussed in this unit. As you watch, pay particular attention to the speaker's confidence, eye contact, voice, gestures, pace, use of pauses and interaction with the audience. Consider how these techniques can be applied when preparing and delivering your own speech. Click on the link/image or scan the QR code to access the video.

https://youtu.be/iV-MdScCDIU





6.7 Summary

You have learned that an effective public speaker possesses qualities such as confidence, enthusiasm, authenticity, professionalism, adaptability, and awareness. Additionally, you have explored practical techniques to enhance public speaking skills.

You have learnt that an effective public speaker needs qualities such as confidence, enthusiasm, authenticity, professionalism, adaptability and awareness. You have also examined practical techniques for improving public speaking, including adequate preparation, regular practice, effective use of visual aids, storytelling, eye contact, appropriate pauses and audience awareness.

The unit has also discussed ways of overcoming the fear of public speaking. Early preparation, regular practice, participation in speaking opportunities, positive visualisation, controlled breathing and gradual exposure to public-speaking situations can help a speaker develop confidence.

Finally, you have examined the importance of audience engagement. Question-and-answer sessions, small-group discussions, audience participation, polls and inclusive communication can make a presentation more interactive and effective.

The ability to speak clearly and confidently before an audience is a skill that develops through continuous practice. You should therefore look for opportunities to practise public speaking and use feedback from others to improve your performance.



6.8 Reference/Further Reading/Web Sources

The art of public speaking: How to give great speeches
https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/the-art-of-public-speaking
https://www.ucumberlands.edu/blog/mastering-the-art-of-public-speaking

MODULE 5

Unit 1 Introduction to ICT and Digital Tools in Language Learning
Unit 2 Multimedia in Language Learning

Unit 1 Introduction to ICT and Digital Tools in Language learning

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcomes
1.3. ICT and the Transformation of Language Learning
1.3.1 Meaning and Components of ICT
1.3.2 Evolution of Language Learning (Traditional to Digital)
1.3.3 Importance of ICT in language Education
1.4. Summary
1.5. Reference/Further Studies
1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s)



1.1 Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become an important part of education in the twenty-first century. The development of computers, mobile devices, the internet, educational software, multimedia resources and online communication platforms has transformed the ways in which teachers teach, and learners acquire knowledge.

Language learning has also experienced this transformation. In the traditional classroom, language learning was largely organised around the teacher, textbooks, the chalkboard and face-to-face interaction. Today, learners can complement classroom instruction with digital dictionaries, language-learning applications, educational videos, virtual classrooms, online discussion forums, electronic books and other digital resources.

The integration of ICT into language learning does not mean that traditional teaching methods have become completely unnecessary. Rather, digital tools provide additional opportunities for learners to practise listening, speaking, reading and writing in more flexible and interactive ways. For learners in an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) environment, these tools can be particularly useful because they provide access to learning resources beyond the physical classroom.

In this unit, you will examine the meaning and components of ICT, trace the movement from traditional to digital approaches to language learning, and examine the importance

of ICT in language education. You will also consider how digital tools can support learner engagement, autonomy, communication, assessment and collaboration.

Pause and reflect on this

Think about how you learned English or another language before you began using smartphones and the internet. Which learning activities have become easier because of digital technology?

Continue reading to find out how ICT has transformed language learning.



1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define ICT in the context of language learning;
- identify the major components of ICT used in language education;
- describe the transition from traditional to digital language learning;
- explain the importance of ICT in language education; and



1.3 ICT and the Transformation of Language Learning

Information and Communication Technology has changed the ways in which information is created, stored, accessed, communicated, and used. In language education, these developments have created new opportunities for learners to interact with language materials, teachers and other learners.

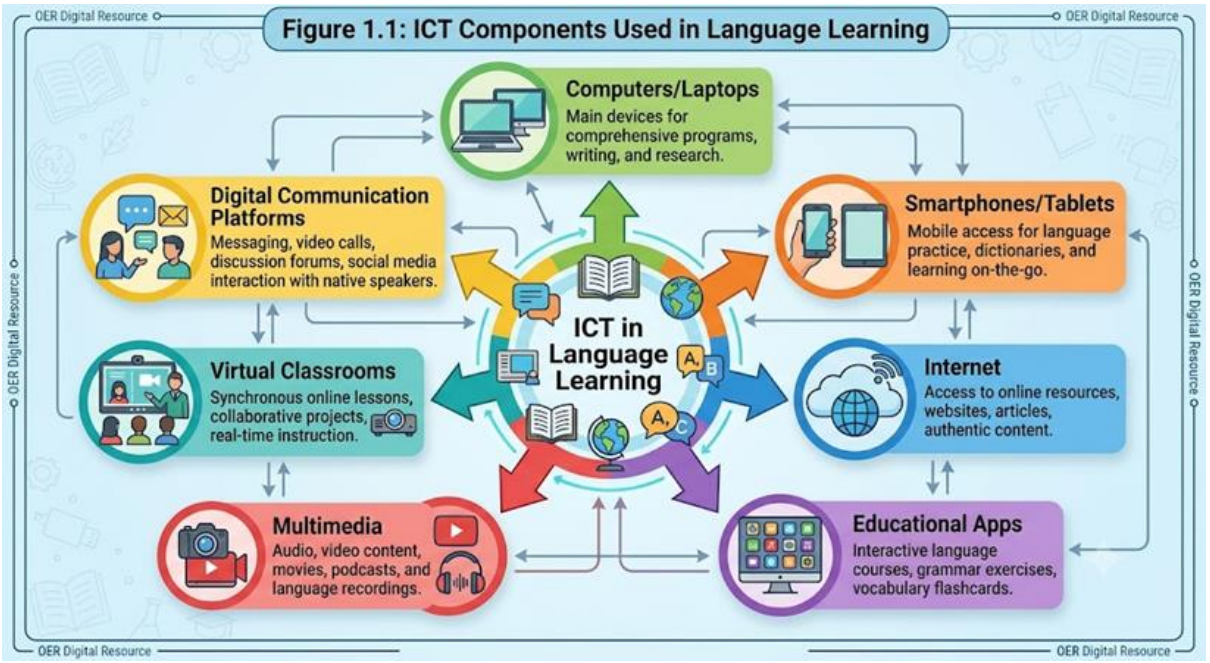
The use of ICT in language learning includes both simple and advanced technologies. A learner may use a smartphone to listen to an English podcast, consult an online dictionary, participate in a virtual class, watch an instructional video, complete an online exercise or communicate with another learner through a digital platform.

The following sections examine the meaning and components of ICT, the movement from traditional to digital language learning, and the importance of ICT in language education.

1.3.1 Meaning and Components of ICT

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) refers to the use of digital technologies such as computers, the internet, mobile devices, software applications, and multimedia tools to create, store, process, and share information. According to Hafsa & Abdelhamid (2025), the emergence of ICT tools, ranging from computers, interactive

whiteboards, and mobile devices to online applications, has revolutionised the world of education and introduced a new concept of language education and practice.



Source: Wikimedia Commons or another openly licensed educational technology repository.

In language learning, ICT and digital tools play a significant role in enhancing learners' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Digital tools such as language learning apps, online dictionaries, virtual classrooms, educational websites, multimedia presentations, and communication platforms provide learners with opportunities to practice languages in real-life and authentic contexts.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Choose the most appropriate answer.

1. ICT in language learning refers primarily to:

A. the use of digital technologies to support learning
B. the use of textbooks only
C. the use of flash cards
D. the memorisation of grammar rules

2. Which of the following is **NOT** an ICT tool commonly used in language learning?

A. Online dictionary
B. Smartphone
C. Virtual classroom
D. Chalk alone

3. Which language skills can ICT support?

A. Listening only
B. Reading only
C. Speaking and writing only
D. Listening, speaking, reading and writing

Continue reading to find out how language learning has moved from traditional approaches to digital environments.

1.3.2 Evolution of Language Learning (Traditional to Digital)

Initially, language learning was more "teacher-centred". Samia & Rahma (2016) assert that traditional classrooms were teacher-fronted. In the traditional classroom, the teacher is in front of the students (the learners), and the learners are always under the teacher's firm control. The teacher is the one who determines what skill is practised, what grammar rule or language function is performed, in other words, who says what to whom and when. Actually, most students who come to learn English in a traditional classroom expect, at least at the beginning, the teacher to direct and lead them, and only later do they realise that they would like to be involved in the process of direction-finding and decision-making (Kraft, Tuţuianu & Chisega Negrilă, 2013). The traditional classroom is centred around subject content knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge (how to teach the same subject to different students, of different levels, with different expectations, in different contexts), general pedagogic knowledge (e.g. classroom management), curricular knowledge, and process knowledge (learning skills, observation skills, etc.).

However, in the last few decades, there has been a need to shift from teacher-centred teaching to learner-centred teaching. Instead of teacher-fronted classrooms, educators have called for increased student interaction and engagement in their learning (Carter, 2010, p. 224). This shift, according to Ruschoff and Ritter (2001), has led educators to advocate learning as "a self-structured and self-motivated process of knowledge construction" (p. 231). Hence, the authors continue, the learner has been increasingly positioned "as a self-governed creator of knowledge" (p. 231). As a result, educators have begun seeking techniques to enhance learner motivation, engagement, and autonomy, with emerging technologies often viewed as offering these opportunities.

As such, Language learning has evolved significantly over time due to technological advancements and changes in teaching methodologies. The shift from traditional classroom methods to digital learning environments has transformed how languages are taught and learned.ICT has revolutionised the way language is taught and learned. Through a dynamic platform, ICT has enabled learners to be more active and collaborative and to access authentic language resources (Rodliyah, 2018; Antika et al., 2024). In the next section, you shall see the importance of ICT in language education.

Traditional Language Learning	**Digital Language Learning**

Teacher-centred instruction	Greater learner participation
Printed textbooks	Electronic books and digital resources
Chalkboard	Interactive digital displays
Face-to-face interaction	Face-to-face and online interaction
Fixed classroom location	Flexible learning locations
Teacher-provided materials	Multiple online resources
Delayed feedback	Potential for immediate digital feedback
Limited exposure to authentic materials	Wider access to authentic language materials

Table 1.1: From Traditional to Digital Language Learning

Digital technologies have therefore expanded the possibilities available to both teachers and learners.

Answer the following questions.

1. What were two major characteristics of the traditional language-learning classroom?
2. What changes have occurred as language learning has become more learner-centred?
3. Give three examples of digital tools that can support language learning.
4. Why is digital literacy important for learners using ICT?

Continue reading to examine the specific benefits of ICT in language education.

1.3.3 Importance of ICT in language education

The integration of ICT in language education has received strong support worldwide. Its role in education can not be overemphasised owing to its ability to foster learners' autonomy and motivation. Studies by Khan and Kuddus (2020) and Bhattarai (2021) indicate that when students are exposed to multimedia content, such as interactive presentations, short films, and digital role-playing activities, they become more engaged in the learning process. ICT has created a turning point in the English teaching-learning process, as it adds new dimensions to learning and keeps it away from memorising and parroting grammatical rules. They open wide new gates for learners to communicate across cultures and interact beyond the classroom walls (Sabiri, 2020). The following are a few importance of ICT in language education:

1. Enhance learner engagement: Interactive activities and multimedia content are able to foster learners' motivation and engagement. Through multimedia, students are exposed to real-life scenarios and cultural references, and, as such, they become more engaged and show genuine interest in the target language.
2. Facilitate real and authentic communication: Online platforms and synchronous calls impact language learning outcomes as they expose learners to diverse accents, real-life situations, and help them enrich their cross-cultural knowledge.

3. Support learners' autonomy: Digital media allows students to identify and set their objectives, work at their own pace and focus on their personal needs.
4. Improve assessment and feedback: Digital tools can offer immediate corrections, track students' progress over time, and improve their deep and critical thinking through activities such as e-portfolios and collaborative writing assignments (Ali, 2020; Msambwa et al., 2024).
5. Foster cultural exchange: Technological tools play an important role in bridging the cultural gap, highlighting the cultural identity while fostering goodwill and global understanding. Such technological innovations have enhanced the students' cross-cultural knowledge and sensitivity through telecollaboration and online resources that highlight the diverse cultural norms (Ruiz-Ortega, 2020).
6. Contextualised Learning: Digital tools provide real-life context for language use, making it easier to understand abstract concepts and vocabulary.
7. Provides authentic learning materials: Digital tools provide authentic learning materials, and not imagery. Learners can see and interact with them.
8. Supports collaborative learning: Digital tools support collaborative language learning by providing interactive and engaging platforms such as digital storytelling, social media, and shared documents that facilitate real-time communication, peer feedback, and joint content creation. These tools enable learners to improve fluency and writing skills through synchronous and asynchronous interaction, moving beyond teacher-centred instruction to foster student-centred, active, and social learning environments.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Answer the following questions by choosing the most suitable option:

1. ICT in language learning refers to……..
A. the use of digital technologies
B. the use of computers and the internet
C. the use of multimedia
D. the use of flash cards

2. The following are the importance of ICT in language learning EXCEPT
A. Enhance learner engagement
B. Support learners' autonomy
C. Improve learning skills
D. Improve assessment and feedback

3. In the traditional classroom, teaching and learning was……
A. Learner-centred
B. Teacher-centred
C. Classroom centred
D. Based on instructional materials



1.4 Summary

In this unit, you have examined the meaning and components of Information and Communication Technology in language learning. ICT includes computers, mobile devices, the internet, educational applications, multimedia resources, virtual learning environments and digital communication platforms.

You have also examined the movement from traditional teacher-centred language learning towards more learner-centred and digitally supported approaches. Although traditional classroom methods remain useful, ICT has expanded learners' opportunities to access resources, communicate, practise language skills, and participate actively in learning.

Finally, you have examined the importance of ICT in language education. ICT can enhance learner engagement, facilitate authentic communication, support learner autonomy, improve assessment and feedback, promote cultural exchange, provide contextualised and authentic materials, support collaboration and provide flexible access to learning.

The effective use of ICT, however, depends not simply on access to technology but also on appropriate digital literacy, reliable resources, purposeful instructional design and responsible use of digital tools.



1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

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1.6 **Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises**

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
1. A
2. C
3. B

Unit 2 Multimedia in Language Learning

Unit structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Multimedia in Language Learning
2.3.1 Types of multimedia in Language Learning
2.3.2 Challenges of Multimedia in Language Learning
2.4 Summary
2.5. References/Further Reading/Web Sources
2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



2.1 Introduction

In the previous unit, you examined the meaning of ICT and its importance in language learning. In this unit, you will focus on **multimedia** and its application to language learning.

Language learning is no longer limited to textbooks, notebooks and face-to-face classroom interaction. Learners can now encounter language through audio recordings, videos, images, animations, interactive applications and online platforms. These multimedia resources can provide learners with opportunities to practise language skills independently and in different contexts.

Multimedia can be particularly useful in language learning because language is communicated through different modes. For example, listening to an audio recording can help develop listening and pronunciation skills, while watching a video can expose learners to pronunciation, facial expressions, gestures and other aspects of communication.

However, multimedia does not automatically guarantee effective learning. Issues such as internet connectivity, cost, technical problems, distraction and inadequate teacher training can affect its effective use.

In this unit, you will examine different types of multimedia used in language learning and consider the challenges associated with their use.

Think about the last time you learnt something about a language through a video, audio recording, mobile application or online platform. What did the multimedia resource help you do that a textbook alone could not?

Continue reading to examine the meaning and applications of multimedia in language learning.



2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify different types of multimedia used in language learning
- explain the functions of multimedia in language learning; and
- discuss the challenges associated with the use of multimedia in language learning



2.3 Multimedia in Language Learning

Multimedia refers to a combination of text, audio, still images, animation, video, and interactive content. It is usually recorded and played, displayed, or accessed by information-processing devices, such as computerised and electronic devices, but can also be part of a live performance. According to Thamarana (2016), multimedia provides a complex, multisensory experience for exploring our world by presenting information in text, graphics, images, audio, and video, and there is evidence that a mixture of words and pictures increases the likelihood that people can integrate a large amount of information.

2.3.1 Types of multimedia in Language learning

Multimedia combines five basic types of media into the learning environment: text, video, sound, graphics and animation, thus providing a powerful new tool for education (Thamarana, 2016).

We will look at some multimedia tools used in language learning.

1. Audio Tools: These digital tools, such as podcasts, language learning apps with audio, Songs, and recorded conversations, improve pronunciation, listening skills, and accent awareness.
2. Video Tools: These digital tools, such as Movies and TV shows, YouTube educational videos, recorded lectures, and video conferencing, help to understand body language, culture, and real-life communication.
3. Interactive Software and Apps: These software apps, such as Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, Babbel, and quiz-based learning platforms, provide instant feedback and self-paced learning.
4. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) uses computers to teach grammar, conduct exercises, provide simulations and offer interactive activities.

5. Online Learning Platforms: These learning platforms, such as Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, provide avenues for virtual classes and video conferencing, Discussion forums and sharing multimedia materials. They also enable real-time interactions between students and their facilitators, fostering collaboration and discussion.
6. E-Learning Platforms: Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Canvas, Moodle, and Blackboard provide a structured framework for multimedia-based English language courses.
7. Gamification and Simulations: Virtual environments and simulations, such as those offered by Second Life or VR classrooms, allow students to immerse themselves in English-speaking scenarios.

Table 2.1: Multimedia Types and Their Uses in Language Learning

Multimedia Type	Examples	Major Language-Learning Uses
Audio	Podcasts, songs, and recorded conversations	Listening, pronunciation, and accent awareness
Video	Educational videos, films, and recorded lectures	Listening, speaking, cultural awareness, and body language
Interactive applications	Language-learning apps, quizzes	Vocabulary, grammar, practice and feedback
CALL	Computer-based exercises and simulations	Grammar, vocabulary, reading and interactive practice
Online communication platforms	Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams	Speaking, discussion and collaboration
Learning Management Systems	Moodle, Canvas, Blackboard	Course materials, quizzes, assignments and multimedia learning
Gamification and simulations	Virtual environments, language games	Engagement, practice and simulated communication

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Answer the following questions.

1. What is multimedia in the context of language learning?
2. Mention four types of multimedia used in language learning.
3. What are two functions of audio tools in language learning?
4. How can video support language learning?
5. State two functions of online learning platforms.

Continue reading to examine some of the difficulties that may arise when using multimedia for language learning.

2.3.2 Challenges of Multimedia in Language Learning

As efficient as multimedia in language learning is, it is not free of certain challenges, as seen below:

1. To use multimedia in language learning, internet access is required. Access to multimedia tools and high-speed internet is limited in some regions, especially in rural or underdeveloped areas.
2. Multimedia may also be a source of distraction: Excessive use of multimedia elements can overwhelm students and detract from the learning objectives. Striking a balance is crucial.
3. Multimedia is not free of technical issues.
4. Some students may become overdependent on technology. To discourage this, combining multimedia tools with traditional teaching methods ensures a holistic approach to language learning.
5. Lack of teacher training: Effective use of multimedia requires teachers to be technologically competent. A lack of training can lead to the underutilization of tools or inefficient lesson delivery. Regular workshops and training programs can equip teachers with the necessary skills to integrate multimedia technologies effectively.
6. Cost Implications: High-quality multimedia tools, software licenses, and hardware (e.g., projectors, smartboards) can be expensive for institutions and learners.

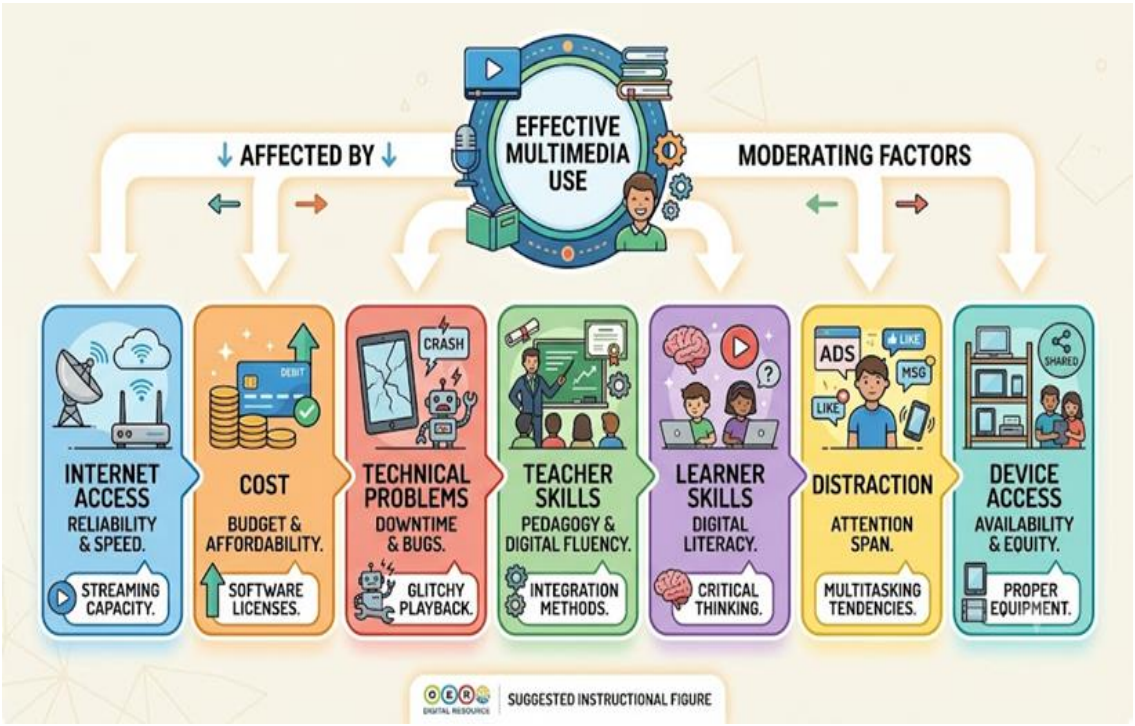

Figure 2.2: Challenges Affecting Multimedia Use

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Fill in the gaps below with the appropriate answers:
1. Multimedia in language learning refers to……..
2 Video conferencing is used for……..
3.……and…….are challenges of multimedia in language learning.



2.4 Summary

In this unit, you have examined multimedia and its application to language learning. Multimedia combines different forms of media, including text, audio, images, video, animation and interactive content.

You have examined several types of multimedia used in language learning. These include audio tools, video tools, interactive applications, Computer-Assisted Language Learning, online communication platforms, Learning Management Systems, gamification and simulations.

You have also examined the benefits and challenges associated with multimedia. Multimedia can support listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary development, pronunciation, learner engagement and independent learning. However, challenges such as limited internet access, distractions, technical problems, overdependence on technology, inadequate teacher training, cost, and unequal access to devices can hinder its effective use.

The effective use of multimedia, therefore, requires careful planning. Multimedia should be selected based on the learning objective and learners' needs and circumstances.



2.5. Reference/Further Studies/Web Sources

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2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. Multimedia in language learning refers to the combination of different media forms, such as text, audio, images, video, animation and interactive content, to support language learning.
2. Four examples are audio, video, interactive applications and Computer-Assisted Language Learning. Other acceptable answers include online learning platforms, LMS, gamification and simulations.
3. Audio tools can improve listening skills, pronunciation and accent awareness.
4. Video can expose learners to spoken language, body language, gestures, pronunciation, culture and real-life communication.
5. Online learning platforms support virtual classes, real-time communication, discussion, collaboration and the sharing of multimedia materials.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Challenges include limited internet access, distraction, technical problems, overdependence on technology, inadequate teacher training, cost and unequal access to devices.
2. Poor internet access can prevent learners from streaming videos, participating in video conferences, downloading resources or accessing online activities.
3. Excessive multimedia elements can divert learners' attention from the main learning objective and make the learning material unnecessarily complicated.
4. Teacher training enables teachers to select appropriate multimedia resources, operate digital tools and integrate them effectively with learning objectives.
5. Challenges can be reduced through teacher training, appropriate selection of multimedia, use of downloadable resources, provision of accessible materials and combining multimedia with other teaching methods.

MODULE 6

Unit 1 Writing Paragraphs: Topic Sentence and Coherence
Unit 2 Development of Paragraphs: Illustration and Description
Unit 3 Development of Paragraphs: Cause and Effect and Definitions
Unit 4 Formal Letters: Stylistic Forms and Essential Parts
Unit 5 Formal Letters: Complaints and Requests

UNIT 1 WRITING PARAGRAPHS: TOPIC SENTENCE AND COHERENCE

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcomes
1.3 Organising and Developing Effective Paragraphs
1.3.1 The Topic Sentence
1.3.2 Developing the Topic
1.4 Coherence in Paragraphs
1.5 Transitional Devices
1.6 Summary
1.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

1.1 Introduction

Most pieces of writing require more than one paragraph. Mastering the art of writing a paragraph is essential to success in any form of writing, whether it is a letter, a report, or a newspaper article, since all longer pieces contain a series of related paragraphs. In these longer pieces of writing, paragraphs generally introduce new ideas to develop the central theme. The division into paragraphs also prevents boredom as it provides a physical break on the page.

In units 1 and 2, we shall offer you some guidance in writing single paragraphs. In Unit 1, we shall discuss the organisation of paragraphs and the elements that make a good paragraph. After you have developed your skills in paragraph writing, you will be able to use paragraphs successfully in order to write a longer composition.

To help you understand the paragraph given as examples, we have provided a glossary at the end of each paragraph, as well as questions on reading comprehension and vocabulary. You should try to answer all these questions, as they will help you understand the paragraphs.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the topic sentence in a paragraph;
- explain ways of developing the central idea of a paragraph;
- describe the role of coherence in paragraph writing;
- identify and use appropriate transitional devices in paragraphs; and
- write well-organised paragraphs with logically connected ideas.

1.3 Organising and Developing Effective Paragraphs

A paragraph is a group of related sentences organised around a central idea. For a paragraph to communicate effectively, the writer needs to establish the main idea and provide appropriate information to develop that idea. The sentences must also be arranged logically.

What makes a paragraph clear and well organised?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out.

Let us begin with the sentence that usually introduces the central idea of a paragraph.

1.3.1 The Topic Sentence

Where would you expect to find the main idea of a paragraph?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out.

You already know that any longer piece of writing is divided into a number of paragraphs. Have you ever considered what a paragraph is? A paragraph is a piece of writing which is unified by a central, controlling idea or theme. This idea or theme is called the topic of the paragraph. It is sometimes expressed in some place in the paragraph by one sentence, which is usually called the topic sentence. This topic sentence may be a statement, a generalisation, or a problem. This sentence is most frequently found at the beginning of the paragraph, but it can sometimes appear at the end or even in the middle. Very often, there may not be a topic sentence at all, but it may be implied within the paragraph. However, at this stage, it may be useful for you to develop your paragraph by writing out your topic sentence.

Example 1: Topic Sentence at the Beginning
The vast majority of people, wherever they live and whatever their occupation, come in contact with animals in one way or another and have to deal with them.

It is obvious that the hunter has to know the ways of his quarry, the farmer must be aware of the habits of his farmyard animals and of creatures that damage his crops; the

fisherman must know when and where to find his fish and how to outwit them. Even the modern city dweller meets animals. He may want to ward off the roaches in his kitchen, or he may keep a dog or a bird and grow familiar with the way his pet behaves. All over the world, among primitive tribes as well as in modern society, there are those who delight in the observation of animals, and there is a growing awareness of the fact that sharing our world with our fellow creatures is like travelling together – we enjoy being surrounded by other beings who, like ourselves, are deeply absorbed in the adventure of living. There is a growing sense of marvel and affinity.

(From Niko Tinbergen (ed). 'An infant science' in Animal Behaviour Time-Life Books.)

Glossary

contact (n): the condition of meeting or coming together *quarry (n):* an animal or bird which is being hunted *outwit:* win by being cleverer.
city dweller: one who lives in the city. *roaches:* informal word for 'cockroaches'.
absorbed: interested.
marvel (n): wonder.
affinity: close connection.

Beginning a paragraph with a topic sentence helps both the writer and the reader. As a writer, you will have less difficulty in constructing a unified paragraph because you will relate every sentence to the topic sentence and the central idea it expresses. Your reader will know immediately what the paragraph is about because the opening sentence states the central idea.

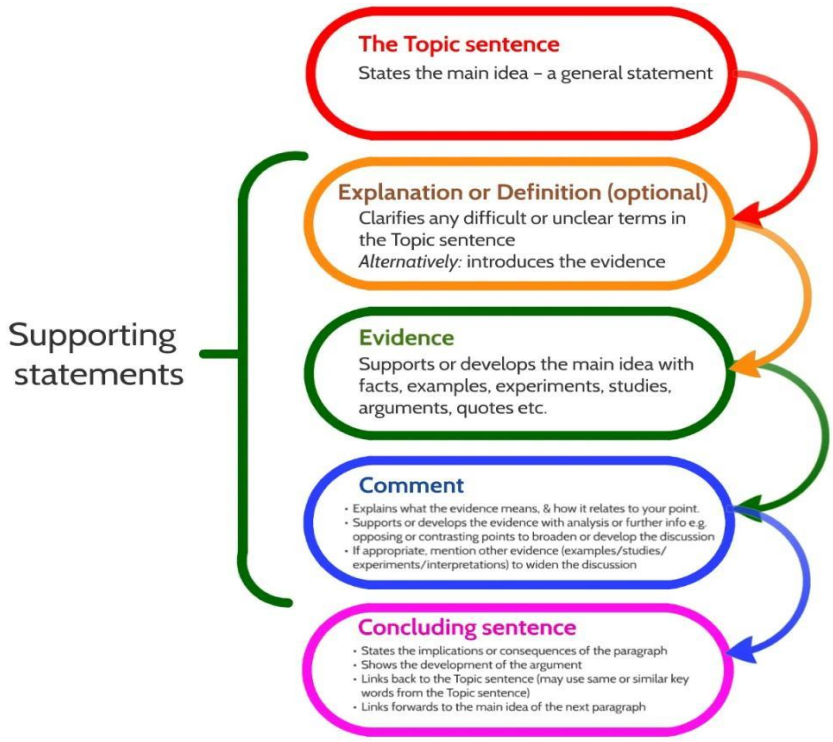

Figure 1.1: Structure of a Well-Organised Paragraph

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Read example 1 again and answer the following questions:

1. What title would you like to give this paragraph?
2. Why does the hunter need to know 'the way of his quarry'?
   3a) Give two examples of how a modern city dweller comes in contact with animals.
3) Are animals always a source of pleasure for him? Which words tell you that sometimes they are not?

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Find two verbs meaning more or less the same as 'take pleasure (in)'
2. Find an adjective which is equivalent to 'belonging to the earliest stage of development'.
3. Find equivalents of the nouns:
   wonder relationship

Example 2: Topic Sentence at the End
In the year 1830, a French official unearthed, in the valley of the Somme, strange implements of flint now recognised as weapons with which the men of the Old Stone Age made war. With these modest tools of death, it seems, Neanderthal men from what is now Germany, and Cro-Magnon men from what is now France, fought fifty thousand years ago for the mastery of the continent, and after a day of lusty battle, left perhaps a score of the dead on the field. Twenty years ago, modern Germans and modern Frenchmen fought again in that same valley for that same price, with magnificent tools of death that killed ten thousand men in a day. *One art alone has made indisputable progress in history, and that is the art of war.*

(Adapted from Will Durant: 'Why Men Fight')

Glossary
unearthed: dug up.
i*mplements:* tools.
Flint: very hard, grey stone.
Stone Age: the earliest known time in the history of man, when only stone was used for making tools, weapons, etc.
modest: simple.
Neanderthal man: a type of early human creature who lived in Europe during the early Stone Age.
Cro-Magnon man: prehistoric man who lived in South-Western Europe and used bone and stone implements.
The continent: (here) Europe.
lusty battle: energetic fighting.
score: twenty.
magnificent: grand and powerful.

indisputable (adj.): when it is too certain to be questioned.

Placing the topic sentence at the end or in the middle is a more difficult skill. The advantage of placing it at the end is that all the sentences build up to this topic sentence, making the conclusion more effective.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

(1a) In the context of example 2, what are the points of similarity between the events that took place in ancient and modern times? Give two instances.
(b) What are the points of difference? Give two instances.
(i) Ancient (ii) Modern 2(a) Was ancient man less violent than modern man?
(b) Why is a modern battle more dangerous?
3(a) What does the phrase 'for that same prize' refer to?
(b) Give some examples of what you think are 'modest tools of death' and 'magnificent tools of death.'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

The topic sentence of the paragraph below is hidden somewhere within the paragraph. Find it and place it in the correct position. After you have completed the exercise, you should check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

In Mother's Shadow

During its early weeks, it depends almost completely upon her, and she, in turn, fastens her attentions upon it, although from time to time she will allow the other females to hold and fondle it. Sheltered by its mother, the growing infant gradually widens its contact with the outside world. Though its first week is spent sleeping and nursing, by its second it is already stumbling about and being restrained by a yank on its tail or leg. Nothing could be more important to the development of an infant Indian langur than its relationship with its mother. At four weeks, on unsteady feet, it ventures forth and discovers the world or at least that part of it within a safe three or four feet of its mother.

Glossary

fasten her attentions upon it: fixes her mind on it by watching it or listening to it.
fondle (v): sucking milk from the mother's breast.
stumbling: walking on unsteady feet.
restrained: held back.
yank (n): a sudden, sharp pull.
infant: a very young creature.
ventures forth: takes the risk of moving forward.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Is there a topic sentence in the following paragraph? Underline it, if it is there. If you don't find a topic sentence, state the main idea of the paragraph in your own words.

Men have cleared away forests to make fields for growing crops. They have moved mountains to make room for roads and cities. They have built huge dams across rivers to turn valleys into lakes, and dykes to push back the sea and create more dry land to live on. Once, everyone cheered the progress man made in changing his environment like this, but now many people are worried about the problems such changes can bring. When the Aswan Dam was built across the River Nile in Egypt, it was meant to help farmers by providing water when they needed it. Unfortunately, people did not realise that much of the nourishing food for plants in the river would be trapped by the dam, so the farmers' crops would suffer. Also, hundreds of kilometres away, at the mouth of the River Nile, less freshwater pours into the Mediterranean Sea. This means the sea will become saltier, and fewer fish will be able to live in it. When this happens, people who catch fish for a living will suffer.

(From Govil, M. and Subramaniam V. (eds.) Explorations, Madhuban Educational Books.)

Glossary

dykes (n): thick banks or walls built to control water.
nourishing: causing to stay alive or grow.
trapped: held back, blocked.

1.3.2 Developing the Topic

How can a writer develop the main idea of a paragraph?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out.

In order to develop the central theme of a paragraph, you have to expand the idea contained in the topic sentence. This can be done by adding more information, explanation, examples, illustrations, etc., to the idea expressed in the topic sentence. We shall discuss different ways of developing a paragraph in greater detail in Unit 2.

If you read the paragraph given under example 1 again, you will notice that this paragraph is developed mainly by adding examples.

Analysis of the Paragraph

1. Topic Sentence: "The vast majority of people, wherever they live and whatever their occupation, come in contact with animals in one way or another and have to deal with them."

2. Examples Given to Develop the Paragraph:

(i) the hunter
(ii) the farmer
(iii) the fisherman
(iv) the city dweller.

3. Summing up: This is done by stating that there is a common bond between man and other creatures.

Now read example 3 below. You will notice that this paragraph is developed slightly.

Example 3

Two main circumstances govern the relationship of living things in the sea: the unbelievably lavish fruitfulness of marine life forms, and the utter ruthlessness with which the large creatures eat the smaller ones.

Somebody has calculated, for instance, that if all the eggs laid by codfish were hatched and grew to maturity, the Atlantic would be packed solid with codfish within six years. But nature does not let this happen. Only an infinitesimal fraction of all codfish eggs ever become full-sized cod, and wastage among other fish is as great. One sea creature in about 10 million escapes the usual violent death inside another sea creature.

(From Leonard Engels (ed.) 'The Great Pyramid of Life' in the Sea, Time-Life Books.)

Glossary

circumstances: conditions; the state of affairs.
govern (v): control or guide.
lavish: plentiful.
fruitful: very productive; producing many young ones.
marine: of the sea.
ruthlessness: cruelty, absence of pity.
codfish: a large sea fish found in the North Atlantic Ocean.
hatched: broken, letting the young ones out. *maturity:* the state of being fully grown or developed. *infinitesimal:* very small.

Analysis of the Paragraph

1. **Topic Statement:** 'Two main circumstances govern the relationship of living things in the sea.'
2. **Elaboration of the Topic Sentence:** The fruitfulness of marine life and the ruthlessness with which the larger creatures eat the smaller ones.
3. **Illustration:** The example of the codfish.
4. **Summing up:** Only one sea creature in about ten million survives.

When you write a paragraph of your own, choose the topic and write down all that you know about the topic. As you make your list, don't stop to question whether a detail fits; any that don't can be left out later. This will help you generate new ideas and also give you something concrete to work on.

However, when you start writing, ensure that every sentence contributes to the central idea, which may be contained in the topic sentence. Only then will your paragraph have unity.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

Read example 3 again and answer the following questions. This exercise will help you better understand the paragraph.

1. What are the two circumstances that govern the relationship of living things in the sea?

2a. Under what circumstances would the Atlantic be packed with codfish within six years?

b. How does nature prevent this from happening?

3. Suggest a title for this paragraph.

4. Find the opposites of:

(i) barrenness:

(ii) terrestrial:

(iii) very large:

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7

In the following exercise, we have given you a topic sentence, the title, and some notes that might help you develop a paragraph. As you develop your paragraph, use only those points which will support the topic sentence and leave out the rest. Your paragraph should not be more than 100 words.

The Secret of the Cockroach's Survival

Topic Sentence: The cockroach is one of the earth's oldest creatures, older than even the dinosaurs.

(i) survived because it can live anywhere

(ii) from coldest to warmest climate

(iii) city as well as the forest

(iv) cockroach is a clean insect

(v) can eat anything, including flower buds, paint, soap, and wood

(vi) some species are large, others are small

(vii) can even live without food and water for months

(viii) usually black or brown in colour

(ix) keeps off predatory animals because of the dirty smell from the scent glands.

1.4 Coherence

What makes the sentences in a paragraph flow logically?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out.

An effective paragraph requires more than a topic sentence and supporting details: it must also be coherent. In a coherent paragraph, the writer takes the reader logically and smoothly from one idea to the next.

The reader must clearly recognise that one sentence logically leads to the next.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

The following sentences form a complete paragraph, but they are out of order. Keeping coherence in mind, put them in the right order.
After you have completed the exercise, you may check your answer against the one provided by us at the end of the unit.

(a) When the box is removed, the ant will not continue on its former course, but will start off rapidly in a new direction.
(b) This can easily be demonstrated by a simple experiment.
(c) Place a light-tight box over an ant carrying food back to its nest, and keep it imprisoned for a few hours.
(d) This new route will differ from the old by exactly the angle that the sun has shifted across the sky during the time the ant was imprisoned.
(e) Many insects rely upon the direction of the sun's rays as a sort of compass.

Glossary

former: earlier, previous.
rapidly: very quickly.
light-tight: where the light cannot enter.
imprison: shut up in prison.
rely: depend.

1.5 Transitional Devices

Which words help connect one idea to another?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out.

Another technique which brings coherence to a paragraph is the use of transitional devices between sentences. These are words/phrases that help a writer move smoothly from one sentence to the next and show the logical relationship between sentences. We

shall give you an example of what these transitional devices are and how to use them. The transitional devices in example 4 are printed in *bold type*.

Transitional devices should be used appropriately. The writer should select a word or phrase that accurately expresses the relationship between the ideas. Excessive or inappropriate use of transitional devices can make writing unnatural.



Figure 1.2: Transitional Devices and Relationships between Ideas

Example 4

Man has been able to spread across the earth so widely for four main reasons. *Firstly,* he is a terrestrial animal not restricted to the forest. *Secondly*, he can cross any natural barriers such as deserts, oceans and mountains. *Moreover,* he can live on a very wide variety of food. *Most important of all,* he has developed culture; he has learned to make clothes and build fires, which allow him to live in climates where he would otherwise perish. To a large extent, he shares some of these advantages with the monkeys. They,

too, can move over unforested land. They, *too,* can cross certain natural barriers because they can swim. And they, *too,* can digest many kinds of food. Thus, a single baboon species has spread across Africa from Dakar in the west to Ethiopia in the east, and as far south as the Cape of Good Hope. *Similarly,* Macaques have done at least as well. One species, the rhesus macaque, is equally at home in the forest, in open cultivated fields, and inside heavily populated cities.

(From Elmerl S. and De Vors. I. (eds.) The 'Monkey's Success in the Trees' in The Primates. Time-Life Books.)

Glossary

terrestrial: living on land.
barrier: something placed in the way to prevent further movement.
perish: die; be completely destroyed.
species: a group of plants or animals that are of the same kind.
baboon: a large dog-like monkey found in Africa and South Asia.
Macaque: a monkey of African origin found mainly in Asia, having a cheek pouch and a short tail.

As you have seen, transitional devices are like signposts in a paragraph. They enable us to follow the writer's line of thought by showing us how one sentence relates to another. In example 4, the words/phrases *firstly, secondly, moreover, and most important of all* indicate the four main reasons why man has been able to spread so widely across the earth. *Most important of all* also shows that some reasons are more important than others. *Too* indicates that monkeys also share man's characteristics. *Similarly* shows the relationship between the macaques and the baboons.

The following list includes other words and phrases that function as transitional devices. To:

(i) **Express result:** *therefore, as a result, consequently, thus, hence.*
(ii) **Give examples:** *for example, for instance, specifically, as an illustration.*
(iii) **Express comparison:** *similarly, likewise.*
(iv) **Express contrast:** *but, yet, still, however, nevertheless, on the other hand.*
(v) **Express addition:** *moreover, furthermore, also, too, besides, in addition.*
(vi) **Indicate time:** *now, later, meanwhile, since then, after that, before that time.*
(vii) **Express sequence**: *first, second, third, then, next, finally.*

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 9

Read example 4 again and answer the following questions:

1. What is the most important reason that makes man range so widely across the earth?

2. What are the three characteristics that the monkey shares with man?
3. Monkeys cross natural barriers like rivers by swimming. What are some of the devices that man uses to cross natural barriers?
4. In the context of this passage, find a word:

(i) with the same meaning as 'limited'
(ii) which is the opposite of 'thrive'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 10

In the following paragraph, the transitional words and phrases are missing. Fill in the gaps by choosing the most appropriate words/phrases from the list given below:

Despite	also	but
However	yet	in the future

Of all the sea's possibilities for man's future, the greatest may be its promise of an important increase in the world's food supply. Square mile for square mile, the sea is estimated to be more productive than the land ...(i) ... at present, the oceans supply only one or two per cent of man's food ...(ii) ... all that he is learning about the sea, man's relationship to it is still primitive; he is a hunter rather than a harvester

...(iii) ..., along some coasts, oyster growers set out beds of oysters and fence out the oyster's enemies to increase the yield ...(iv) ..., in the Philippines, Indonesia, Japan and China, people already grow fish and prawns in fresh water ponds ...(v) ... this is just a beginning ...(vi) ..., to meet the great needs of a rapidly expanding world population, man will have to farm the sea as he has for so long farmed the land.

Glossary

productive (adj.): that produces much.
primitive: at the earliest stage of development.
harvester: a person who gathers the crops.
oyster: a type of shellfish.
fence out: keep out by building a fence.
prawn: any of various types of small ten-legged sea animals.
rapidly expanding: fast increasing.

1.6 Summary

In this unit, we have discussed the major elements involved in organising and developing effective paragraphs. We examined the **topic sentence** and found that it expresses or implies the paragraph's central idea. We also examined ways of **developing the topic** through explanations, examples, illustrations, and other supporting details.

We further discussed **coherence**, which enables the ideas in a paragraph to flow logically and smoothly. Finally, we examined **transitional devices** and their functions in connecting sentences and showing relationships between ideas.

1.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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Olaofe, I. A. (1993). *Communicate English.* Zaria: Tamaza Publishing Co.

1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. A suitable title is **People and Animals** or **Human Contact with Animals**.
2. The hunter needs to know the ways of his quarry in order to understand and successfully hunt the animal.
3. A city dweller may keep a dog or bird as a pet, or may have to deal with cockroaches in the kitchen.
4. No. The expressions **"ward off the roaches"** and the reference to creatures that damage crops show that animals are not always a source of pleasure.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. delight in
2. primitive
3. marvel
4. affinity

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

1. Both ancient and modern groups fought in the same general location and for control of territory.
2. Ancient weapons were relatively simple, while modern weapons were much more powerful and destructive.
3. No. The passage suggests that modern warfare can be more destructive.
4. Modern weapons can kill many more people within a short period.
5. It refers to the deaths resulting from warfare.
6. Examples may include stone weapons and simple weapons as modest tools of death, and guns, bombs, missiles, and other modern weapons as magnificent tools of death.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

The main idea is that the infant Indian langur's development is closely connected with its relationship with its mother.

Self-Assessment Exercise 5

The paragraph does not have one clearly stated topic sentence at the beginning. Its central idea is that human modification of the environment, although once regarded as progress, can create serious environmental problems.

Self-Assessment Exercise 6

1. The abundance of marine life and the ruthlessness with which larger creatures consume smaller ones.
2. If all the codfish eggs hatched and survived to maturity.
3. Most eggs do not survive, and young fish are eaten by other sea creatures.
4. A suitable title is **The Survival of Marine Life**.
5. a. Fruitfulness
   b. Marine
   c. small

Self-Assessment Exercise 7

Answers will vary. The paragraph should focus only on the characteristics that explain the cockroach's survival.

Self-Assessment Exercise 8

The correct order is:

E → B → C → A → D

Self-Assessment Exercise 9

1. The development of culture, including the ability to make clothes and build fires.
2. They can move over unforested land, cross some natural barriers, and digest many kinds of food.
3. Humans use means such as roads, ships, aircraft, bridges, and other forms of transport.
4. **Thus**
5. **Similarly**
6. a. Restricted
   b. perish

Self-Assessment Exercise 10

The answers are:

1. **However**
2. **Despite**
3. **also**
4. **but**
5. **yet**
6. **in the future**

UNIT 2 DEVELOPMENT OF PARAGRAPHS: ILLUSTRATION AND DESCRIPTION

Unit structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Developing Paragraphs through Illustration
2.3.1 Illustration
2.3.2 Description
2.4 Summary
2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

2.1 Introduction

In Unit 1, we discussed the elements of a good paragraph: the topic sentence, development of the topic, thematic coherence, and the use of transitional devices. In other words, you learned how to organise your paragraphs.

In this unit, we shall help you to develop different kinds of paragraphs. Paragraphs can be developed in a number of ways, depending on your purpose, the topic, and the kind of reader you have in view. The different methods of paragraph development can be considered in terms of two broad categories:

(i) those which stay strictly within the scope of the topic: e.g. illustration, descriptions, definition, as well as cause and effect, and
(ii) techniques which involve a second topic: e.g. comparison and contrast.

The method of development that you choose should be the one that will most effectively put across the point that you want to make: the point you have stated in your topic sentence. There are no rules about the kind of development to be adopted in any writing situation, although some topics lend themselves more readily to certain kinds of development than they do to others. It must be realised, however, that you can combine more than one technique in composing a paragraph.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss different techniques for developing paragraphs
- apply the techniques to writing some paragraphs
- identify different kinds of paragraphs using the techniques discussed.

2.3 Developing Paragraphs through Illustration

How can examples help a reader understand a general idea in a paragraph?
Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out.

A paragraph may contain a clear topic sentence, but the idea expressed in it may still be too general for the reader. One effective way of making such an idea clearer is to support it with specific examples. This method of paragraph development is known as illustration**.**

2.3.1 Illustration

Giving examples is one of the easiest ways of developing a topic. When a writer gives examples, he helps the reader to understand a rather difficult and abstract generalisation that may be contained in the topic sentence. He also persuades the reader that the generalisation is correct by providing examples. Examples also add to the reader's interest.

We often introduce examples or illustrations using expressions such as for example, for instance, and an example.

Example 1: Development of a Paragraph by Illustration
All warm-blooded animals are incredibly helpless at first. Young birds and young bats must be taught to fly. Thousands of young seals and young sea lions are drowned every year. They never learn to swim 'naturally', the mother has to take them out under her flipper and show them how. Birds sing without instruction, but they do not sing well unless they have had an opportunity of hearing older and more adept members of their species. Older harvest mice build better nests than beginners. It is said that the young elephant does not seem to know at first what his truck is for; it gets in his way and seems more of a hindrance than a help until his parents show him what to do with it. Insects, indeed, seem to start life completely equipped with all necessary reflexes, but even then, the concept of 'instinct' seems to require some modification, for they improve their talents with practice. Young spiders, for example, "begin by making quite primitive little webs, and only attain perfection in their art in the course of time," and older spiders, if deprived of their spinnerets, will take to hunting.
[From Evens, B. (ed.) The Natural History of Nonsense. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.]

Glossary
warm-blooded (adj.): able to keep the temperature of the body rather high, whether the outside temperature is high or low.
incredible: to a degree that is difficult to believe.
seal: a large fish-eating animal living mostly on cool seacoasts and floating ice.
sea lion: a type of seal found in the Pacific Ocean and having large ears.
flipper: a limb of certain large sea animals, with a flat edge used for swimming.
adept (adj.): highly skilled.
hindrance (n): something that prevents an activity.
equipped: provided with what is necessary.

reflex: an action or movement of the body which happens by itself when one sees, hears or touches something. For example, you remove your finger from touching something hot.
instinct: ways of behaviour which are not based on learning or thinking, but are there from birth; e.g. a bird flies by instinct.

modification: change.
web: a net of thin threads spun by the spider.
spinneret: an organ of certain spiders which produces a silky thread used in spinning a web.
When giving examples to support your topic sentence, keep in mind that:
(i) there should be enough examples to support your point;
(ii) each example should be logically related to your main idea;
(iii) each example should be developed with interesting details. (Note that the writer of the paragraph above does not merely list the examples, but tells us in what way each of these animals is helpless, the results of their helplessness and how they become self-sufficient.)
(iv) the examples should represent a reasonable cross-section of the group you are dealing with.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
This exercise will help you to understand how the paragraph has been developed.
a) What is the topic sentence in this paragraph?
b) Read the paragraph again and fill in the following columns in the manner shown here:

Name of Animals	**Skills to be Developed**
(i) Young birds and bats	Learn to fly (ii)
(iii)	
(iv)	
(v)	
(vi)	

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
You have already come across the following words in example 1. Use these words to fill in the blanks in the sentences given below:

Drowned adept incredibly hindrance deprived

(i) Human babies are helpless at birth.
(ii) Ram was at playing the sitar.
(iii) The black South Africans are being..... of their rights by the white minority government.
(iv) A number of people get ..... every year because they don't know how to swim.
(v) Lack of money is a real..... to Rita's plans for travelling.

All these are illustrations used in the passage to develop the paragraphs.

2.3.2 Description

You may never have to write descriptions which are complete in themselves, but you may need to include descriptions in other pieces of writing, e.g. personal letters, narratives, reports and travelogues. You may like to describe people, places, objects, habits and conditions, as well as scenes such as accidents.

Since descriptions are concerned with detail, the larger and more precise your vocabulary, the better your descriptive writing will be. The following items are usually included in descriptive writing:

(i) place and position; direction;
(ii) measurements: weight, size, volume, distance;
(iii) shapes and patterns;
(iv) colours and textures;
(v) materials and substance.

Example 2: Development of a Paragraph by Description

Of the more than 20 species of small whales, our 300-pound playboy is identified by his gunmetal hide, his 8 to 12 foot length and his laughing face. The porpoise has no teeth at birth; they begin to appear (from 44 to 50 in each jaw) a few weeks later. Though he suckles for about a year and a half, he begins to munch on small squid at four months. He breathes through a single nostril, a crescent-shaped blowhole in his head that closes upon contact with water. This is also the source of his 'voice', and he can vibrate it like a human lip. His eyes, set just back from the mouth, are like a human being's capable of ranging. He hears through a cushioned inner ear and periodic bone, and has the keenest auditory sense of any animal. His brain weighs about 3.7 pounds, which, in terms of cell count per cubic centimetre, is the same as a man's. Some marine biologists believe that porpoises may have a higher potential IQ than humans, but have never had to develop it because they are so perfectly adapted to their environment.

[Adapted from Scott, J.D. 'Pranksters of the Sea' in *Marvels and Mysteries of the Animal World.* New York: Reader's Digest Association.]

Glossary

playboy: wealthy young man who lives mainly for pleasure (there it refers to the porpoise).
gunmetal: a metal which is a mixture of copper, tin, lead and zinc (the animal's hide is compared to gunmetal).
porpoise: a large sea animal that swims about in groups.
munch: eat with a strong movement of the jaw, making a noise.
squid: a small sea creature.
crescent-shaped (adj.): curved like the shape of the moon when it forms less than half a circle.
blowhole: a breathing hole at the top of the head of a whale which controls or regulates the flow of air in and out.

vibrate: cause to shake continuously and rapidly with slight movement that may often be felt or heard rather than seen.
ranging: stretching or reaching from one limit to another.
cushioned: provided with soft inner lining.
periotic: surrounding the ear.
auditory: of hearing.
biologist: a scientist who studies living things.
potential: (Adj.): capable of developing.
IQ: intelligence quotient. It is a measure of a person's intelligence. (100 represents the average.)
adapted: suited.
environment: surroundings.

This description of the porpoise is a good example of the type of writing that seeks to create a clear and accurate word picture of a subject without specifically mentioning the author's feelings about it. Notice the way in which the writer has built up a picture of the porpoise. The first sentence gives the general characteristics of the porpoise. The remaining sentences add details that develop the subject. These details concern the subject's physical appearance, including its teeth, nose, eyes, ears, and brain. Most good descriptions follow this progression from the general to the more specific.

When you write a description, keep in mind that you must:
(i) begin with the general appearance;
(ii) select such physical details as will support the description of the general appearance you have given in your first sentence;
(iii) describe each object by giving characteristics such as size, colour, design, weight, and materials;
iv. in some descriptions, especially of scenes and landscapes, arrange your details in a definite order, such as near to far, high to low, left to right, etc. Some of the words used to indicate position are:

to the right	above	beyond
to the left	below	under
in the centre	opposite	over
next to	between	on the eastern end
along the	right side	alongside
across		beneath

to the east/west/north/south surrounding

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3
We have already shown you in example 2 how a live object may be described. Now, we would like to describe a familiar scene, let's say your room. Keeping in mind the points we have discussed, write a description in about a hundred words of the room you live in. Before you write your paragraph, fill in the details in the following columns, which may help you arrange your points.

Object	Physical characteristics	Location
...……..	……	……
…….	……	……
...……..	……	……
…….	……	……
...……..	……	……
…….	……	……
...……..	……	……
…….	……	……

After you have completed the paragraph, compare it with the specimen paragraph given by us at the end of the unit.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Reading Comprehension

Let's read example 2 again. The questions below will help you understand it better.

(i) What phrases indicate that the writer has a positive attitude towards the porpoise?

(ii) The porpoise suckles for about:

(a) 4 months.

(b) 1 year.

(c) 1½ years.

(d) A few weeks.

Tick the right answer.

(iii) The source of the porpoise's voice is its .....

(Fill in the blank).

(iv) The porpoise can hear:

(a) better than any other animal.

(b) as well as any other animal.

(c) as well as human beings.

Tick the right answer.

(v) Marine biologists believe that porpoises:

(a) are more intelligent than man.

(b) may be capable of being more intelligent than man.
(c) can never be more intelligent than man.
(d) are less intelligent than man.

Tick the right answer.
In the description, you should be conversant with the appropriate words to use. The words must be such that what is being described is vivid, clear and well presented. Again, your description must follow some logical order. You may want to start with the north down to the south, or from left to right, or from the most important to the least important. Indeed, the work of descriptive writing is to paint a picture of what is to be described in words. A picture must emerge in the reader's mind after a description.

2.4 Summary

In this unit, you have learned two important methods of developing paragraphs: **illustration** and **description**. Illustration involves using relevant examples to explain, clarify, or support a general idea expressed in the topic sentence. You have also learned that effective illustration requires sufficient, relevant, well-developed, and logically arranged examples.

Description, on the other hand, involves presenting specific details that enable the reader to form a clear picture of a person, place, object, scene, or situation. Effective description requires careful selection and organisation of details such as size, shape, colour, position, texture, and other physical characteristics.

You have also learned that both illustration and description can make paragraphs clearer, more informative, and more engaging. The choice of a development technique should depend on the purpose of the writing and the idea the writer wants to communicate.

2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 3 DEVELOPMENT OF PARAGRAPHS: CAUSE AND EFFECT AND DEFINITIONS

Unit structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Learning Outcomes
3.3 Cause and Effect
    3.3.1 Causes
    3.3.2 Effects
    3.3.3 Cause and Effect
3.4 Definition
3.5 Comparison and Contrast
    3.5.1 Comparison
    3.5.2 Contrast
3.6 Summary
3.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
3.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

3.1 Introduction

In Unit 2, you learnt how to develop paragraphs using illustration and description. These techniques help writers explain ideas by providing examples and creating clear word pictures. In this unit, you will learn three additional techniques for paragraph development: cause and effect, definition, and comparison and contrast.

These techniques are particularly useful in academic writing because writers often need to explain why something happens, describe the results of an event, explain the meaning of a concept, or show how two things are similar or different.

For example, when discussing poor academic performance, you may need to identify its causes and effects. When writing about a technical term, you may need to define it clearly for your readers. Similarly, when discussing two universities, cities, occupations, or methods of learning, you may need to compare and contrast them.

The method of paragraph development you choose should depend on your purpose, topic, and intended readers. In some cases, more than one method can be used in the same piece of writing.

As you study this unit, pay attention to how each technique is used to organise ideas logically and effectively

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. explain how cause and effect can be used to develop paragraphs;
2. analyse paragraphs developed through causes, effects, and cause-and-effect relationships;
3. define terms and concepts using appropriate techniques;
4. develop paragraphs using definitions;
5. explain how comparison and contrast can be used to develop paragraphs; and
6. write paragraphs using appropriate comparison and contrast techniques.

3.3 Cause and Effect

Before you continue, think about this question:

What causes can lead to poor academic performance, and what effects may result from it?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out how writers identify and organise causes and effects when developing paragraphs.

Many events do not happen without a reason, and many actions produce consequences. When writers want to explain why something happened or what happened as a result, they use the **cause-and-effect technique**.

We often have occasions in our lives to ask "Why did it happen?" or "What will happen if ...?" and then try to find the cause and effect of an event. You may, for instance, want to know the cause of your poor grades, or of a bus accident, or the effect or consequence of taking drugs, deforestation, etc.

We shall begin by looking at how to identify and organise causes in a paragraph.

3.3.1 Cause

Besides using illustration and description to develop the topic of your paragraph, you may, in some cases, need to use the technique of cause and effect.

Analysing the cause can be quite a complex task. For example, a daughter rebelling against her father and leaving home may have an apparent immediate cause, but there may also be a chain of causes going back into the past. Thus, there are likely to be many causes, not just one.

When you write, you can follow any of these patterns. You may discuss one or more causal connections between events. You may trace a chain of events in which A is the cause of B, which is the cause of C, which causes D, and so on. The choice between one

cause and several causes is often not a free option. Usually, your topic will determine it.
When you work with several causes or reasons, you face the problem of arranging them in a significant order. If the reasons follow a logical pattern, i.e., if the main event is caused by A, and A in turn by B, and B by C, the organisation is predetermined. But sometimes, the reasons or causes may be parallel, all contributing to the same result. Then, a good strategy is to begin with the least important cause and conclude with the most important.

When developing a topic which is supported by reasons or causes, remember to:

1. make it clear whether you are dealing with an immediate cause or an earlier cause, a direct cause or an indirect cause;
2. consider multiple causes;
3. account for all the links in the sequence of causes;
4. write about all the causes or reasons with details.

Example 1: Development of a Paragraph by Listing the Causes

Hills and mountains are slowly worn away over thousands of years by erosion. Erosion takes place everywhere on Earth. There are several agents of erosion: glaciers, which carry rocks weighing thousands of tons; frost, which causes small cracks in rock faces; and strong winds, which wear away exposed rocks in deserts. By far the greatest cause of erosion, however, is the action of water on rocks. Water carries dissolved chemicals that soften rocks. This softening is the first stage of erosion called weathering. Rainwater falling on hills runs onto streams and rivers, and these carry the weathered rock away. Millions of years in the future, your favourite hills will have been worn completely away by erosion.

(Adapted from Geography by Dougal Dixon, Franklin Watts Science World)

Glossary
worn away: caused to disappear.
erosion: the action of wearing away.
glaciers: masses of ice that move very slowly down a mountain valley.
frost: a white powdery substance formed on outside surfaces from very small drops of water when the temperature of the air is below the freezing point.

Analysis of the Paragraph
(i) Topic sentence: "Hills and mountains are slowly worn away over thousands of years by the process of erosion."
(ii) (a) Causes of Erosion:
glaciers frost
strong winds.

Process of erosion by water.

(iii) Summing up: In a million years, even your favourite hills will be worn away by erosion.

(iv)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

You have just read an analysis of a paragraph which lists the causes of erosion. It follows a sequence where the less important causes are mentioned first, followed by the most important cause. Now, think of your own life. For instance, what were the reasons which led you to join the Open University? Jot down your reasons.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Read example 1 again and answer the following questions:

1. What are the various forces of erosion?
2. Fill in the gaps:

Water softens rocks because it carries certain .....(i) This softening is called (ii) ..... (iii) ..... falls on hills and runs into .....(iv) ..... and (v) ....., which carries the (vi) Rock away.

3.3.2 Effects

Effects or consequences can be handled in the same way as reasons or causes. But now the main idea is understood to cause the consequences discussed in the rest of the paragraph. The paragraph may deal with only a single effect or refer to several effects. If several consequences are listed, one must be careful to distinguish between the major and the minor ones.

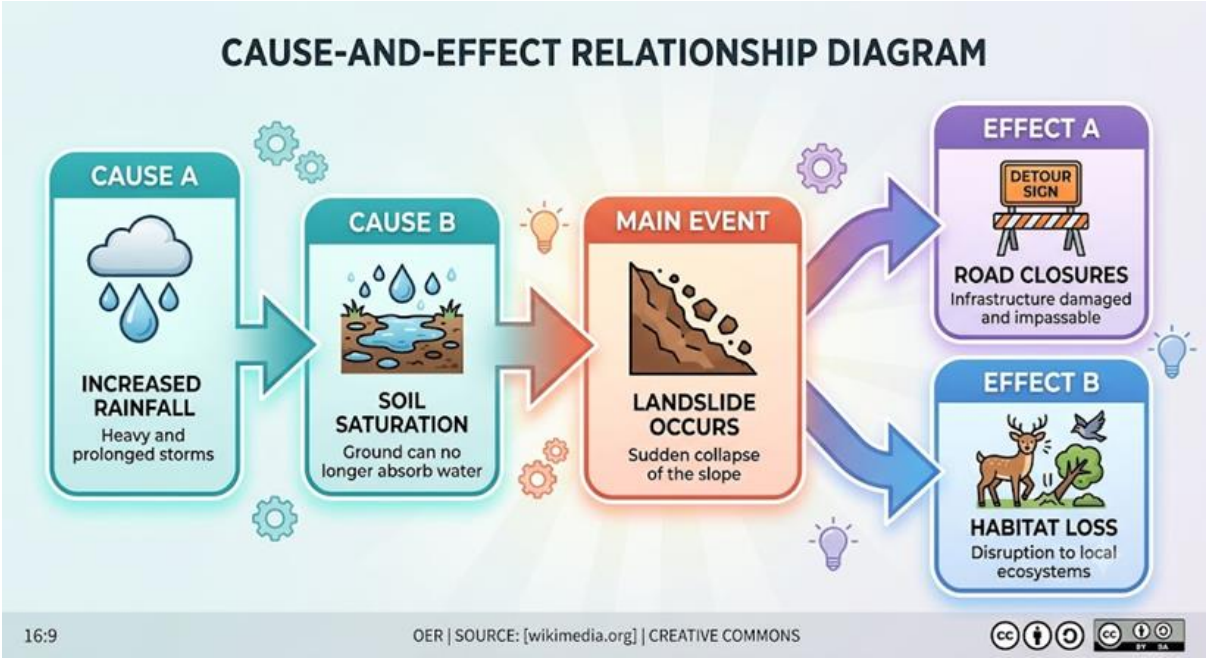


Figure 3.1: Cause-and-Effect Chain

Example 2: Developing a Paragraph by Listing Effects

An earthquake strikes without warning. When it does, its power is immense. If it strikes a modern city, the damage it causes is as great as if it had struck a primitive village. Gas mains burst, causing explosions and fires. Underground railways are wrecked. Whole buildings collapse. Dams burst. Bridges fall. Gaping crevices appear in busy streets. If the quake strikes at sea, huge tidal waves sweep inland. If it strikes in mountain regions, avalanches roar down into the valleys. Consider the terrifying statistics from the past. In the year 1755, Lisbon, capital of Portugal, was destroyed entirely, and 450 people were killed; in 1970, Peru, 50,000 people were killed.
(From "Can We Stop Earthquakes"? in World of Wonder)

Glossary

warning: the act of giving earlier information of danger.
immense: very great.
gas mains: pipes bringing gas from the source of supply to the houses and buildings.
graping crevices: wide opening or cracks.
tidal waves: very large ocean waves.
avalanches: large masses of snow and ice, sliding down a mountainside.
terrifying: filling with terror.

SELF-ASSESSMENT Exercise 3

In earlier sections, we analysed some of the paragraphs for you. The following exercise will help you understand the organisation of the paragraph above.

Cause: The power of ..... (i) .....
Main Effect: The great .....(ii) .....
Details of the Effect:

On Land	**At Sea**	**In the Mountain Region**
(i) Gas mains burst (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi) (vii) (viii)		

Summing up: Reinforce the idea of the damage caused by an earthquake by quoting statistics from the past and the present.

SELF-ASSESSMENT Exercise 4

In Exercise 1, you noted the reasons for joining the Open University. Now write down what you think will be the results or consequences of your joining this programme.

3.3.3 Cause and Effect

We have discussed a paragraph that gives reasons supporting a topic and a paragraph that addresses effects. Often, however, cause and effect are more closely related, forming a chain in which A gives rise to B, B to C, and so on. In such a link, B is both a consequence of A and the cause of C. The paragraph below illustrates such a chain.

Example 3: Paragraph Developed by Stating Cause and Effect
Without sunlight, there can be no form of life as we know it, and all man's basic needs can be ultimately traced back to the sun. In the first place, by its light and warmth, the sun directly provides man with water, for the heat of the sun causes the damp air over the seas to rise and form clouds which cool at a high altitude and consequently fall as rain. One result of rainfall is the formation of lakes and rivers from which man takes his water supply, and which can be used for hydroelectric power. At the same time, rain, together with sunlight, enables plants to grow, and plants provide food for man and animals, which in turn are another source of food for man.

(From Anita Debska: Upgrade your English, Oxford University Press.)

Glossary
ultimately: in the end.
survival: the fact of continuing to live.
high altitude: great height.

SELF-ASSESSMENT Exercise 5
In example 3, the paragraph has been developed by stating the cause and effect. By filling in the gaps below, you will be able to understand the organisation of the paragraph.
Main Cause: the sun.
Main Effect: Man's .....
(i) .....

Indirect Effect : rainfall ii…….. : rainfall
Effect: formation of .....iii..... and iv .....
Cause: lakes and rivers .....v..... :water and ..... vi Cause:
rain+ vii
.....Effect: plants. viii
..... ix: x
.....Effect:.....xi…….....
for man and
.....xii.....

SELF-ASSESSMENT Exercise 6
You have already noted the reasons for your joining the Open University and the effect it will have on your future career. Now write a paragraph of about 150 words combining both the reasons and the consequences of joining the Open University.

You may find some of the following words/phrases useful in developing your paragraph: because (of) , resulting in, since, leading to, on account of , causing, thanks to, consequently, with the result that

Cause and effect help us explain relationships between events. However, writers also need to explain the meaning of terms and concepts, particularly when writing for readers who may not be familiar with specialised vocabulary. We shall now examine how a **definition** can be used to develop a paragraph.

3.4 Definition

Before you continue, think about this: How would you explain a technical term to someone who has never encountered it before?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out**.**

Often, when we write, we need to explain what something is or what it means, especially if we feel our readers may not be familiar with it. This generally happens when we use technical terms or when we want to give an ordinary word our own meaning.

The simplest way to define a term is to give a synonym or to place the word in a general class and then distinguish it from others in that class. For example:

Term Class Differentiation
Nurse a woman or man helps takes care of the sick.
Surgeon a doctor who performs medical operations.
Such definitions are rather formal in style and are generally found in dictionaries.

Some concepts or ideas cannot be defined in such a manner, and for this purpose, extended definitions are useful. Topic sentences that relate to abstract concepts such as ‘freedom’, ‘democracy’, etc., need support from specific examples. In fact, both in our thinking and writing, we often require extended definitions. This is done by adding details such as uses, component parts, examples, similarities to or differences from other things, and what it is not.

Sometimes, a definition appears in the midst of other forms of writing, and sometimes the definition itself becomes the focus of a piece of writing.

Example 4: Paragraph Developed by Definition
A map is a representation of an area of land, sea, or sky. Maps have been used since the earliest civilisations, and explorers find that they are still used in rather primitive

societies today by people accustomed to travelling. For example, Arctic explorers have obtained considerable help from maps of the coastlines showing settlements drawn by the Eskimo people. Occasionally, maps show not only the roads, but also pictures of other features. One of the earliest such maps dates from about 1400 B.C. It shows not only roads but also lakes with fish, a canal with crocodiles, and a bridge over the canal. This is somewhat similar to modern maps of a state, which show, for each large town, some features of interest or the town's chief products.
C. C. Wylie

Glossary
representation: a picture.
Civilisation: a stage of human social development.
accustomed to: use to.
explorer: one who travels in unknown lands for the purpose of discovery.

Analysis of the Paragraph
Definitions: 'A map is a representation of an area of land, sea or sky.'
Generalisation: ' Maps have been used by those who are accustomed to travelling.'
Example: Arctic explorers.
Generalisation: Occasionally, maps show not only the roads, but also pictures of other features.
Example: Maps from both ancient and modern times.

SELF-ASSESSMENT Exercise 7
Use the sentences given below to write a paragraph on Mammals. The paragraph should be arranged in the following order:

(i) Definition
(ii) Generalisation by differentiation
(iii) Example (2 examples)
(iv) Generalisation.

You may make any changes in the language and introduce any connectives you feel are required to write a smoothly flowing passage. You will need, for example, to replace some of the nouns with pronouns and avoid unnecessary repetitions.

(i) Mammals differ from the other vertebrates in their system of reproduction.
(ii) The young mammals are protected by the mother's body.
(iii) After birth, the young mammals are nourished with milk secreted by the milk glands of the mother.
(iv) A mammal is a warm-blooded vertebrate that has four limbs and hairy skin.
(v) Mammals are an extremely varied group, ranging in size from the largest mammal, the blue whale, which is 150 tons, to shrews, which weigh only a few grams.

Glossary
vertebrates (n): animals which have a backbone.
secreted: produced.
varied: of different kinds.
shrew: a very small mouse-like animal with a long pointed nose.

When we define an object or a concept, we often need to describe its characteristics. For instance, look at some of the sentences in exercise 7.

A mammal is a warm-blooded vertebrate that has four limbs and hairy skin ..... the blue whale, which is 150 tons.....

Relative clauses in the examples given behave like adjectives because they qualify nouns: vertebrate and whale.

Relative clauses are of two types: defining and non-defining according to their function in the sentences in which they occur. Here, we shall discuss the defining relative clauses. They are called defining relative clauses because they define or specify the noun which they qualify. They form an essential part of a sentence, as it remains logically incomplete if this additional information is not provided. A defining relative clause is never separated from the noun it qualifies by the use of commas.

A defining relative clause begins with a relative pronoun: *that, which, who, whom, whose. That* may refer to persons or things, *which* is used only for things, and *who* for persons. The possessive and objective forms of *who are whose* and *whom. Whom and which* may be preceded by a preposition: about whom, of which.

SELF-ASSESSMENT Exercise 8
Complete the definitions below with appropriate relative pronouns:

1. Biology is a Science studies living beings.
2. Darwin was the person .....wrote The Origin of Species.
3. Mammals are a class of animals young are fed on the mother's milk.
4. An animal ..... has a large brain is called an anthropoid.
5. The house into I went belongs to a friend of mine.

Definitions help readers identify and explain unfamiliar terms. However, writers sometimes need to develop a paragraph by examining two subjects together, especially when the purpose is to show how they are alike or different. The next section introduces this method of paragraph development.

3.5 Comparison and Contrast

Before you continue, think about this: When do you compare two things in everyday life?

Keep your answer in mind as you continue reading to find out.

Sometimes a paragraph can be developed by showing how two things are alike or different. This method is known as **comparison and contrast**. Comparison focuses on similarities, while contrast focuses on differences.

So far, we have been discussing ways to develop paragraphs that deal with only one topic. Sometimes a topic can be developed by showing how two things are alike or different. In fact, comparison and contrast are common devices in writing mainly because we tend to think that way. Our decisions are often based on comparison and contrast. For instance, comparison and contrast dominate our thoughts when we decide to join a particular college or university, when we choose a career or a job, and even when we buy a particular brand of toothpaste. We often compare our teachers, our neighbours, the cities we have been to, the food served at different restaurants, and so on. Hence, comparison and contrast are continuous processes in our lives.

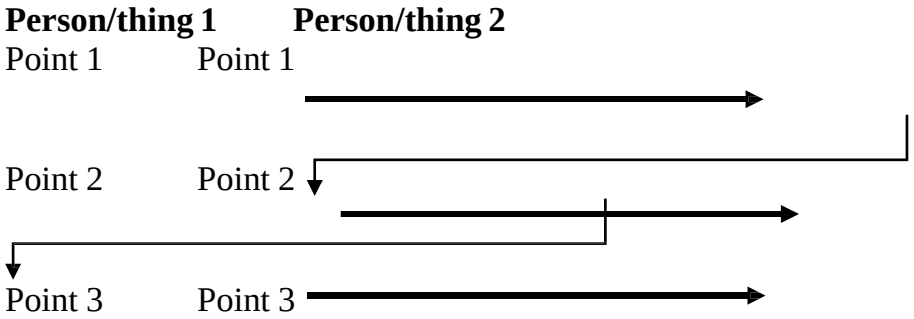
We generally compare or contrast two items for three basic purposes:

(i) We wish to point out distinctions in order to give information about two things.
(ii) We wish to clarify the unfamiliar by comparing it with the familiar.
(iii) We wish to show the superiority of one thing over another when we compare two cars, for example.

There are two ways of arranging information when comparing or contrasting things. One is to write down all the main points about one of the things to be compared or contrasted, and then take all the main points about the other.

Person/thing 1	Point 1 Point 2 Point 3
Person/thing 2	Point 1 Point 2 Point 3

The other way is to take each point in turn and to compare the two things with respect to each point, like this:



Example 5: Paragraph Developed by Comparison

The existence of a hierarchy helps ensure order and discipline, and these are important among monkeys just as they are among humans. They permit, first, the making of quick decisions. Whenever people are brought together, they can only reach decisions quickly if a hierarchy is established. Every jury needs its foreman; every cricket team needs a captain. The same is true of monkeys; some animals in the group have to decide when the group shall move, which direction it shall follow and what action it shall take to avoid predators. Some form of leadership is essential if action is to be taken quickly, and hierarchy has emerged to avoid continual infighting, which could result from total equality.

(Adapted from The Primates by Eimerl. S. and De Vors, I. Time-Life Series)

Glossary
hierarchy (n): the organisation of a system into higher and lower ranks.
foreman: the leader of the 12 people (jury) appointed to decide whether a person on trial is guilty or not.
predators: animals that live by killing and eating other animals.
infighting: fighting or disagreement within a group.

Analysis of the Paragraph

Topic sentence: 'The existence of hierarchy helps to assure order and discipline, and these things are important among monkeys just as they are among humans.'

Comparison Subject 1: People.
Subject 2: Monkeys.
Summing up: 'Some form of leadership is an essential consequence of total quality.'

Reading Comprehension
The paragraph given above is organised by first discussing one subject and then comparing it with another. Let's try to understand the paragraph better.

Fill in the gaps.

(a) Having a hierarchy is essential for both men and monkeys because
(b) It is particularly important for man because
(c) Give three reasons why it is particularly important for monkeys to have a form of hierarchy.

(i)
(ii)
(iii)

(d) The writers of this paragraph:

(i) believes in dictatorship;
(ii) are being practical;
(iii) do not believe in equality. (Tick the correct answer).

Example 6: Developing a Paragraph by Contrast

We live on the planet Earth, a ball of rock 12,750km in diameter. Like all the planets, the Earth rotates on its axis and orbits the sun. But the Earth is not alone. It has a companion on its travels – the moon, which orbits the Earth once a month. But the two worlds are very different. The Moon is a dead planet. It has no volcanoes or geological activity, it is airless, waterless and lifeless. The Earth, on the other hand, is lush and fertile. It supports millions of living things – planets, insects, birds, animals and human beings. It has fascinating erupting volcanoes. Since the moon has no atmosphere to protect it, its surface is heated to 105 °C during its day, and cools to 155 °C at night. In contrast, the Earth is covered by an atmosphere we can breathe, which also keeps the temperature quite constant.

Glossary

rotates: turns around a fixed point.
axis: an imaginary line around which a spinning body moves.
orbits: goes round.
Volcanoes: mountains with a large opening at the top through which melting rock, steam, gases, etc., escape from time to time with great force from inside the Earth.
geological activity: activity which relates to the physical changes in the structure of the Earth, especially relating to rock, soil, etc.
lush: thickly and healthily growing (especially plants).
erupting: exploding and pouring out fire.

Self-Assessment Exercise 9

Unlike example 5, the paragraph in example 6 has been organised by talking about the Earth and contrasting it with the moon. This exercise is to help you analyse the paragraph.

Analysis of the Paragraph:

1. What is the topic sentence?
2. Fill in the gaps in the following table to show the contrast between the Moon and the Earth.

The Moon	**The Earth**
(i)	(i) lush and fertile
(ii) ……..	(ii) has volcanoes
(iii) ……..	(iii) ……
(iv) ……..	(iv) has atmosphere
(v) very hot during the day, very cold during the night	(v) …….

SELF-ASSESSMENT Exercise 10

Write a paragraph of your own contrasting the Arctic and the Antarctic regions. The first sentence and some points describing the two regions are given below. The expressions of contrast listed here may also help you in developing the paragraph.
First Sentence: The northern and southern polar regions are different in many ways.

Northern (Arctic) Region Southern (Antarctic) region
ice-covered sea-surrounded by land. A huge continent surrounded by Ocean.
varied climate. climate is less varied; cold throughout the year.
more rainfall. less rainfall.
much plant life. empty desert.
exploited for trade. No trade at all.

Expressions of contrast

Is different from, can be distinguished from, but, yet, while, although, whereas, despite the fact that, on the other hand, are examples of contrast expressions.
(Adapted from K. Johnson: Communicate in writing.)

3.6 Summary

We have discussed different techniques for developing paragraphs in this unit. These techniques include the use of:
cause and effect
definition
comparison and contrast.

You should now be able to use these techniques in writing paragraphs on different topics.

3.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 4 FORMAL LETTERS: STYLISTIC FORMS AND ESSENTIAL PARTS

Unit structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Learning Outcomes
4.3 Formal Style of Communication
4.4 Formal and Informal Letters
4.5 Essentials of a Formal Letter
4.6 Mechanics of Writing a Formal Letter
4.7 Summary
4.8 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
4.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

4.1 Introduction

In Units 1, 2 and 3, you learnt to organise and develop effective paragraphs using techniques such as illustration, description, cause and effect, definition, and comparison and contrast. In this unit, you will apply these paragraph-writing skills to a practical form of communication: formal letters.

A formal letter is a written communication used when the writer and the recipient have an official, professional, institutional or business relationship. You may need to write a formal letter when applying for a job, requesting information, making a complaint, seeking permission, responding to an official matter, communicating with a government agency, writing to a school or university, or conducting business.

Formal letters differ from personal letters because they follow certain conventions relating to language, organisation, tone and presentation. The writer is expected to communicate clearly, politely and directly while providing all the information necessary for the recipient to act on the matter.

Formal communication does not necessarily mean using complicated or old-fashioned language. A well-written formal letter should be professional but natural. It should communicate its purpose efficiently and respectfully.

In this unit, you will learn the language features that characterise formal communication, the differences between formal and informal letters, the essential features of a formal letter, and the practical steps involved in preparing and presenting one.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the characteristics of formal communication;
- distinguish between formal and informal letters;
- identify the essential features of a formal letter;
- apply appropriate language and tone when writing formal letters; and
- organise and present a formal letter according to accepted conventions.

4.3 Formal Style of Communication

In spoken or written communication, we can be formal or informal depending on the situation and our relationship with the person we are speaking or writing to.

For example, the language that we use at home with our family or with intimate friends is the most informal. By contrast, the language that we use outside the home becomes progressively more formal. We are likely to use formal language with strangers, business associates, people of higher status than we are, and so on. Formal language is often written generally in the form of official reports, business letters, legal documents, etc. Certain fields of human activity are usually associated with formal language, such as business, law, and government.

What are the linguistic indicators of a formal style, especially in written language? You must have noticed that certain vocabulary items are never used except in formal situations.

Examples

Formal	**Informal**
commence	begin
conclude	end
deteriorate	get worse
aperture	opening

Many phrasal verbs are characteristic of an informal style.

Formal	**Informal**
encounter (verb) (= meet unexpectedly)	come across/run across (a friend)
inflate/enlarge	blow up
investigate	look into
extract (verb)	take out
deceive	take in

Similarly, certain grammatical structures are more common in formal writing, for example, the passive voice and impersonal subjects. Thus, in the instructions given to candidates at an examination, we may find:

'It is suggested that candidates spend thirty minutes on each question.'
'Full marks can be obtained by showing all the steps in the solution of the problems.'

Less formal ways of saying the same things would be:
'We suggest that you spend thirty minutes on each question.'
'You can get full marks if you show all the steps in the solution of the problems.'

You must have noticed from the examples given above that in formal written language the speaker does not refer directly to himself or his readers and avoids the pronouns, *I, you, we.*

The use of contracted forms of words is generally absent in formal writing. You will not normally find a sentence like:

The *meeting'll* commence at 4 p.m. Instead, you may come across:
The meeting *will* commence at 4 p.m.
The placing of a preposition at the beginning or at the end of a relative clause or an interrogative sentence can also distinguish formal and informal styles:

Examples

She longed for a friend in whom she could confide. (formal) She wanted a friend she could talk to freely. (informal)
In which street do you live? (formal) Which street d'you live in? (informal)
There are various degrees of formality, as the examples below show: When his father died, Ramesh had to look for a job.
After his father's death, Ramesh had to find a job.
On his father's demise, Mr. Ramesh Chandra was obliged to seek employment.

At the outset, we may tell you that it is not always necessary to use a very formal style even in rather formal situations. In your formal letters as well, while you may retain the form of such a letter, you should, as far as possible, avoid sounding too stilted or pompous. It is always a good idea to appear natural and friendly.

Rewrite each of the following sentences in a more appropriate formal style.

1. We can't give you the information because you didn't send the documents.
2. Please look into the matter and get back to us.
3. We want you to send us the details as soon as possible.
4. The meeting'll start at 10 a.m.
5. We need to find out why the payment has not been made.

Continue reading to find out how formal letters differ from informal letters.

4.3 Formal and Informal Letters

In everyday life, people write both formal and informal letters. The choice between them depends mainly on the relationship between the writer and recipient and the purpose of the communication.

In the course of our lives, we all have to write both formal and informal letters. Let's first discuss the difference between the two.

As you are aware, informal letters are likely to take the form of an extended, long-distance private conversation. But, at the same time, they are not really different from other kinds of writing. For instance, in a letter to a relative or a friend, you may wish to describe a place or a person, tell a story, or even have an argument. In these private letters, you may use whatever serves you best. These letters are, therefore, rather varied in their styles and contents.

Formal letters, on the other hand, are generally more 'set' in their styles and phraseology, although the conventions change from time to time. They are usually written, for example, when you want to request that an organisation do something for you, or when government decisions have to be conveyed to the people concerned, and records have to be kept.

What are these formal letters? These include, for example, letters of enquiry, job applications, letters to newspaper editors, orders for goods, and letters requesting travel and hotel reservations. They may be semi-formal (also called semi-official) letters written to business/professional colleagues and addressed by name.

You will no doubt realise the importance of formal letters and how often you may have to write them in the course of your life.

Table 4.2: Major Differences between Formal and Informal Letters

Formal Letter	**Informal Letter**
Usually written for official or professional purposes	Usually written for personal purposes
Follows an accepted format	Has greater freedom of organisation
Uses professional and courteous language	May use conversational language
Usually focuses on a specific purpose	May cover several personal matters
Avoids unnecessary details	May contain extended personal discussion
Uses an appropriate formal salutation and closing	May use personal greetings and closings
Requires careful attention to accuracy	Allows greater personal expression

4.4 Essentials of a Formal Letter

A formal letter must follow the usual form for such communication. There are certain things that one should keep in mind when writing a formal letter.

(i) Keep your letters as brief as possible. Remember that the person you are writing to doesn't have the time to go through a long, rambling letter. If he receives such a letter, he is likely to slip it in at the bottom of his pile of incoming mail with the thought 'that he'll look at it when he has more time.'

(ii) In fact, most formal letters are restricted to one or two main points. Most of them do not exceed one page of single-space typing, and very few are longer than two pages. Topics that are too complex to be treated within the space of the usual formal letters are generally made the subject of reports. If the situation requires a letter as well, you can include a covering letter with your report that states the main points and conclusion.

(iii) Your letters should be clear, precise and complete. This suggests that all the information should be given, but unnecessary details should be avoided. Care should be taken to highlight the main points. These points should be arranged in a logical sequence.

(iv) Read this in the light of the suggestions.

Dear Mr. Abdullahi,

We are in receipt today of your letter of 6 October, in which you have requested the catalogue and prices of our watches. We often receive such enquiries, particularly at this time of year, when we know that most dealers order fresh stock from Dadin Kowa Stores.

In accordance with your request, we have enclosed our latest illustrated and descriptive catalogue, which shows the range of watches we manufacture. Separately, we have also enclosed a copy of our price-list-cum-discount schedule. As you will notice, our watches range from traditional models to the latest in quartz, with prices to suit all sections of society.

You must be aware that we are Nigeria's largest watch manufacturer, and that this position has been earned through years of hard work. We assure you that you will be fully satisfied with our products, and you can place your orders with us unhesitatingly.

We might add that our watches carry a two-year guarantee against manufacturing defects. A copy of our standard guarantee terms is also enclosed.
We look forward to hearing from you in the near future.
Yours sincerely,

You will probably agree that it is not a well-organised letter. Why do we say that? First, let us consider what the writer wants to say in the letter. Obviously, he wants to tell the

addressee that he is sending the catalogue, the price list, and information about the guarantee terms, and also wants to persuade him to buy the watches from him.

These points are all included in the letter, but are not properly organised. There are too many unnecessary details that are rather distracting. For instance, if we look at the first paragraph of the letter, is there any need for a sentence such as "We often receive such enquiries, particularly ...stocks for Dadin Kowa Store"? Also, is there any need for the entire paragraph beginning with 'You must be aware that we are Nigeria's largest manufacturers of watches...'
Now, how can we make this letter more pointed and precise? Look at the letter given below:

Dear Mr. Abdullahi,

Thank you for your enquiry of 6 October.

As requested, we have enclosed our catalogue and price list. All our products carry a two-year guarantee from the date of sale.

You will notice that we offer a wide selection of watches, but may we draw your attention to the models described on pp. 6-7 of the catalogue, which we think might best suit your market?

If you require any further information, please contact us. Meanwhile, we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

You will agree that this letter is clearer and more precise. Let us see how the writer of the letter proceeds. First, he thanks the reader for showing interest in his product. He then informs him that he is enclosing information about his products, i.e. catalogues, price list, and guarantee terms. After that, in paragraph 3, instead of giving a general description of the items in the catalogue, he pinpoints specifically what would interest this particular customer, thus further motivating him to buy his products.

Your letters should always present the facts accurately. Figures, dates and explanations that are incorrect or misleading may cost time, money and goodwill. Therefore, check your facts before you state them. Remember that when you sign a letter, you are responsible for what it says, and sometimes it may even be legally binding on you. Therefore, allow yourself time to review a letter before mailing it, and make the changes you believe are necessary.

The tone of your letter should always be courteous and considerate. Even though you may not know your reader, you must take into account what he/she may feel on receiving the letter. Always ask yourself, 'How might I feel if I were to receive such a letter?'

Suppose, for example, you are the manager of a store selling electrical appliances, and you receive a letter from a customer who wants a free replacement of a defective part but does not provide the cash memo number. You could reply to him as follows:

'The cash memo number must be given in the letter of complaint; otherwise, the replacement cannot be arranged.'

or
'Please let us know the cash memo number so that we can process the replacement immediately.'
Which reply do you think is better?

Obviously, the second one. Notice that the second version uses the active voice, while the first uses the passive. In general, the active voice has a friendlier, more courteous tone; the passive, on the other hand, tends to sound impersonal and unfriendly.

Instead of writing in a stilted, official language, use a more personal, down-to-earth style. There is a tendency in many of us whenever we have to write official or business letters to use words or phrases that we would never use in any other situation. These are generally legal phrases or the jargon of a particular trade or profession. It is true that there are certain conventions we must follow in official/business correspondence. But if these are carried too far, it makes our language stylised and pompous.

Also, many of us tend to write business letters in the phraseology used fifty years ago. The overuse of 'set phrases' is likely to produce wrong results in that they may sound like polite formulas without any meaning.

Look at the following letters:
Dear Mr. Adebayo,

Letter of Thanks
Thank you for your gracious letter of the 7th instant. In response to your query, I wish to state that we no longer sell the equipment you enquired about. Be advised that Yusuf and Company could be of some help to you. You may address further correspondence to that firm for assistance in the matter.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely, **Ade Odusote** *Store Manager*

What are the words/phrases that you might omit? Perhaps we could replace or omit words/phrases like the following: 'gracious,' of the 7th instant, 'query', 'I wish to state that ...', 'be advised that,' 'You may address further correspondence to ...', 'thanking you.'

As you must have noticed, the writing is full of out-of-date business jargon. Let's try to avoid this, and we rewrite the letter:
Dear Mr. Adebayo,
Thank you for your letter of 7th May.

We no longer sell the equipment you requested. However, we are aware that Yusuf and Company now deal with that line. You may like to write to them for assistance.
Sincerely yours, **Ade Odusote** *Store Manager*

Given below are words/phrases which are often used in official/business letters, but which you must avoid in your own writing.

Avoid: Instead, try to use:
query request, enquiry
I beg to state that... I wish to say
After a dialogue with you... After talking to you...
causative factors causes
optimum advantage greatest
benefit/advantage
answer in the affirmative yes
In (accordance/compliance) with your request... as you asked for/requested...
I enclose herewith the papers... I enclose the papers
Pursuant to our agreement... As we agreed
Making an indepth survey...studying
in view of because of
in the event of if
in the majority of instances usually
notwithstanding the fact that... although, even though

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Given below are extracts from letters. Rewrite them, making the tone more courteous.

(i) 'We hope that you have taken care of your return air/train booking. As we have already informed you, we do not undertake to do this for you.'
(ii) 'We've just received the goods we ordered four months ago. We are sending them back as we are unable to use them.'
(iii) 'Your request was unclear, so we cannot fulfil your requirements.'
(iv) Dear Mr. Chukwu,

Your account with us is overdue. We must have your payment by the beginning of next week or we will be forced to initiate recovery proceedings.

2. Given below are extracts from letters. Rewrite them, omitting or replacing all the words and phrases that you consider incorrect or inappropriate.

(i) 'We are herewith sending you the final circular with information regarding accommodation, travel, etc.'

(ii) '..... However, it may not be possible to supply free of cost, so, I may kindly be informed of the rate of Annual Subscription of 'Student's Bulletin', especially for the year 1988. '

(iii) Dear Mr. Joseph,

We have received your gracious letter of the 13th instant in which you request information about the Personal Computer 'Future 300.'

Pursuant to your inquiry, we are pleased to be able to inform you that 'Future 300' is available with us.

Please be advised that we have every assurance that the newly designed 'Future 300' will best fulfil your needs.....

(iv) .....Since the work is confidential and urgent, I have been directed to request you to kindly spare your valuable services on Saturday.....

(v) Dear Parents,

As you are aware, our constant endeavour has been to make steady improvement in the academic standards and achievements of our students.
In order to accelerate progress, especially in the academic sphere, we have introduced a new system of exams, after considerable deliberation, in which I am happy to state that some parents took an active interest.

4.5 Mechanics of Writing a Formal Letter

In this section, we shall discuss the steps we must take when writing a formal letter. We shall discuss the letter's layout as well as the equipment used.

Drafting the Letter

We follow the same steps in composing a formal letter as we do for any other kind of letter or for other kinds of writing. We offer you some hints which you may find useful in composing your letter.

(i) It is always a good idea to prepare an outline. This may involve jotting down on a notepad the points you wish to make, and the order in which you wish to say them.

(ii) Second, write a rough draft based on the outline you have sketched. In this draft, try to limit your writing to the focus you have chosen, weeding out unnecessary ideas, words and phrases. As a general rule, you can organise your letter into three parts:
   (a) say why you're writing;
   (b) highlight the important facts;
   (c) describe what you would want the reader to do for you.

(iii) Then, go over the rough draft carefully, checking for mistakes in grammar, spelling and punctuation.

a. Some Basic Equipment

The appearance of an official or business letter can greatly influence a recipient who has never seen you. To make the appearance of your letter attractive, you may follow these suggestions:

(i) Try as far as possible to type your letters.
(ii) Type on unruled white paper of A4 size, and use envelopes of good quality.
(iii) Be sure that the typewriter keys are clean and the ribbon is fresh.

b. The Format

A formal letter generally follows a set format.

Sometimes your company/office may have its own format or style. In that case, you have to follow it. Otherwise, you may follow the guidelines given below.

Given below is an example of how people generally set out their letters to commercial companies and officials. Look at it carefully, and study the notes that go with it.

Modern School
R-58, DCM School Marg
1. New Park Road, Zaria. 069-337654
2. 6th May, 1988
3. Your Ref. No. RLJ/246
4. The Manager
5. Arewa Tourism Ibrahim Taiwo Road Kano
6. Dear Sir,
Formal issue or discussed topic Re: Vacation Hours
7. Thank you for your letter of 2 May, sending us information about your special vacation tours to Yaukari Game Reserve.
8. (Body of the letter)
9. Yours sincerely, Sheu Muazu.

Remember, all formal letters should have a title specifying what the letter is about. *Re: is used if the letter is a reply to a former letter,* discussion, or issue.

Notes

(i) Your personal address should go in the top right-hand corner. Do not put your name above your address. Take care not to put your address at the bottom of the letter.
(ii) The date should go under your address. It can be written in a number of acceptable ways: 6th May, 1988; 6/5/88; 6.5.88; May 6, 1988.
(iii) If the company or the official you are addressing your letter to has written to you before, there may be a reference number on their previous letter. It is better to quote this back to the writer on the left-hand side as shown.

(iv) Write down the name or the designation of the person you are writing to. It is better to write both if you know them. In case you write both, you need to remove 'The' from before the designation.

Example
Mr. J. Baba, Manager, Arewa Tourism,
Ibrahim Taiwo Road, Kano.

(v) Write down the name of the office or institution that you are writing to, and then the official address.
(vi) Place the salutation or greeting two spaces below the recipient's address in line with the left margin. In most official/commercial correspondence, the normal ways of addressing the person you are writing to are as follows:
(a) If you know the name of the person: Dear Mr./Ms/Dr. Surname With women who do not have a professional title, use Ms. (for both married and unmarried women). If the woman has expressed a preference for Miss or Mrs., honour her preference.

Titles like Professor and Captain are not usually abbreviated.

Example

Dear Professor Hassan,

(b) If you don't know the name of the person, Dear Sir/Madam/Sirs
(c) In some cases, you may use a word describing the position held by the addressee.

The choice will depend on the letter's subject. Dear Parent/Guardian, (in a letter from the school) Dear Principal, (in a letter to the university)

(d) These days, writers who do not know the name or the designation of the recipient often address the letter to the appropriate department. Alternatively, the name of the department may either appear in an 'attention' line, or it may be indicated in the 'subject' line.

Example 1
National Electronics, 64, Park Road,
Zaria
Attention: Public Relations Department Dear Sir,
I am returning the three transistor radios we purchased from you because their sound quality is very poor.

Example 2
Subject: Repair of Defective Parts Dear Sirs,
I am returning the three transistor radios we purchased from you because their sound quality is very poor.

(vii) The first line of the letter may begin immediately below the salutation as shown in the specimen letter. It is perfectly acceptable to indent it, i.e. start below the end of the salutation.

Example
Dear Sir,

Could you please send me some information.....

(viii) For the body of the letter, use single spacing between lines and double spacing between paragraphs. Again, it is perfectly acceptable to indent or not to indent the first line of each paragraph.

(ix) Start the complimentary: close two spaces below the body of the letter, either towards the right (as shown in the specimen letter) or towards the left. You can use standard expressions like 'Sincerely,' or 'Sincerely yours'. If the recipient is a friend as well as a business associate, you can close your letter in a less formal way: 'Best wishes' ', Warm regards', etc. All these expressions are always followed by a comma. Four spaces below the complimentary close of the letter, and aligned on the left with the close, type your full name. On the next line, you may type your business title. Then sign your name in the space between the complimentary close and your typed name.

Additional Information: Commercial/official letters sometimes require additional information – an enclosure notation, or an indication that a copy of the letter is being sent to more than one person. Place any such information on the left, two spaces below the last line of the letter's complimentary close.

Example

Sincerely,

Enclosure: Report of Projections for the year 1988 cc: Mr. R. M. Paul
Mr. S. M. Alhassan

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Shehu Muazu, Regional Director
Below is the layout of a letter. As you will notice, the format is not absolutely correct. On a separate piece of paper, redo this in the correct format. You may then review the specimen format we provided.

4.7 Summary

This unit introduced you to formal letters as an important form of official, professional and institutional communication. You learnt that formal communication differs from informal communication in its purpose, tone, vocabulary, organisation and conventions.

You learnt that effective formal writing should be:

- clear;
- concise;
- precise;
- complete;
- accurate;
- courteous; and
- appropriately organised.

You also learned that formal language does not require unnecessarily complicated or outdated expressions. Good formal writing should be professional, natural and easy to understand.

The unit further examined the essential components of a formal letter, including the writer's address or letterhead, date, recipient's address, salutation, subject line, body, complimentary close, signature, enclosures and copies.

Finally, you learnt how to plan, draft, revise and present a formal letter. These skills will prepare you for the different types of formal correspondence that you will encounter in academic, professional and everyday institutional contexts.

4.8 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 5 FORMAL LETTERS: COMPLAINTS AND REQUEST

Unit structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Writing Formal Letters for Specific Purposes
  5.3.1 Letters of Complaint
  5.3.2 Replying to Letters of Complaint
  5.3.3 Letters of Request
5.4 Summary
5.5 Tutor-Marked Assignment
5.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

5.1 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learned about the formal style of communication, the distinction between formal and informal letters, the essential features of formal letters, and the mechanics of writing them. In this unit, you will extend your knowledge by learning how to write formal letters for specific purposes.

The unit focuses on three important forms of formal correspondence: letters of complaint, replies to letters of complaint, and letters of request. These forms of communication are useful in academic, professional, commercial and everyday situations. For example, you may need to complain about a defective product, request information from an organisation, or respond to a customer's complaint in an official capacity.

A good formal letter should be clear, courteous, precise and purposeful. Whether you are making a complaint or requesting a service, the way you present your message can influence how the recipient responds.

As you study this unit, pay attention not only to the information contained in the specimen letters but also to their organisation, tone, language and format.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- write letters of request
- produce a formal letter of complaint
- give a reply to a letter of complaint.

5.3 Writing Formal Letters for Specific Purposes

Formal letters are written for different purposes. The purpose of a letter determines the information it should contain, the language to be used and the action expected from the recipient.

This section focuses on three common forms of formal correspondence: letters of complaint, replies to letters of complaint, and letters of request.

5.3.1 Letters of Complaint

There are often things in our daily lives that bother us, cause us inconvenience, or need to be changed. It then becomes necessary to write a letter of complaint to the appropriate person, organisation, or department. If we want a larger audience to read it, we can get it published in a newspaper.

Here are some suggestions about letters of complaint:

(i) Take care that your facts are accurate. To complain without reason will annoy the recipient of the letter.
(ii) Avoid sounding rude or nasty in the letter. Remember that the person who receives the letter may not be directly responsible for the situation you are complaining about. Getting angry with someone who was not at fault is neither fair nor useful.
(iii) If you have a complaint to make, do not delay. Delay not only weakens your case but can also complicate matters, as the people you're dealing with may forget the details.
(iv) There is no need to apologise if you are complaining. You need not begin in any of the following ways:

I am very sorry to bring this up ..... We regret to inform you ....
This merely weakens your case.
It is better to get to the point directly.

Example:
… unless you can give us better service, we shall be forced to consider other suppliers in the future.
… we are far from satisfied with the service you offer.
… please make sure that problems like these do not arise again.

Now look at the specimen letter given below. Notice that the tone is polite but firm.

Elektra Televisions Private Limited, 14, Mayfair Road, Lagos, Nigeria

May 14, 1988

Okda Industrial Enterprises, P/27A Okda Industrial Area,

Lagos.

Dear Sir,

Letter of Complaint

On 14th April, 1988, we placed an order for 50 pieces of 20" colour TV Picture Tubes. On 27th April, we received a consignment of 50 pieces of 16" colour Picture Tubes in place of our order for 20" colour Picture Tubes. We immediately returned these 16 picture tubes with a note indicating the mistake. However, not only have we not received the Picture Tubes we ordered, but we have also been billed repeatedly.

Would you please send the Picture Tubes we ordered? If you are unable to do so, please inform us immediately, so that we can make other arrangements.

Enclose a copy of the original order letter and the most recent bills.

Sincerely,
P.K. Akuse
Sales Manager

Enclosures: (i) original Order
(ii) Recent bill

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

The first paragraph of the following letter of complaint is missing. Fill in the gap with the most appropriate option from the three given below the letter.

R-47 Nigerian Airways,
P.O. Box 50, Ikeja, Lagos, 6 April, 1988.
Fair Price Clothes, 16 Marina Street, Lagos.
Dear Sir,

T-Shirt Supplied

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I am sure that this particular T-shirt is not representative of your products, and that you will immediately replace it.

As a regular customer of Fair Price Clothes, I'm generally pleased with your garments and hope to continue shopping at your store.

Sincerely,
G. Ibileye

Choices for the First Paragraph

(i) I must bring it to your attention that the T-shirt I bought from your shop just last week has faded and lost its shape after the very first wash. This has shocked me very much indeed.

(ii) With great reluctance, I bring it to your notice that the T-shirt I bought from your shop last week has lost its colour and shape after the very first wash.

(iii) I bought a T-shirt from your shop last week. The cash memo no is 6234. I find that after the very first wash, the colour faded, and it is out of shape.

5.3.2 Replying to Letters of Complaint

You may sometimes be in a position where you have to answer a letter of complaint. The technical term for a letter of this kind is an adjustment letter. To prepare an adjustment letter, you must first investigate what happened and what you can do to satisfy the person who has made the complaint. After you have obtained the facts, you can organise your letter in the following ways:

(i) Acknowledge that you received the complaint, thank the person for writing to you, and apologise immediately.

Example
'Thank you for your letter about the order for 50 pieces of 20" colour TV picture Tubes. Please accept our apologies for not sending the proper size of picture tubes, and for incorrectly billing you.'

Sometimes it is not possible to deal with the complaint immediately. It is better not to keep the customer waiting, but tell him at once what you are doing to help him.

Example
'We are sorry, we cannot give you an immediate explanation. However, we assure you that we are looking into the matter and will write to you again shortly.'
If the complaint is justified, explain clearly why the error occurred.

Example
'It was a mistake on the part of our dispatch department. '

‘We have rechecked your account and find that we have indeed been sending you the wrong statement due to a confusion in names and addresses. The computer has been reprogrammed, and there will be no more difficulties…’

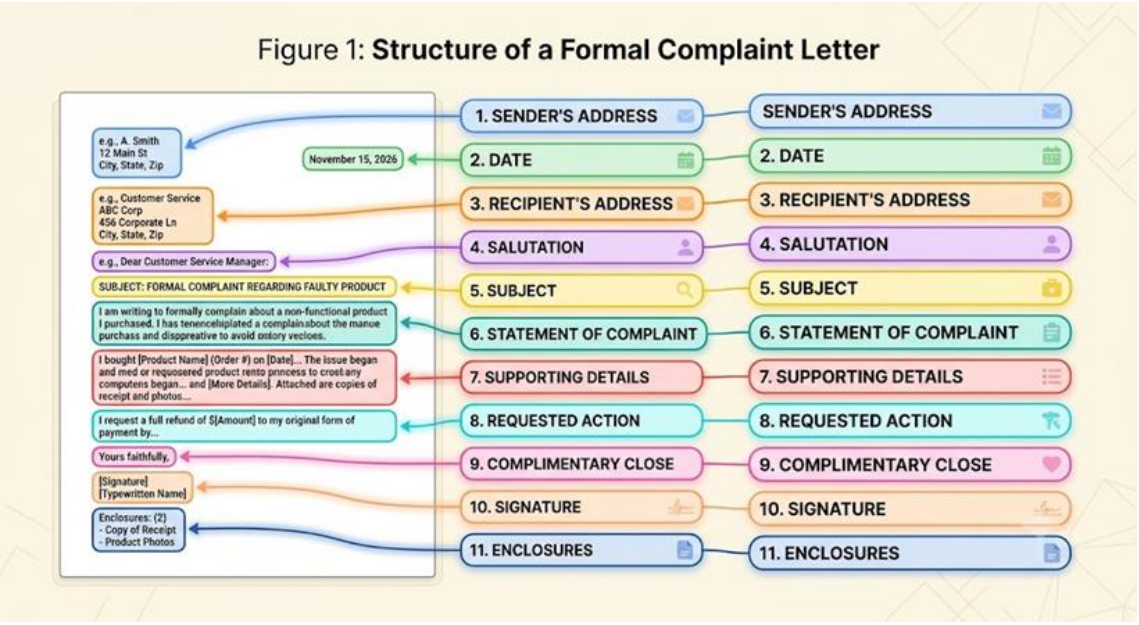
(ii) You must state specifically what you intend to do or have done to solve the problem.

Example
‘We have already sent the correct size of Picture Tubes by road transport. You should receive them shortly after you receive this letter. ’
‘We have returned the T-shirt to the manufacturer. Meanwhile, we request you to visit our store and choose another one. ’

(iii) Sometimes you may have to deal with a complaint which is unjustified. Even then, you must be firm but polite in your answer.

Example
‘Our technical department has examined the two-in-one and found that there were cracks on the body, as well as in the circuit. This could have happened only if a heavy object had fallen on the two-in-one, or if it had been dropped from a height. We can repair the machine for you, but I am afraid we will have to ask you to pay for the repairs, as this kind of damage is not covered by our guarantee. As a gesture of goodwill, we shall only charge you for the parts and not include labour charges.

Figure 1: **Structure of a Formal Complaint Letter**



SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
You are a manager at a company that deals in Air Coolers. Given below is a letter of complaint from a customer. Write an answer to the letter. Be careful about the layout of the letter as well. After you have completed the letter, you may compare it with the specimen letter given at the end of the unit.

Shanti Building 2/15, 19, Airport Road, Kano.
30th November, 1987

The Manager,
Quick Electrical Goods, 14, Bazar Street,
Kano.
Dear Sir,

Complaint about the Air Cooler Bought
I bought a 'Cool Home' air cooler from your shop on October 14 this year. The cash memo number is 457. The machine is, therefore, still under guarantee.

This morning, the water pump did not work. We would be grateful if you could send an engineer to rectify the fault. Since both my wife and I work, please ask the engineer to come after 6 p.m.

Yours sincerely,
D. Abdullahi

5.3.3 Letters of Request

Now that we have discussed the important features of a letter of complaint, let's take up letters of request in our next discussion.

Writing to commercial organisations and to official bodies for things you want to be done is probably the most common form of formal letters. There are two kinds of requests you may make:

(i) requests for goods and services;
(ii) requests for information of various sorts.

Look at the specimen letter below. It is a letter from a teacher to the manager of Yankari Tourism. This teacher would like to take her students on a trip to Yankari Game Reserve, making preliminary enquiries. Notice, especially, the language used in the letter.
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

6 August, 1987
The Manager, Yankari Tourism,
P.O. box 997,
Bauchi.

Dear Sir,
Could you please send me some information about the tours to the Yankari Game Reserve? We are particularly interested in visiting this interesting place.

I would like to know the days when your buses run, their timings, and whether they are air-conditioned. Could you also tell us the fare for thirty students?
I would be grateful if you could also enclose a list of all the accommodation there with their tariffs.
Yours sincerely,

M. Ibrahim
You must have noticed that the teacher has requested information in three ways from the manager of Yankari Tourism. What are these three ways? They are as follows:

Could you please send me some..... I would like to know the days.....
I would be grateful if you could also enclose.....
There are other options you can use when making a request: Would it be possible for you to send...
Could you (possibly) send me..... I would like to inquire about.....
I am writing to inquire about.....

When you make a second request or require more information, you could use the word 'also', as in the letter above.
I would be grateful if you could *also* enclose..... I would *also* like some help on.....
or
Another point I am not certain about is..... Another matter I need information on is.....

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. You would like to take a certificate course in Food and Nutrition. Complete the letter below, asking for information about the course.

Dear Sir,
.....(i) ..... like to have some information about your certificate course in Food and Nutrition beginning this September.
..... (i) ..... the prospectus for the course, indicating its duration and the fees to be paid.
..... (iii) ..... like to know if you have any plans for developing this into a degree course.

2. Write a letter to the Manager of a hotel in Abuja. In your letter, specify how many rooms you require, for how many people, for how long, your arrival and departure time, and finally, the meals you will require. Besides the content, be careful with the letter's layout.

Nigerian Context Activity

Imagine that you are a student at a Nigerian university, and your internet service provider has repeatedly failed to provide the data service you have paid for.

Write a formal letter of complaint to the customer service manager. Your letter should state:

- when the problem started;
- the service or package affected;
- the steps you have already taken;
- the inconvenience caused; and
- the action you expect the company to take.

Remember to remain factual, courteous and firm.

5.4 SUMMARY

In this unit, you learned how to write formal letters for specific purposes. The discussion focused on three important forms of formal correspondence:

- letters of complaint;
- replies to letters of complaint; and
- letters of request.

A good complaint letter should present accurate facts, explain the problem clearly, maintain a polite but firm tone and state the action expected from the recipient.

A reply to a complaint should acknowledge the complaint, investigate and explain the relevant facts, apologise where appropriate, and state clearly what action will be taken. Even when a complaint is unjustified, the response should remain courteous and professional.

A letter of request should clearly state what information, goods or services are required. Expressions such as *"Could you please...?", "I would like to know...?", "Could you also...?", and "I would be grateful if..."* can help the writer make requests politely.

These skills are useful in academic, professional, commercial and everyday situations. Effective formal correspondence depends not only on correct grammar but also on clarity, accuracy, organisation, courtesy and an appropriate tone

5.5 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING/Web Sources

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MODULE 7

Unit 1 Formal Letters: Letters about Jobs, Ordering Goods and Letters to Government and Other Organisations
Unit 2 Writing Reports 1: Reporting Events
Unit 3 Writing Reports II: Reporting Experiments
Unit 4 Writing Summaries I: Techniques of Summarising
Unit 5 Writing Summaries II: More on Techniques of Summarising

UNIT 1 FORMAL LETTERS: LETTERS ABOUT JOBS, ORDERING GOODS AND LETTERS TO GOVERNMENT AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Unit structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Objectives
1.3 Letters about Jobs
1.4 Letters Ordering Goods
1.5 Letters to Government and Other Organisations
1.6 Summary
1.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

1.1 Introduction

Think about the situations in which you may need to communicate formally with an organisation. You may be applying for a job, responding to an employment offer, ordering office equipment, reporting a problem to a government agency, or requesting a service from an organisation. In each situation, the purpose of the letter may be different, but the need for clear, accurate and appropriately organised communication remains the same.

In Units 4 and 5 of Module 1, you were introduced to the formal style of communication, the essential elements of a formal letter, and the writing of letters of complaint and request. You have therefore already acquired some of the basic skills needed to communicate formally.

This unit takes those skills further by focusing on three important areas of formal correspondence: **letters about jobs, letters ordering goods, and letters to government and other organisations**. You will learn how to present your qualifications effectively when applying for a job, how to accept or decline a job offer courteously, how to place an accurate order for goods, and how to communicate complaints, instructions and requests to public and private organisations.

As you work through the unit, pay attention not only to **what** information is included in each letter, but also to **how** that information is organised and expressed. A well-written formal letter should make its purpose immediately clear to the reader and should guide the reader towards the action expected.

Let us begin with letters about jobs, since writing effectively about employment is a skill you are likely to need at different stages of your working life.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- **write** effective formal letters relating to job applications and employment offers
- **prepare** letters for ordering goods with accurate and complete information
- **compose** formal letters to the government and other organisations for complaints, instructions and requests.

1.3 Letters about Jobs

If you are looking for a job or wish to change your job, you will probably have to write a number of letters, particularly the letters of application that you will send along with your curriculum vitae. This is a short written account of your education and past employment. In this section, we shall discuss some of these letters, but shall pay the most attention to the letter of application. This letter requires a special effort, as you must convince your reader that you deserve an interview invitation.

This section examines three common situations involving employment correspondence: applying for a job, accepting a job offer and declining a job offer. As you read, notice how each type of letter has a different purpose and therefore requires a different approach.

(a) Applications

Whenever you send a copy of your curriculum vitae to an organisation where you are seeking a job, you should also send a personal covering letter, also known as a letter of application. The two are sent together, and you should consider them inseparable, even if you are answering an advertisement that asks for only the curriculum vitae. This letter supplements your curriculum vitae in that it provides information that is not usually included in the curriculum vitae, or cannot be fitted in it for lack of space. A letter of application, therefore, is an elaboration and an explanation of the facts that you list in your curriculum vitae.

There is an important difference between a letter of application and a curriculum vitae. The curriculum vitae is a straightforward, factual presentation of your education, work experience and other qualifications. These facts may qualify you for a number of jobs in different organisations. In the covering letter, you have a chance to interpret these

facts and show how they are particularly relevant to the position you are applying for. So your letter goes beyond merely saying that you have certain qualifications; it shows that your qualifications are appropriate to a specific job and organisation. And your aim in the letter should be to offer your reader several compelling reasons to speak with you in person about your application. Therefore, your letter and curriculum vitae together explain your qualifications. They also provide evidence of your ability to select appropriate information and organise it for the reader. An effective presentation can easily make even average qualifications appear quite impressive. A poor presentation can make excellent qualifications look ordinary.

Your letter of application must attempt to do three things:
(i) catch your reader's attention favourably;
(ii) convince your reader that you are qualified for the position;
(iii) ask for an interview.

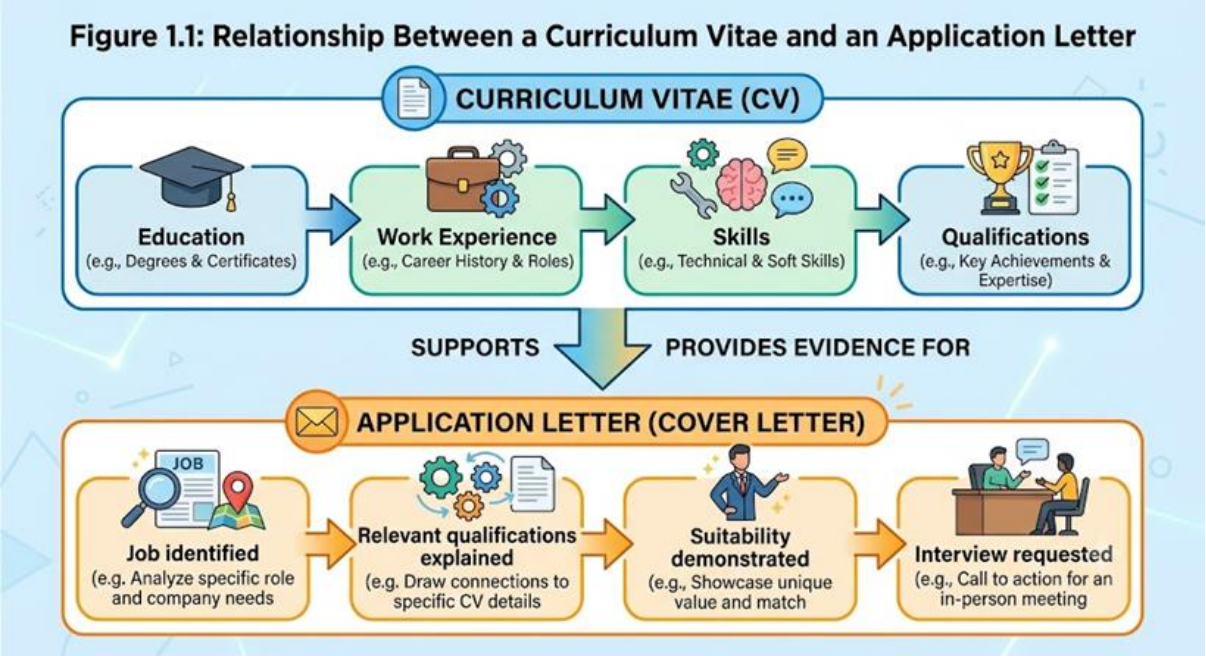
You should try to achieve the three objectives in a one-page letter.

If you are applying for a *specific* advertised job, identify the job by title and state where you learned about it. Remember that an organisation may have advertised for several jobs on the same day in the same newspaper or professional journal. If you do not specify which job you are applying for, it will confuse your reader and give them sufficient reason to move on to the next application.

Some of the ways you could begin are:
I am interested in applying for the post that was advertised in
The New Nigerian on 21 June, 1988.
In answer to your advertisement in *The Daily Times* of 21 June, 1988, I wish to apply for the post in your organisation.
Your advertisement in *The Guardian* on 21 June 1988 for a production manager interested me because your requirements closely align with my work experience.

There may be occasions when you explore the possibility of a suitable job in different organisations. Then, you should explain that you are seeking a particular type of job and are writing to inquire whether the organisation has any openings for it.

Before moving further, it is useful to visualise the relationship between the two documents normally submitted during a job application. The figure below shows how the curriculum vitae provides factual information while the application letter connects those facts to the particular position being sought.



Example

I am looking for a responsible position in the sales department, where my marketing training and experience selling consumer goods may prove useful. I would be interested in exploring the possibility of obtaining such a position in your firm.

Once you begin your letter (i.e., state the title of the job and indicate where you came to know of it), your aim should be to convince your reader that you are suitable for the job. You, therefore, need to explain how your experience and skills qualify you for the job.

In your curriculum vitae, you should list the basic facts about your education, experience, and special skills. In your letter, you will have to show your reader what these facts mean by placing them in the specific context of the job you are applying for. For instance, if you are applying for a sales job, indicate that your previous job has taught you to present a product line effectively. If you are applying for a job as an office manager, indicate any supervisory experience you may have had. However, if you are applying for your first job, highlight how your education matches the job and show your capacity for hard work and taking initiative.

Examples

1. (In response to an advertisement for the post of Private Secretary to the Chairman in a commercial organisation.)

   I have been employed as a stenographer with University of Abuja for the past four years, and thus have the experience of secretarial work. In this post I have had to assume a certain amount of responsibility. I have been in-charge of the typists' pool, and have for the last three months been acting as personal secretary to the managing director. I enjoy this type of work, but with the return of the director's secretary from maternity leave, I shall have to go back to my earlier responsibilities.

If I am found suitable for the post advertised, I feel that my experience and talents will contribute not only to the growth of your organisation, but also to my personal growth.

2. (In answer to an advertisement for the job of T.V. service mechanic in a private organisation.)

I have the experience of precisely the kind of work that the post you advertised entails. I have a diploma in T.V repair from I.T.I. After taking this diploma, I was an apprentice with Alfa Radios for six months, where I repaired both Black-and-White and colour TV sets. During this period, I also repaired many video sets.... You may want to enter into an entirely new field in which you lack experience. In that case, you should frankly admit that you are inexperienced. At the same time, you should give persuasive reasons why you wish to change your job, and show your keen interest in the new area that you wish to enter.

Example
At the moment, I am working as a clerk in a government office. I do not find this work particularly interesting, and I wish to make a career in sales.

Although I lack prior experience, I believe I have the necessary personal qualities to succeed in this field. I enjoy travelling and meeting people. My academic record is good, and the officer under whom I currently work will be able to testify to my willingness to learn and work hard. To make myself more efficient in this field, I have enrolled in a correspondence course in marketing...

The final stage of your letter is to ask your reader to do something for you. In a letter of application, this is the place to request an interview. Now, it is clear that the purpose of your letter is to request an interview. Therefore, the important thing is not *what* you ask for, but *how* you do it. The point is to do it tactfully without appearing to beg or demand.

Don't write in any of the following ways:

I hope my letter finds your kind favour and that you will give me a chance to appear for an interview.

I am confident that, after reviewing all the applications for this position, you will see that I am the best qualified for this job.

Try to be polite but directly ask for what you want, like this:
I will appreciate an opportunity to talk to you in person about the position of in your company and will be available for an interview at your convenience.
If my application is considered, I shall be available at any time that suits your convenience, though I would need a little notice to make travel arrangements.

The last paragraph of your letter is also the place to state any restrictions on your availability for an interview or special instructions on how to contact you.

Examples

(i) I will be happy to meet you at your convenience and provide any additional information you may need. You can contact me either at my home address or at 342643 during regular business hours.

(ii) Could you fix an interview to discuss my qualifications in more detail? With a week's notice, I can arrange to travel to Abuja at your convenience.

You must make sure that you type your letter and avoid all errors.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Given below are sentences taken from an application for the post of a sales officer. Rearrange the sentences in the correct order and organise them into separate paragraphs.

(i) My present job requires me not only to sell goods but also to keep an account of the sales, and do a bit of typing.

(ii) I am twenty-seven years old and have a diploma in marketing.

(iii) I am interested in applying for the post of a Sales Officer, which was advertised in the *New Nigerian* on 21 June, 1988.

(iv) I enclose my curriculum vitae, and will be happy to give you any further information that you require.

(v) You can contact me either at my home address or at 623029 during regular business hours.

(vi) The reason I wish to leave this job is that I find the office routine too monotonous.

(vii) I have been working in a department store for the last three years, where I have often been in sole charge of the shop.

(viii) Since the job advertised involves travelling and meeting people, it would suit my abilities and temperament better.

2. Given below is a letter of application for the post of a stenographer in a commercial organisation. The beginning and the end of the letter are missing. Complete the letter by filling in the gaps.

16, Wuff Street
P.O. Box 63
Zaria 16/7/88
The Personnel Manager, Cabo Airlines
P.O. Box 779, Kaduna Dear Sir,
……..
……..
……..

I am twenty-three years of age, and have recently graduated from Ahmadu Bello University with a 2nd Class Upper. I have also completed a two-year secretarial course at the Institute of Vocational Studies, where I studied commercial subjects, shorthand,

and typing. I may add that I also took a special course in Computer Science offered by the Institute and am quite proficient with the word processor.

……..
……..
……..

Yours sincerely,

Agnes Otaru

3. Here is an advertisement that appeared in the *New Nigerian Times* on 7 July, 1988. Keeping in mind the format discussed in this unit, write an answer to the advertisement.

Marketing Manager Pharmaceuticals

A new pharmaceutical unit requires a dynamic marketing manager. The incumbent shall have full responsibility for sales promotion and will be required to formulate and implement marketing strategies.

Applicants should have 3 – 5 years of relevant experience.

Attractive salary and perks will be offered. Applications giving full bio-data and past record may be sent within 10 days to:

Dhana Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd. 47/G-5, Haudala Way

Jos

……
……
……
……

Writing an application letter is only one part of employment correspondence. What happens after the employer has considered your application and offers you the position? You must respond appropriately. The next subsection considers how to accept a job offer professionally.

Writing an application letter is only one part of employment correspondence. What happens after the employer has considered your application and offers you the position? You must respond appropriately. The next subsection considers how to accept a job offer professionally.

(b) Accepting an Offer

If you are offered a job you would like to accept, you must write a brief letter of acceptance as soon as possible, certainly within a week. The letter's format is simple.

(i) Begin by thanking the person for giving you the job. Then, accept the job that you have been offered. Take care to identify the job by title.
(ii) In the second paragraph, you would specify when you would like to take up the post.
(iii) Conclude the letter with a statement that you look forward to working for your new employer.

Some of the ways in which you could begin a letter of acceptance are:

(i) Thank you for your letter of 6 May 1988 offering me the post of Storekeeper in your company, which I am glad to accept.

(ii) May I thank you for the kindness and courtesy shown to me when I came for an interview on the 16th. I am glad to accept the post of Accounts Assistant in your organisation on the terms stated in your letter of yesterday.

(iii) Thank you for your offer of the post of ..... in your I have great pleasure in accepting the offer.

Some of the ways in which you could conclude your letter are:

(i) I look forward to what I am sure will be a rewarding future with Exact Time Watches.

(ii) I am looking forward to working for your company.

(iii) I feel very happy to have obtained this appointment and assure you that I shall do my best to make a success of my work.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Imagine that you have received a letter from General Television saying that you have been selected for the job you applied for. Given is the main part of the letter. Write a letter accepting the offer.

General Television PVT. Ltd.
64, Ali Road, Calabar

May 16, 1988
Dear Mr. Hussain,

I am pleased to offer you the post of Technical Supervisor at our company.

As we discussed during our talk, your initial salary will be on the SS-04 salary scale. You will also be entitled to the regular allowances that we provide for our employees.

If you accept this offer, please let us know how soon you can join our office.
With best wishes.
Sincerely yours,
R. N. Sanni
Personnel Manager

……
……
……
……
……
……

Not every job offer will be suitable for an applicant. You may receive another offer, decide that the terms are unsuitable, or simply change your plans. In such situations, the way you communicate your decision matters. A refusal that is careless or abrupt can damage a professional relationship.

(c) Declining an Offer

While searching for a job, you may have applied to several organisations and may, as a result, receive more than one offer. You will then have to select the job which is most attractive to you and write your letter of acceptance. To the other employers, you must write a letter of refusal *immediately.*

When writing such a letter, begin by thinking about your readers. Remember that they have invested time and effort in you, compared you with other applicants, and found you to be the best person for the job. They may have counted on your accepting the job. If you refuse the offer, they will have to redo some of their work.

Therefore, in your letter of refusal, you must be tactful and courteous. Try to give honest and sincere reasons for your refusal. If you have accepted another offer, say so, and explain why. Do everything to ensure that you and your readers part company as friends.

You may begin the letter by first thanking them for offering you the post. Then make a reasonable excuse for not accepting the offer.

Examples
Thank you for your letter of..... offering me the post of ..... in your organisation. I am sorry, I am unable to accept this offer as.....

Thank you for your offer of a post of..... in your .... I am afraid I am unable to accept your offer as.....

A more unconventional but equally polite way of rejecting an offer is as follows:

I enjoyed talking with you about your opening for a and was gratified
to receive your offer. Although I have given the offer serious thought, I have decided.....

One of the ways in which you can conclude your letter is:
I appreciate your consideration, and I am sure I would have enjoyed working for your company.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3
Read the letter given in exercise 1.2 offering you the job of a Technical Supervisor. Write a letter in reply, refusing the offer.

You have now examined formal letters connected with employment. Formal correspondence is also important in business transactions. Organisations regularly need to purchase stationery, equipment, books, materials and other supplies. When placing an order, even a small error in quantity, description, price or delivery instructions can lead to costly problems. The next section, therefore, focuses on how to write clear and accurate order letters.

1.4 Letters Ordering Goods

If you are employed in an organisation or are self-employed, you may often have to order supplies of goods or equipment. Letters ordering goods have the format of any other formal letter, but there are certain points which you need to emphasise in such a letter.

(i) An order letter must be *specific* and *complete* if you are to receive the exact items that you want. For instance, you must give the exact name and part number (if necessary) of the item. You must give a detailed description of the size, style, colour and so on. You must specify the quantity needed of each item.
(ii) Do not clutter the letter with unnecessary details such as why you need the items and who will use them.
(iii) Be accurate. Sometimes, even a misplaced decimal point could cause a serious error. Therefore, re-read your letter carefully and check all price calculations.

Format
Given below are some points which might help you to organise your letter. You may, of course, change the organisation to suit your situation:
(a) Probably the best way to begin a letter ordering goods is by coming straight to the point.

Examples
(i) Attention: Sales Department
Please send us the following books listed in your catalogue:

No of copies	***Title***	***Author***	***Published Price***
15	Writing Tasks	D. Jolly	₦750
20	A textbook of Economics	R. Hanson	₦1,500
25	Modern Office Practice	S. Kumar	₦150

(ii) Confirming the order we placed with you by telephone this morning, we request you to supply the following items:

(iii) We thank you for your quotation of 4th June and shall be glad if you will supply the following items:
(iv) Please register our requirements for the month of May and arrange to supply the following flavours of Top Chef Soft Drink Concentrate:

Flavours	**No. of Crates**
Mirinda	100
Maltina	120
Cocacola	100
Fanta	150
Pineapple Juice	130
Total	**600**

In some companies, the orders are written on the official order form. Such an order form should always be sent with a covering letter. A covering letter allows you to make any necessary points and confirm the agreed terms. You could begin such a letter in the following ways:

(i) Thank you for your letter of 7 June regarding the we wrote to you about. You will find enclosed our official order (No. 3842) for.....
(ii) Please find enclosed our order No. 39645 for 200 sets of different models of transistor radios.
(iii) We thank you for your letter of 5th June and enclose our Order No. 328 for the four items we require.
(b) You should confirm the terms and the method of payment.

Examples
(i) As agreed, we shall send our remittance in full settlement of your invoice by a bank draft thirty days after receipt of goods ordered.
(ii) You may draw on us for the cost of the goods through Union Bank, Mohammed Murtala Way, Ilorin. Please rest assured that your documents will be honoured by the bank upon presentation.
(iii) Once we have received your advice, we shall send a banker's draft to.....
(iv) The enclosed cheque for ₦25,000 covers the price of goods and postage charges.
(c) You must also confirm the discount (if any) agreed upon.

Examples
(i) We had agreed that if we sent the payment along with our order, we would be entitled to a prompt payment discount of 5%. We have therefore deducted this when making the payment.
(ii) You will notice from the size of our order that we are entitled to a 15% discount. Please ensure that the discount is allowed in the invoice; it will be difficult for us to settle your bill.
(iii) We would like to thank you for the 10% 'quantity discount' you have allowed us.
(iv) We would like to take advantage of the generous cash discount you have offered for prompt settlement.
(v) Although the low rate of discount –5% – has disappointed us, we are placing an order with you and hope that you will review the position in the near future.

It is very important to advise your supplier about how you want the goods packed and sent to you. Then, if the consignment does arrive late or in a damaged state, your letter is the evidence of the instructions you gave.

Some Examples

(i) The goods may be dispatched through a reliable Road Transport Service, if possible through NITCO Roadways.
(ii) We suggest delivery by road to avoid constant handling of this fragile consignment.
(iii) Please send the goods by air freight, as we need them urgently.

If the goods are fragile, it is better to advise your supplier on how you want them packed.

Example

The 50 sets of crockery we ordered should be packed in five crates, with 10 sets per crate. Each piece of crockery should be individually wrapped in thick paper and stuffed with straws. The crates should be clearly marked 'crockery' and 'fragile'.

(d) Always indicate the date by which you need the items. If you need them urgently, specify the reason and the mode of transport you think will enable the goods to arrive faster.

Examples

(i) Please complete the above order positively before 25th September because of the impending rainy season.
ii) All these items are urgently required by our customers. We hope you will send them by air freight immediately.
iii) We note that you can supply these items from stock and look forward to delivery within the next few days.

The following letter is an example of an order letter:

People's Watch Store 15, Palika Bazar, Maiduguri

3rd May, 1988
Exact Time Watches 25/B Marina
Lagos

Attention: *Sales Department Dear Sirs,*
Thank you for your letter of May 1, which provided information about the new range of watches you have manufactured. We wish you to supply us with the following items:
150 "Popular" watches @ ₦2,500 each 200 "Regent" watches @ ₦3,00 each
100 "Aristocrat" watches @ ₦6,000 each.

As agreed, we shall send the payment by bank draft immediately upon receipt of the goods.

We note that you can supply these items from stock and look forward to delivery in the next few days.

Sincerely, ***Alfred King,*** *Proprietor*

You have already placed your order over the telephone. Now write a letter confirming your order

Formal communication is not limited to employment and commercial transactions. As a citizen, customer, student, employee or member of a community, you may also need to communicate with government agencies and other organisations. You may need to report a problem, give instructions, request a service or seek information. The effectiveness of such communication often depends on how clearly you state the problem and the action you expect.

1.5 Letters to Government and Other Organisations

So far, we have mainly dealt with letters you may need to write if you are applying for jobs in various organisations or ordering goods. There may, however, be situations when you, as an ordinary citizen, need to write to various governments or other organisations about the problems that you may be facing in your daily life. These are also formal letters, including letters of complaint, letters of request, and letters making enquiries or suggestions. We often avoid writing these letters because we don't know how to. In this section, we shall give you some examples of these letters and provide you with practice in writing them yourself.

(a) Letters of Complaint

A letter we have to write frequently is a letter of complaint or protest. You may find that the Electricity Undertaking or the Telephone NITEL overcharged you. Your telephone may be out of order for days or even months without the authorities bothering to repair it. The bus conductors may be rude to you. The sanitary conditions in your area may be deplorable. You should then write to the department dealing with your specific problem. Below is the main part of a letter written by a resident of Mayapuri, complaining about the unhygienic conditions in the area.

I want to bring to your notice that the sanitary conditions around the Block of Nine Flats and many adjoining flats in Area G., A.B.U, are deplorable. The sewer lines are faulty, and stinking water is stagnating in almost every open drain. The cleaners turn up once a fortnight, and the garbage is rarely removed. It remains lying in heaps till it finds its way to the open drains.

With the onset of the rainy season, things have worsened. The entire area has become a breeding ground for mosquitoes and flies, and residents open their doors and windows at their own risk. Human excreta from the three houses in the Block are overflowing from the septic tank into the open drain because the line to the main sewer is blocked by concrete that was poured into it when the road was built.

Kindly take immediate action before the situation worsens and an outbreak of infectious diseases occurs.

What are the points that you should keep in mind while writing such a letter?

(i) Don't make the complaint too general; give details of what is bothering you. In the letter given above, for example, notice how specific the writer is. He gives the precise details of the area he is writing about: "..... around the Block of nine Flats and many adjoining flats in the Area G of ABU....", " the three houses of the Block". You must include facts that your reader cannot possibly ignore.
(ii) Ask for satisfaction firmly but politely. If you can suggest a solution, do so.
(iii) End your letter forcefully. Make clear what you expect of your reader.
(iv) Address your letter of protest to the appropriate person. For instance, if you want to complain about a bill, send your complaint to the Accounts Officer, not the organisation's Chairman.
(v) If you have made the same complaint before, say so in your letter.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
There is probably something you want to complain to the local authorities about. Write a letter of complaint detailing your problem. Take care to adopt the format of a formal letter.

(b) Letters Giving Instructions

We sometimes write letters conveying our instructions to various organisations to have something done for us. For instance, you may change your address and will then have to ask the circulation manager of the magazine you have subscribed to to send the magazine to the new address, or you may have to instruct the post office to redirect your letters.

What are the points that you must keep in mind in writing such a letter?
(i) Give the essential information you want your reader to have clearly and completely.
(ii) Leave your reader with a clear understanding of what you expect him to do.
The letter below is from a woman writing to the circulation manager of the magazine she subscribes to, informing him of her change of address and instructing him to send the magazine to the new address.

No 57, South Extension Airport Road, Kano

June 10, 1988
The Circulation Manager, Vanguard Newspaper
P.O. Box 68, Kano

Subject: Change of Residence
Dear Sir,

I am a subscriber to Vanguard Newspaper. My subscription number is: D2/478. I am writing to inform you that I shall be moving to a new house on 2nd July.
My new address will be 642, Civil Lines, Kano.
Please send the future issues of the magazine to my new address. I hope we shall continue to receive them as regularly as we used to.

Sincerely,
Danda Mohammed

Watch and reflect: You have now examined several types of formal letters, including applications, order letters, complaints, instructions and requests. The short video below brings these principles together by demonstrating how purpose, organisation, tone and accuracy contribute to an effective formal letter. As you watch, compare the features presented in the video with the examples you have studied in this unit.

https://youtu.be/wsuzmTglBzI



SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6
You've lost a bearer cheque. Write a letter to the bank manager instructing him to stop payment. After you've written your letter, refer to the specimen letter given at the end of the unit.

(c) Letters of Request

We often have to request information from official bodies; this is probably the most common type of official letter. It includes letters to various organisations requesting services. For instance, you may request the public transport organisation in your town

to run more buses in your area. If you wish to meet an official, you often have to write a letter asking for an appointment. Letters have to be written to universities asking for application forms or duplicate copies of certificates.

The letter below is a request to Emeniwa Transport Corporation for improved bus service in the area.

D.B. 49
No Man's Land Kano
17 June, 1987

The General Manager
Emeruwa Transport Corporation, Kano

Dear Sir,
I am a resident of No Man's Land, an area rather poorly connected to the rest of the city by buses. The people most affected by the lack of bus service are schoolchildren and teachers, who find it difficult to reach a convenient bus stop in time to catch the bus to their schools.

I request that the ETC improve the bus service from this area. Specifically, could you start a direct bus service from No man's Land (touching sectors A & D) to Ahmadu Bello Way? It would benefit at least 150 school children and teachers.

I hope you will take immediate action to solve our problem. Sincerely,

Shehu Yaardua.
This is one type of letter of request in which you have a problem and ask a certain organisation to solve it for you. How is this letter organised?

(i) First, you state the problem.
(ii) Then, you request the organisation to solve your problem, and give details of how you would want it solved.
(iii) Conclude by asking for immediate action.

Other types of letters of request will have a different organisation. When you do the next exercise, you will discover it for yourself.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7
You want to become a 'postal' member of a library. Write to the library to request information on the rules for such membership. Also, ask for the application form.

1.6 Summary

This unit has examined three broad areas of formal correspondence. First, you learnt how to write letters related to employment, including applications, acceptance of job

offers, and refusal of offers. Second, you examined letters for ordering goods and considered the importance of accuracy, payment arrangements, discounts, packaging and delivery instructions. Finally, you explored letters to the government and other organisations, including letters of complaint, letters giving instructions and letters of request.

The common principle running through all these forms of correspondence is **clarity of purpose**. A formal letter should tell the reader why you are writing, provide the information needed to deal with the matter, and make clear what action you expect.

As you continue with formal letter writing, remember that good organisation, accuracy, courtesy and appropriate language are just as important as the information contained in the letter.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Read this advertisement and apply
A lecturer is wanted in Biology and Physics. The lecturer must have a good University degree and three years of working experience. The applicant should be of good behaviour and have an appreciable number of research papers, publications, and journal publications. Graduated with 2nd class upper, the applicant must have at least a Master's degree. A doctorate degree will be an advantage.

Signed
The Registrar, University of Abuja, FCT
Abuja, Nigeria

2 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

© Materials are adapted from: Indira Gandhi Open University. School of Health Sciences and School of Humanities. February 2001 (reprint), July 1997 (reprint). HSTITA Functional English, FEG 1 Foundation English Course in English I, By Permission.

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UNIT 2 WRITING REPORTS 1: REPORTING EVENTS

Unit structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 Different Stages of Report Writing
2.4 Types of Reports
2.4.1 Reporting an Event
2.5 Summary
2.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

2.1 Introduction

Think about the last time someone asked you to explain what happened at a meeting, describe an accident, give an account of an event, or tell others what you discovered during an investigation. You probably had to remember the important facts, arrange them in the right order and present them clearly. That is essentially what report writing involves.

A report is a form of written communication used to present information about an event, experience, investigation, observation or activity. Unlike a personal story, a good report is based mainly on facts. It should be organised, clear and objective so that the reader can easily understand what happened and why it matters.

Reports are part of everyday academic, professional and public life. As a student, you may be asked to report on an excursion, seminar, meeting or school activity. In the workplace, you may need to prepare a report on an accident, equipment failure, project or investigation. You may also encounter reports in newspapers, research publications, business organisations and government institutions.

In this unit, you will learn how to plan a report, identify common types of reports and report an event accurately and vividly. You will also examine the language that makes reports clear, concise and useful to their readers.

Let us begin by considering a simple reporting task based on your own experience.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the major stages involved in planning and writing a report;
- identify common types of reports and distinguish reports on events from other types of reports;
- write a clear, accurate and objective report of an event.

2.3 Different Stages of Report Writing

How does one write a report? As with any other serious task, you also have to plan your report. The way a report is planned is outlined for you in this section, in stages.

For example, imagine that you have been asked to report on a fire outbreak in your community. Before writing, you would need to establish what happened, where and when it happened, who was involved, what damage occurred and what may have caused the fire. You would then organise these facts before presenting them in a report.

A well-planned report is easier to write and easier for the reader to follow. The following stages provide a useful guide.

Stage 1: Identify the Purpose and Audience

You have to ask yourself a number of relevant questions. For example: What information is to be conveyed? What is its purpose? Who is it for?

Stage 2: Gather Relevant Information

At the next stage, you gather relevant material from different sources. While doing so, you will have to take notes. The advantage of taking notes is that you will not have to depend on your memory to recall every detail whenever you require it.

Stage 3: Prepare an Outline

Now you have to write an outline of the report. The outline makes writing your report easier and more effective by enabling you to attend to one part at a time. Most reports contain three main parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. In the introduction, you should state the subject and the purpose of the report. You may also provide background information if necessary. In the body of the report, you should present a detailed and organised account of the subject of the report. You may also include figures, tables, graphs, and charts as supporting evidence. In the conclusion, you should summarise your observations and give your suggestions or recommendations.

Example
The outline of a report on a fire accident can be written as follows: (The actual report is given later in this unit.)

Introduction: A major fire accident took place in Lokoja
Body: Exact time and place at which the fire started – cause of the accident – casualties – loss of property, etc.

Conclusion: The reason for the continuation of the fire for a long time. Precautions to prevent such accidents.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Write a letter to your father or some other near relative, giving a brief report of your studies, your hostel life, and your friends (about 100 words).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
As the Cultural Secretary of the Students' Union at your college, give an outline of your annual report.

Stage 4: Choose Appropriate Language

Having prepared your outline, you must consider the language to use. Of course, it will depend on the kind of topic and the kind of reader you have in mind. Remember that you are writing to communicate with others, not to impress or mystify them. The following rules will be useful:

1. **Be Clear:** To be clear, your writing must be definite and not vague. You must also avoid ambiguity. By 'ambiguity', we mean that a word or a sentence may be understood in more than one way, and even the context does not make the meaning clear.

Example
An Ambiguous Sentence: The neighbours avoided the Johnsons because they were snobs.

A Clear Sentence: Because the neighbours were snobs, they avoided the Johnsons. (Or because the Johnsons were snobs, the neighbours avoided them).

2. **Be Simple and Brief:** Try to say one thing at a time and say it briefly and directly. Do not overload your sentence by trying to say too much. Use short sentences as far as possible. In a sentence, do not use more words than are necessary.

Example 1
I prefer a large university because you can meet many kinds of people with different interests from different parts of the country, where there are different ideas, and a wide range of experiences is an important part of education.

Improved Version: Experience with a wide range of people is an important part of education. In a large university, you can meet people from many parts of the country and people with different interests. I prefer a large university because it provides this important part of education.

Example 1
Awkward Repetition: I have chosen a topic that is frequently discussed today. My topic is: developing our own natural resources.

I have chosen a topic frequently heard in conversations today – developing our own natural resources.

Example 2
Awkward Repetition: My point is that too much emphasis is placed on college education, leading many people to attend who don't need or want it.

My point is that placing too much emphasis on college education leads many people to attend college for education they don't need or want.

3. **Avoid Jargon:** Jargon is a language that is hard to understand because it is full of special words known only to the members of a certain group. If your report is for circulation only among fellow experts, you can use this kind of technical language, but if the report is for a non-specialised group, avoid the use of technical language.

Example
Jargon: In non-exceptional structures, the coordinates that constitute multiple units exhibit essential similitude in grammatical functioning and usually in parallelism of semantic qualities in addition.

Improved Version: Ordinarily, elements in a series in a sentence are alike in grammatical form and usually have some similarity of meaning too.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3
Point out the faults in the following sentences:
1. Children often anger their parents; they don't talk to them.
2. This narration is narrated by a narrator whom we cannot completely believe.
3. I want to go to college because going to college will satisfy my long-felt desire.

You now know that effective report writing begins before the actual writing starts. You have to identify the purpose and audience, gather information, prepare an outline and choose language that is clear and appropriate. However, reports do not all serve exactly the same purpose. The next section introduces some common types of reports and shows where event reports fit within the wider field of report writing.

2.4 Types of Reports

Though it is difficult to give a rigid classification of reports, we can say that some of the common types of reports are: (i) reports on events, (ii) reports on meetings and

speeches, (iii) reports on interviews, (iv) reports on tests and experiments, and (v) reports on surveys.

In this unit, we shall discuss the reporting of events. Reporting experiments will be taken up in the next unit.

2.4.1 Reporting an Event

You come to know of various incidents in your day-to-day life. For example, whatever kind of work you do, accidents and equipment failures may occur at your workplace. You may have to write reports on such accidents so that the causes can be determined and the necessary steps taken to prevent them from happening again. The report on an accident can even be used by the police or a court of law inquiring into the matter. So the report – an accident report as it is usually called – should be prepared as promptly, objectively and accurately as possible.

At the beginning of the accident report, state briefly the nature of the accident you are reporting on. Describe any physical injury or property damage caused by it. Be sure to include the precise details of the time, the date, and the place of the accident, the names of witnesses or the sources of information, and any other important detail. Try to indicate the cause of the accident, if known. Finally, provide your suggestions or recommendations to prevent a recurrence of the accident. While writing the report, be exact and objective and support your opinions with facts. Of course, all accident reports need not follow the same pattern.

Before writing an event report, ask yourself whether you have answered the essential questions about the event. The following figure provides a practical checklist that can help you organise your facts before drafting the report.



Figure 2.2: Key Information in an Event Report.

Example of a Report

Here is a report on a fire incident that took place in Lokoja recently.

Major Fire in Multi-storeyed Building

A major fire broke out in the Byepass, a multi-storeyed building on the Byepass, Lokoja on the morning of 29th June. The fire was noticed at 10.45 a.m. on the fifth floor, and in no time the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth floors were gutted, with thick smoke covering the entire building. While many office workers rushed out of the building as the fire raged, nearly 300 people were left on the building's terrace.
Tenders from the Lokoja Fire Service and the Defence Fire Service for Fire Research helped the Byepass Fire Service to rescue the stranded people. The Army and the Navy personnel were also summoned to the building during the five-hour fire fighting operation. Lokoja Air Force helicopters were also flown to the building to rescue people, but the operation had to be called off as it was found they were in fact fanning the flames.Some workers on another building managed to build a causeway between the two buildings by using ropes and wooden poles.

The fire was fully extinguished around 3.30 p.m. Three persons were killed in the blaze and about fifty-five persons were taken to a nearby hospital as they were overcome by smoke.

An electrical short circuit on the fifth floor of the building was reported as the cause of the trouble. Due to neglect of safety precautions and inadequacy of fire fighting equipment, the building became a veritable death-trap for hundreds of people. So the Lokoja Fire Force Officials have decided to issue statutory notices to the owners of about 200 high-rise buildings in the city asking them to provide the necessary fire safety measures.

(Adapted from Functional English, Indira Gandhi Open University, 2001.)
Glossary
causeway: a raised path.
extinguished: put out.
veritable: real.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Read the report given above and answer the following questions:
1. What is the subject of the report?
2. When and where was the fire first noticed?
3. Were many people stranded on the terrace of the building?
4. How were they rescued? Who rescued them?
5. What was the cause of the fire?
6. What is your suggestion for preventing the recurrence of such accidents?

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5
Write a brief report on the Independence Day Celebrations in your town or village.

You have now examined the planning stages of report writing and applied them to the reporting of an event. Before you complete this unit, watch a short instructional video on report writing. As you watch, pay particular attention to the organisation of a report, the importance of factual evidence, and the use of clear, concise language.

https://youtu.be/-MGqnycoKSA



You have now moved from the basic idea of a report to the practical process of producing one. You have examined how to plan a report, considered different types of reports, and applied the principles of factual and objective writing to reporting events. The summary below brings these major points together.

2.5 Summary

A report is an organised, factual and objective presentation of information. Reports are used in academic, professional, business and public contexts to communicate information about events, experiences, investigations and other activities.

Effective report writing requires careful planning. Before writing, you should identify the purpose and audience, gather relevant information, take useful notes and prepare an outline. A typical report consists of an introduction, body and conclusion.

The language of a report should be clear, simple, brief and precise. Writers should avoid ambiguity, unnecessary repetition and inappropriate jargon.

There are several types of reports, including reports on events, meetings and speeches, interviews, tests and experiments, and surveys.

When reporting an event, particularly an accident or incident, you should provide accurate information about what happened, when and where it happened, the people

involved, the causes and effects, the action taken and any recommendations for preventing a recurrence.

A good event report enables a reader who was not present to obtain a clear and reliable account of what happened.

2.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 3 WRITING REPORTS II: REPORTING EXPERIMENTS

Unit structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Objectives
3.3 Various Steps in Conducting an Experiment
3.3.1 Reporting an Experiment
3.3.2 Experimental Reports
3.4 Summary
3.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

3.1 Introduction

Have you ever carried out an experiment and then been asked to explain exactly what you did, what you observed, and what you discovered? Performing the experiment is only part of the task. You must also be able to communicate the process and findings clearly to another person who was not present when the experiment was conducted.

Laboratory experiments are carried out in many fields, including Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Medical Technology and Environmental Science. Although the equipment and procedures may differ from one field to another, the basic principles of careful observation, accurate recording and logical reporting remain important.

When you conduct an experiment, you need to select suitable equipment, arrange the apparatus correctly, follow the required procedure, observe what happens and record your findings accurately. You must then organise these details into a report that another person can follow and evaluate.

This unit takes you through these activities. You will first examine the major steps involved in conducting an experiment. You will then learn how to organise the information gathered into a formal experimental report. Finally, you will examine examples of experimental reports and identify the features that make them clear, objective and systematic.

As you study the unit, pay particular attention to the relationship between **what you do during an experiment and what you write in the report**. A good report should provide a reliable account of the experiment from its purpose and procedure to its observations and conclusions.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- outline the various steps in conducting an experiment
- report experiments in a systematic manner

- analyse an example of experimental reports.

3.3 Various Steps in Conducting an Experiment

Before you can write a good experimental report, you need to understand what takes place during an experiment. The quality of the final report depends largely on how carefully the experiment is planned, conducted and documented. The following steps provide a useful guide.

(i) Before planning the actual experiment, you should have an understanding of the nature of the problem and any theory associated with it. The theory explains the problem. The theory or explanation has, of course, to be proved, but it helps in formulating a hypothesis. Do not conduct an experiment without having a clear idea of what is to be tested. You should ask yourself: Why am I carrying out this experiment? Will it be of use to me in finding an answer to my problem? Moreover, you should analyse the problem and put it in simple words. You may divide your problem into parts which can be answered more easily separately than together.

(ii) Experimentation is observation carried out in specific conditions. In an experiment, an event is seen to occur under known conditions. So you should eliminate as many outside influences as possible. In this situation, you can carefully observe the interrelationship between facts.
Remember that observation implies selection. It is important to decide whether you will use selective sampling or cover the entire field.

(iii) You should arrange the apparatus carefully to suit your purpose and follow the procedure you have in mind for conducting the experiment.

(iv) In your notebook, you should record, carefully and accurately, the details about the purpose of the experiment, how the equipment was set up, the procedure, the results and the conclusions. It is important to record what is actually seen, including the things not fully understood by you at the time of conducting the experiment. You should avoid carelessness or dishonesty in recording the facts related to the experiment.

(v) You may use illustrations like diagrams, drawings, graphs, maps, or tables. The purpose of an illustration is to clarify or give a visual explanation of the text. With the help of an illustration, you can present a large number of details in a limited space. Further, suitable illustrations catch the reader's eyes quickly and convey your message effectively.

Different illustrations serve different purposes. Diagrams or drawings form an essential part of a report on scientific experiments. You will have to include drawings of the apparatus, e.g., electrical circuit diagrams, in your report.

Graphs present mathematical data and trade statistics pictorially. They are very effective for indicating trends, distributions, and comparisons among two or more items.

Maps are used to show the geographical distribution of data.

Tables are used for displaying mathematical data in a compact form.

The stages of an experiment are closely connected. A researcher begins with a problem, plans how to investigate it, conducts the experiment, records observations and eventually draws conclusions. The figure below presents these stages as a sequence

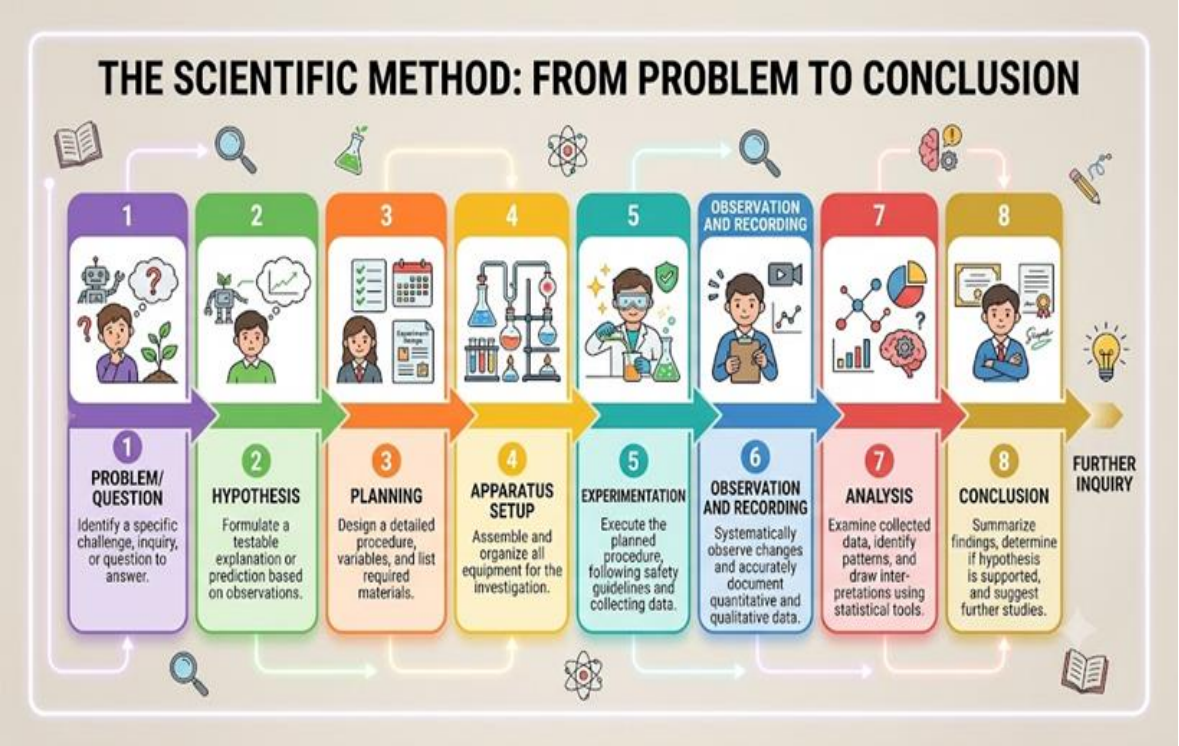

Figure 3.1: Stages in Conducting an Experiment

3.3.1 Reporting an Experiment

Once an experiment has been carefully conducted and the observations recorded, the next challenge is to communicate what happened. An experimental report should allow another reader to understand the purpose of the experiment, the materials used, the procedure followed, the observations made, and the conclusions reached. Let us now consider how these elements are organised in a report.

Your report should have the following contents:

(i) Subject
(ii) Apparatus and other materials used
(iii) Procedure
(iv) Observations
(v) Conclusions
(vi) Drawings, diagrams, or graphs.

You should identify the experiment you are reporting on and indicate the apparatus and other materials you used.

If the purpose of the experiment is not obvious to your reader, you should explain it in the body of the report and give a detailed explanation of how you performed the experiment. Include your observations also.
In the concluding part of your report, you should give the results of your experiment. If an interpretation of the results is going to be useful to the reader, provide such an analysis in your conclusion. You may include your recommendations as well.

When you write your report, state your findings in clear sentences. Avoid the use of jargon as far as possible. Be objective and accurate. In experiment reports, the passive voice is more suitable than the active voice. So use the passive voice and include illustrations such as diagrams, drawings, or graphs to make your report clear.

An experimental report follows a recognisable structure. Each part serves a particular purpose, from identifying the experiment to presenting the evidence and drawing a conclusion. The figure below shows how these components fit together.

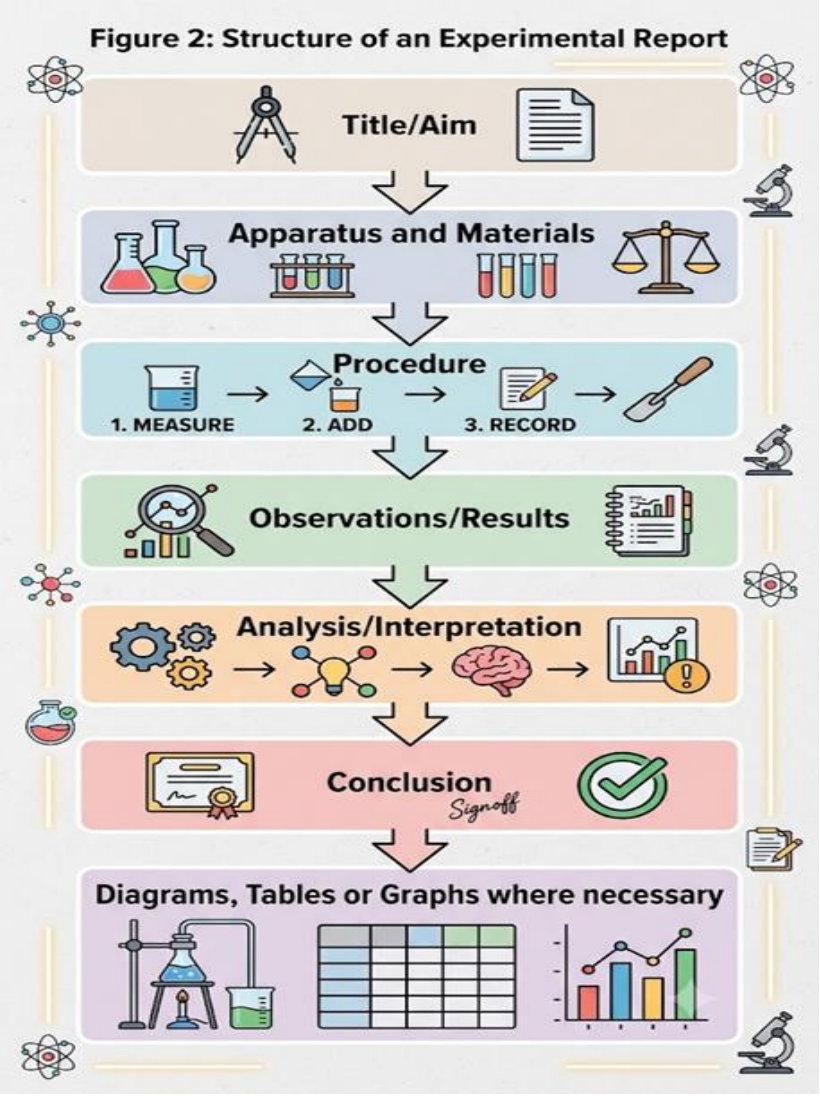

Figure 3.2: Structure of an Experimental Report

3.5 Examples of Experimental Reports

Knowing the components of an experimental report is useful, but seeing those components applied in actual reports makes the structure much clearer. In this section, you will examine examples from Chemistry and Physics. As you read them, notice how the aim, apparatus, procedure, observations and conclusion are presented and how illustrations support the written explanation.

Example 1
Here we shall show you how to report an experiment conducted in a chemistry laboratory:

Aim
To prepare hydrogen gas and to study its properties.

Apparatus
Woulfe bottle; thistle funnel; glass jars, with discs as covers; delivery tube bent at three places; two corks, each with a single hole; trough with water; and beehive shelf.

Materials
Granulated zinc, dilute sulphuric acid, matches.

Theory
Hydrogen gas is prepared in the laboratory by the action of dilute sulphuric acid on granulated zinc.

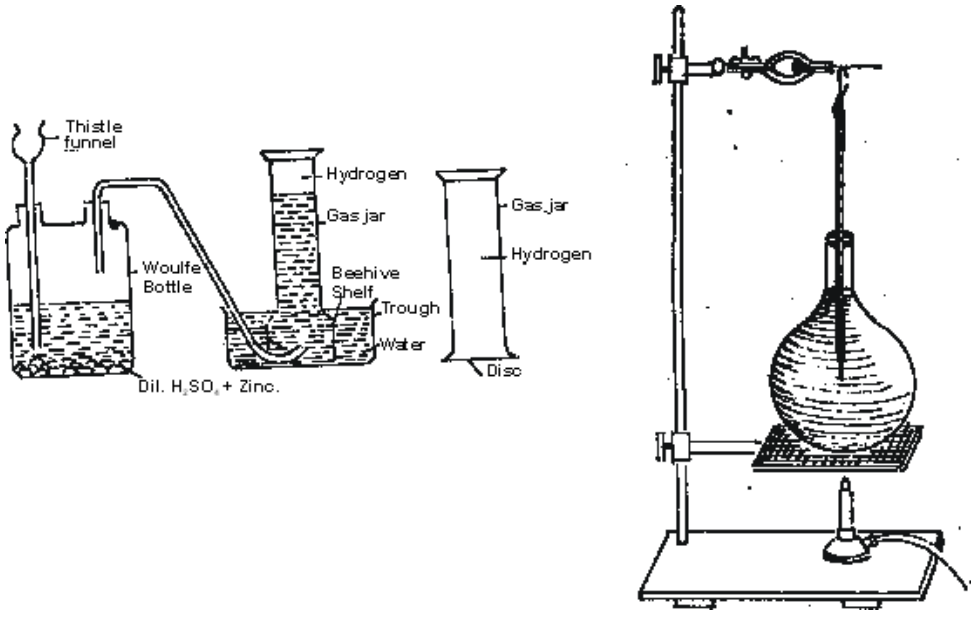

Figure 1 – Preparation of hydrogen gas.

Procedure

- The apparatus is set up as shown in the figure. 1
- Grams of granulated zinc are put into the bottle.
- We make sure that the lower end of the thistle funnel is very near the bottom of the Woulfe bottle.
- Dilute sulphuric acid is poured down the thistle funnel to cover the zinc.
- It is observed that as soon as the acid comes in contact with zinc, a gas is produced.

The gas is collected in the jar by displacing water. The mouth of the gas jar is closed with a glass disc. The jar is removed and put in the same position, that is, upside down, with the disc cover on the table.

Observations

(i) The colour of the gas jar is observed. The gas is colourless.
(ii) The gas is also odourless.
(iii) A lighted splinter is introduced into the gas jar. The gas begins to burn at the mouth of the jar. From this, we infer that the gas inside the jar is hydrogen.
(iv) To test whether the gas inside the jar is lighter than air, the gas jar is covered with a glass disc and placed in an upright position on the table. An empty jar is placed with its mouth downward on the gas jar. The glass disc between the two jars is removed. After two minutes, a burning splinter is introduced into each jar. The gas in the upper jar starts burning, but the gas in the lower jar does not burn. This indicates that the gas is lighter than air and has moved from the lower jar to the upper jar.

Conclusion

The gas collected in the jar is colourless, odourless, combustible and lighter than air. As it has all the properties of hydrogen, the gas must be hydrogen. What then are the features of the experiment report just presented? Can you suggest some? Put some of these points down on a piece of paper and compare them with the ones I'm going to give here.

(i) The language is impersonal: there is no use of I, we, they – experimental reports are devoid of the feeling of the person carrying out the experiment.
(ii) The language is objective: subjectivity is not part of the language of experiments. What is observed is stated in plain language. No ambiguity. The language is a straightforward one.
(iii) The report is systematic: It is not written anyhow. The pattern must be clear and logical.
(iv) The diagrams are well presented, and the labelling is clearly done.
(v) The language is formal in style: no abbreviations, contraction of words (e.g. don't, I'm isn't). All sentences are written in full and fully developed.

(vi) Words are not wasted in experimental reports: the goal of writing is not to impress but to express real facts as observed.

Let's study another example of an experimental report.

Example 2
Here is an example of a report on a scientific experiment conducted in a Physics Laboratory.

Aim
To study the rate of cooling of a given mass of heated water.

Apparatus used
A flask of 1 litre capacity, a thermometer (0-100 °C), a stopwatch, and a stand to fix the thermometer.

Procedure
The apparatus is set up as shown in Figure 2.

The flask is filled to its neck with water, and the water is heated to 80 °C. Then the water is allowed to cool. The temperature of the water is recorded every minute for the first five minutes; every two minutes for the next ten minutes.
The experiment is repeated by heating the water to 70 °C and 90 °C and allowing it to cool.
A graph is drawn showing temperatures at different times, and the water's rate of cooling is determined.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Answer the following questions:
(i) What is the role of observation in conducting an experiment?
(ii) What do you record in your laboratory notebook?
(iii) What are the contents of a report on a scientific experiment?

Writing experiments is an important task that science students must perform. If you are a science student, you will agree with me that constant practice in writing experiments should be a priority. You should make sure you follow the steps suggested in this unit. You should also make sure that you read as many experimental reports as possible. These are ways you can be an expert in writing experimental reports.

3.6 Summary

In this unit, you learned how to conduct and report an experiment systematically. You examined the importance of planning an experiment, arranging the apparatus, observing what happens, recording observations accurately and writing a report based on the findings.

You also learnt that an experimental report should normally identify the aim or subject of the experiment, the apparatus and materials used, the procedure followed, the observations made and the conclusions reached. Drawings, diagrams, tables and graphs may also be included where they help to present the findings clearly.

Finally, the examples showed that experimental reports should be objective, accurate, systematic and formal. The language should communicate facts clearly, without unnecessary words or personal expressions.

3.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 4 WRITING SUMMARIES I: TECHNIQUES OF SUMMARISING

Unit structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Learning Outcomes
4.3 Techniques of Summarising
4.4 Summary
4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

4.1 Introduction

Summarising is an important academic skill. As a student, you will frequently need to reduce lengthy information into a shorter form while retaining the ideas that are essential to the meaning of the original text. You may need to summarise lecture notes, textbooks, journal articles, study materials, examination questions, research findings and other academic texts.

Summarising is also useful when preparing for examinations. Instead of repeatedly reading lengthy materials, you can reduce them to concise notes containing the major ideas. In essay writing, summarising can also help you present the main points of a discussion clearly and concisely.

A good summary is not simply a shortened version of every sentence in a passage. It involves identifying the important ideas, removing unnecessary details, avoiding repetition, combining related ideas and expressing the information concisely in your own words where appropriate.

In this unit, you will learn some basic techniques of summarising. You will begin by learning how to distinguish essential ideas from supporting details. You will also learn how to remove repetition, combine sentences, use appropriate linking words and reduce lengthy expressions without destroying the meaning of the original passage.

Try This

Think about a long lecture note that you have studied recently. If you were asked to reduce it to about one-quarter of its original length, which information would you retain and which would you leave out?

Continue reading to find out how you can make such decisions systematically.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- separate essential from non-essential ideas
- distinguish between details and ideas
- remove repetition and re-statement from passages
- apply the summarisation techniques learned to summarise passages of varying lengths.

4.3 Techniques of Summarising

Let's start to familiarise you with the techniques of writing summary by going through a real life reading passage.

Example 1: The Nile

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
You are now going to read a passage about the river Nile. As you know, the Nile is a great river in Africa which flow through and gives life to the plains of Egypt. Now, go ahead and read the passage, trying to grasp its meaning.

The Nile

The great river Nile flows gently in its course through the hot plains in the first half of the year, but later on, when the melting snows and the rains on the mountains far to the south swell its tributaries, the Nile overflows. It spreads rich, muddy soil from Ethiopia over its valley and forms deep stretches of green, fertile lands along its banks. The settlers found, in the soft rich earth, barley and wheat and other crops could be planted, even without the use of the plough, and they began to make many settlements of farmers. They used more implements for tilling the soil, and flint for their weapons; and as time passed they learnt the use of copper.

Glossary
Settlers: the first people who began to live there.
flint: a very hard kind of stone used to produce fire.

Now you will read the passage a second time, sentence by sentence. After reading each sentence you will state which words you think you can remove from that sentence without destroying its meaning in the passage. Then, we shall discuss the reasons for including/deleting certain words, before proceeding with the next sentence in the same way. We can then put together, in paragraph form, the new sentences that we have created by means of these deletions or removal of words. These will form a summary of the passage.

Now read the opening sentence:

'The great river Nile flows gently in its course through the hot plains in the first half of the year but later on, when the melting snows and the rains on the mountains far to the south swell its tributaries, the Nile overflows.'

Notice that the main statement here is "The great river Nile flows gently in its course through the hot plains in the first half of the year, but later on the Nile overflows.' The clause that has just been removed, namely, 'when the melting snows and the rains on the mountains far to the south swell its tributaries,' is a less important part of the statement, as it only gives further information relating to the words. 'Later on.' It is for this reason that it can be removed without damaging the basic meaning of the sentence. Notice also that this is a subordinate clause; hence, it contains less important information than the main clause. What we have retained so far is the entire main clause. It is important to learn to separate the main clause from its subordinate clauses in order to understand where the basic meaning of the sentence and the details lie.

Notice also that in the main clause stated above, other phrases can be cut down to remove some details which are not absolutely essential. Remember that we are trying to summarise, and in summaries, there is bound to be a loss of detail and richness of information. Details are necessary in full-scale writing but not in summaries. Now, try to see which phrases you feel can be removed from the main clause above without destroying its basic meaning. In the blank space below, note down the words you wish to remove.
Have you chosen to remove any of the following:

- through the hot plains
- in the first half of the year
- gently in its course.

You cannot, obviously, remove "The great river Nile flows' without damaging the basic meaning of the sentence, so that has not been considered a possibility. Let us, then, consider which of the three word groups given above you can possibly remove without much harm. Notice that 'through the hot plains' is a contrast to 'the melting snows,' but the line in which 'the melting snows' occurs has already been found to be a detail and has been removed. So, the contrast with 'the hot plains' is not required here. Let us read the sentence without this phrase.

1(a) 'The great river Nile flows gently in its course in the first half of the year but later on the Nile overflows.'

Do you agree that the sentence still conveys the basic sense of the original?

Can the other two word groups (ii, iii) be removed as well? What will happen if 'in the first half of the year' is removed from la? If this is done, the contrast with 'but later on,' which is necessary for the sentence, will be lost, and the sentence as a whole will not remain meaningful. Hence, (ii) has to be kept even in the summary.

Can ‘gently in its course’ be removed? No, because it is being contrasted with ‘but later on the Nile overflows’. The phrase is required to show the Nile's behaviour at certain times compared to its behaviour at other times. So you cannot cut down the sentence any further.
Now read the next sentence:

‘It spreads rich, muddy soil from Ethiopia over its valley and forms deep stretches of green, fertile lands along its banks.’
You notice that what is being described here is the action of the river. Is there anything in this sentence which is not absolutely essential for its meaning?

Consider which words you can remove and write these words in the blank spaces below. Both single words and phrases can be cut out.

Once you have written something down, look at the following words/phrases. Have you removed any of these? (i) rich (ii) muddy (iii) from Ethiopia (iv) deep (v) stretches of green (vi) fertile.

Let us consider which words can, in fact, be deleted. In doing this, you have to be careful to retain the most important words from the point of view of the meaning. The sentence states that, in its course, the Nile spreads rich soil across its valley and forms fertile lands along its banks. So, if you delete the word ‘rich’ or’ fertile’ from your version of the sentences, the meaning will be lost. But you can, in order to shorten the sentence, remove (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v) above, because these words relate to the sub-ideas and not to the main idea of the sentence.

You may now ask: how can one distinguish whether the words referred to contain the main idea or merely details of the main idea? Let us try to analyse the sentence to answer such a question. The sentence states the function of the Nile. The richness of the soil, which makes the ground fertile, is seen as the river's main function. Notice that ‘muddy’ is a detail of ‘rich soil’ and ‘green’ is a detail of ‘fertile’. Again, the phrase ‘from Ethiopia,’ while providing useful information about the course of the river, is not essential for describing the action of the river. Thus, we can summarise (2) to read:
2.(a) ‘It spreads rich soil over its valley and forms fertile lands along its banks.’

‘The settlers found that in the soft rich earth, barley and wheat and other crops could be planted, even without the use of the plough, and they began to make many settlements of farmers.’

What can you remove from this sentence without damaging its basic meaning? In the blank space given below, write down what you think can be deleted.

Now that you have chosen to remove some words, check if you have deleted any of the following:
(i) soft (ii) rich (iii) barley and wheat (iv) even without the use of the plough.

If you read the sentences carefully, you will find that not only the richness but also the softness of the soil is important here because of the statement that crops can be planted without the use of the plough. So, (i) and (ii) cannot be removed without damage to the sense. Notice that (iv) is required because it indicates an amazing softness of soil, something that normal fertile soil doesn't possess. So it needs to be retained. Examples of crops, as in (iii), on the other hand, can perhaps be removed. It is possible to condense this part of the sentence to 'a number of crops could be planted.'

Another kind of change is also possible. You will notice a similarity between the words 'settlers' and 'settlements of farmers.' Can we cut down some of the common words? To do this, the sentence will need to be written in a shortened form. The condensed sentence can then read:

3(a) 'Many settlements of farmers were formed there because of the soft, rich earth on which a number of crops could be planted even without the use of the plough.'

Now read the last line of this paragraph.

'They used stone implements for tilling the soil, and flint for their weapons; and as time passed they learnt the use of copper.'
Do you think any words can be removed from here? If so, write down these words in the blank space below.

You may find it difficult to select the words which can be removed from here. Remember that it is not always possible to do so. In this case, it may, instead, be possible to reduce the length of the sentence by writing a generalisation to cover the examples listed here. The examples given are:

(i) making stone implements for tilling the soil
(ii) using flint for their weapons
(iii) using copper.

What general statement can you make to cover these examples? Write this down in the blank space given below before reading further.

Perhaps it is possible to say:
4(a) 'They learnt the art of tool-making with the use of stone, flint and copper.'

'Tool-making can cover the making of tools and weapons. It is possible to remove 'with the use of stone, flint and copper' from (4a) if you consider this a detail. But the kind of materials used is historically so important that it seems desirable to retain, that is, not to remove the mention of stone, flint and copper. The condensed sentence then reads as given above in (4a)

Summary
The great river Nile flows gently in its course in the first half of the year, but later on it overflows. It spreads rich soil over its valley and forms fertile lands along its banks. Many settlements of farmers were formed there because of the soft, rich earth on which a number of crops could be planted even without the use of the plough. They learnt the art of tool-making using stone, flint and copper.

Compare this with the original passage. As it contains all the essential points of the original, it can be considered a summary. Notice that the task of separating these points was made easy because you had to shorten only one sentence at a time. So, now you are not required to write new sentences of your own or to combine sentences from the passage. All you have to do is remove those points that are not absolutely essential to the meaning.

Please remember that this is only one form of summary. We shall deal with other ways of summarising later.

Example 2: Plants

Now, are you ready to work through another passage using the same method?

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
This passage deals with the importance of plants in human life and the uses to which they have been put. It goes on to address the Jojoba plant in particular. Now read the passage through, trying to understand its meaning.

Plants

People depend on plants for their existence. Plants in the form of seeds, especially grains, are important to people because they are the principal ingredients in most people's diets. Yet most of the plants that are important to people were domesticated, or tamed, in prehistoric times. For example, before history was written, corn and wheat became part of people's diets. People have grown these grains as crops in small fields for thousands of years.

Scientists have only recently begun to keep records of plant domestication. Because of their records, scientists can predict some of the problems in domesticating a plant. On the other hand, there are three reasons why scientists cannot predict all the problems or all the solutions. The first reason is that they have never been successful in taming a wild plant. The second reason is that scientists have kept records for a relatively short time. The third reason is that each plant species is unique, different from other plants. The *Jojoba* is an example of a plant that scientists are trying to domesticate.

The *Jojoba* is a desert plant that grows wild in the dry regions of the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. It is a bush that grows to be about two metres high. On its many woody branches, the *jojoba* produces a fruit that is 40 per cent to 60 per

cent liquid wax. This liquid substance, called jojoba oil, is valuable. It can be used as a base for all kinds of cosmetics. It works well as an ingredient in high-quality machine oils. By domesticating the jojoba, scientists hope to change unproductive desert land into productive agricultural land.

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Glossary
predict: say in advance what will happen
domestication of plants: use of plants for man's purposes Now you will read the passage sentence by sentence.
Let us begin by reading the first two sentences:

1. 'People depend on plants for their existence.
2. Plants in the form of seeds, especially grains, are important to people because they are the principal ingredients in most people's diet.'
There are perhaps some words here which repeat the meaning that is being stated in different words. They can, therefore, be removed from a summary. Which are these words? In the space below, write down the words you can remove.

Did you decide to remove the whole of the first sentence or some parts of both sentence 1 and 2? One way of shortening the sentence is to say:
'People depend on plants, in the form of seeds, especially grains, for their existence because these are the principal ingredients of human diet.'

By doing this, you have removed the repetition of the words 'Plants ....are important to people' because this idea is already contained in (1). You have also shortened 'most people's diet' to 'human diet.'

Notice also that 'they' in 'they are the principal ingredients' changes to 'these' in the reduced form. In the original sentence, 'plants' is the subject of the sentence to which 'they' refers. In the rewritten sentence, however, there can be some confusion about whether 'they' refers to 'people' or 'plants. Grammatically speaking, in the rewritten sentence, 'they' should refer to 'people' because that is the subject of the sentence, but that will not make any sense. 'These,' on the other hand, indicates very clearly that it is plants which are being referred to.

By following this process, you remove obvious repetition. They may be some repetition that remains and so, after going through the whole passage, you may decide to cut out some more words. But that can be considered later. Let us go through the passage sentence by sentence first. Read the next three sentences.

i. 'Yet most of the plants that are important to people were domesticated, or tamed, in pre-historic times.

ii. For example, before history was written, corn and wheat became part of people's diet.
iii. People have grown these grains as crops in small fields for thousand of years.'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Underline or write down the words in the above sentences which say the same thing. Once you have done this, read ahead.

Did you underline any of the following?

(i) in pre-historic times before history was written for thousand of years.
(ii) domesticated tamed became part of people's diets
(iii) have grown these grains as crops in small fields.

Notice that the three phrases in (i) very clearly mean the same thing. In (ii), the words/phrases are not identical in meaning, in themselves. But, in the context of these sentences, they are very similar. So perhaps it is possible to keep only one phrase/word from (i) and (ii) each in order to summarise the sentences. Rewrite (3), (4) and (5) as one sentence, cutting out repetition of words and ideas, in the space given.

One way of doing this will be:

'Yet most of the plants that are important to people, for example, corn and wheat, were domesticated in pre-historic times.'

In producing this summary, most of (3) has been kept, but (except for the example) (4) and (5) have been cut out. This is because the same ideas were being repeated. By now you must have begun to understand when ideas are being repeated.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Now read the next two sentences

1. *'Scientists have only recently begun to keep records of the domestication of plants.*
2. *Because of their records, scientists can predict some of the problems in domesticating a plant.'*

Underline the words/phrases that are identical or similar in the two sentences. Now try and combine the two sentences removing the words that are similar. Try to do this in the space given below and also check whether it is necessary to substitute some other words for those that are removed.

It is clear that three things are being repeated in the two sentences 'scientists', 'records' and 'domestication of plants'. If possible, these words should occur only once in a summary. Bearing this in mind, perhaps the sentences can be rewritten as:

'Scientists have only recently begun to keep records of the domestication of plants because through these they can predict some of the problems in domesticating a plant.'
Notice the substitutions used:

'scientists'. they
'records of the domestication of plants'. these
The substitution for similar words here consists of pronouns.

Another way to reduce the sentences is to remove any references to the scientists performing this task. This makes the statement sound more technical, and it also becomes much briefer:

'Records of the domestication of plants are very recent, and they can help predict some problem areas in this field.'

Notice that the following phrases have been reduced.
'have only recently begun' (6) ..are very recent 'the domestication of plants' (6)
'problems in domesticating a plant' (7). Problem areas in this field.

Now look at the next few sentences.

1. *'On the other hand, there are three reasons why scientists cannot guess all of the problems or all of the solutions.*
2. *The first reason is that they have never been successful in taming a wild plant.*
3. *The second reason is that scientists have kept records for a relatively short time.*
4. *The third reason is that each plant species is unique, different from all other plants.*
5. *The Jojoba is an example of a plant that scientists are trying to domesticate.'*

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5
In what way can you reduce the size of these sentences? Think about this a little before looking ahead. You may jot down your points here.

Notice that 'On the other hand' seems to be required because it signals that a different viewpoint is being presented from the one in the earlier sentence. But, nevertheless, this phrase can be shortened. Can you suggest a word you can use instead?

What words are being repeated in the four sentences above (8-12)? Underline these. Can some of them be removed? Can some of them be shortened? Write your shortened version here on the basis of the changes you have made above.

Here is one way to reduce the sentences.
Check this with your version and compare the differences.

'However, all the problems/solutions cannot be guessed in advance because:

(iv) scientists have never been successful in taming a wild plant;
(v) records have been kept for a relatively short time;

(vi) each plant is unique. The *Jojoba* is an example of a plant that scientists are trying to domesticate.'

Note down the points of difference between your version and this one. Notice that sentence 12 has been retained without any change, partly because it is required to be a bridge to paragraph 3.

Now read sentences 13-19, which make up the whole of paragraph 3.

1. 'The jojoba is a desert plant that grows wild in the dry regions of the south western United States and northern Mexico.
2. It is a bush that grows to be about two metres high.
3. On its many woody branches, the jojoba produces a fruit that is 40 per cent to 60 per cent liquid wax.
4. This liquid substance, called jojoba oil, is valuable.
5. It can be used as a base for all kinds of cosmetics.
6. It works well as an ingredient in high-quality machine oils.
7. By domesticatingthe jojoba,scientists hope to change unproductive desert land into productive agricultural land.'

First, think of ways in which you can shorten this. You can jot down your points here or underline in the paragraph the words that you wish to remove.

In what way can you combine some of the sentences? Let us start with (13) and (14). It is possible to reduce these to the following:

'The jojoba, a wild desert bush that grows in some parts of the United States and Mexico, is about 2 metres high.'

What has been done here?
First, is 'a desert plant that grows wild' and 'it is a bush' have been combined to form 'a wild desert bush.'

Second, notice that we don't state that the jojoba is a wild desert bush: we don't make this a separate sentence. After 'jojoba', we place 'a wild desert bush' separately by a comma, in order to show that the jojoba and the wild desert bush refer to exactly the same thing. In your grammar books, you will find an explanation for this relationship, namely that 'a wild desert bush' is a noun phrase in apposition to 'jojoba'. This is a useful way of condensing sentences, provided that the two nouns (or noun phrases) in apposition refer to identical things.

Third, it is not necessary to include in your summary all the details that occur in a passage. Passages can, of course, be summarised for various reasons, and certain details will be required for certain particular purposes. However, in a general summary such as the one we are attempting here, details that are not needed for the development of the main point can be omitted. So, we have left out mention of 'the dry regions' in which

the jojoba grows, and the fact that it grows in the 'south-western' parts of the United States and 'northern Mexico'.

Fourth, notice that because sentences 13 and 14 have been combined, the main clause is 'the jojoba is about two metres high.' The other parts of the sentence are a noun phrase in apposition: 'a wild desert bush,' and a subordinate relative clause: 'that grows in some parts of the United States and Mexico.'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

Let us now look at sentences 15-19. These contain several sentences about the jojoba fruit, its contents, and its uses. How can we combine these into fewer and shorter sentences?

First, underline the parts of the sentence that deal with detail which is not necessary for the main argument.

Have you done that? Next, *find the common elements in these sentences. State these here.*

Once you have done that, you can proceed to combine sentences 15-18 (not 19) into two sentences. Write your combined sentences here.

Read your sentences again to check whether you can improve them. Now compare your work with this version. This is, of course, only one way of condensing the sentences. There can be other ways as well:

'Its fruit is 40-60 per cent liquid wax, called jojoba oil, which is valuable. This can be used in making cosmetics and high-quality machine oils.'

Let us analyse what steps have been taken to produce these sentences.

Details removed:	(15)	'many woody branches'
Common elements:	(15)	'liquid was'; (16) 'liquid substances;'
	(16)	'jojoba oil'; (17) 'it', (18) 'it';
	(17)	'can be used as a base for' (18) 'works well as an ingredients in'

Sentence 15 can be condensed to "Its fruit is 40-60 per cent liquid wax,' but we don't end the sentence there. We draw on sentence 16, removing the common element 'liquid substance' and adding 'called jojoba oil, which is valuable.' Notice that we have added the word 'which', which refers to liquid wax. The main clause of this new sentence now reads: "Its fruit is 40-60 per cent liquid wax. This sentence has two subordinate clauses: (i) 'called jojoba oil' (short for 'which is called jojoba oil') and (ii) 'which is valuable.' Remember that the process of condensing sentences requires you very often to combine sentences in such a way that one or more sentences become subordinate clauses in the new sentences. You must therefore learn how to distinguish main and subordinate clauses and also how to produce these different clauses.

Sentences 17 and 18 have been combined to give rise to 'This can be used in making cosmetic and high-quality machine oils'; the common element in 'it can be used as a

base for' and 'it works well as an ingredient in' is expressed in 'this can be used in .' This applies to both cosmetics (17) and high-quality machine oils (18), so the two, when joined by an 'and', can complete the sentence.

What about sentence 19? It appears difficult to condense this without removing the essential point of the passage, so we can just leave it as it is.
Now read the summary as a whole. Compare it with the original text.

Summary A

1. (1) People depend on plants, especially in the form of seeds or grains, for their existence because these are the principal ingredients of the human diet. (2) Yet most of the plants that are important to people, for example, corn and wheat, were domesticated in prehistoric times. (3) Records of the domestication of plants are very recent and can help predict some problem areas in domesticating a plant. (4) However, all the problems/solutions cannot be guessed in advance because (i) scientists have never been successful in taming a wild plant; (ii) records have been kept for a relatively short time; and (iii) each plant is unique.
2. (1) The jojoba is an example of a plant that scientists are trying to domesticate. (2) The jojoba, a wild desert bush that grows in some parts of the United States and Mexico, is about 2 metres high. (3) Its fruit is 40-60 per cent liquid wax, called jojoba oil, which is valuable. (4) This can be used in making cosmetics and high-quality machine oils. (5) By domesticating the jojoba, scientists hope to change unproductive desert land into productive agricultural land.

Now, let us go over the summary and consider whether each sentence is probably linked to the following one.

Look at sentence 2 of Paragraph 1 of the summary. Sentences 1 and 2 are connected by means of the word 'Yet'. This word suggests that something different from what is stated in sentence 1 will be presented. Is that, however, the case? The fact that most plants were domesticated in prehistoric times (sentence 2) is not being stated in contrast to people's dependence on plants (sentence 1). So the use of 'Yet' is confusing. What is being contrasted occurs in sentences 2 and 3: namely, that although plants were domesticated in prehistoric times (sentence 2), records of this domestication are very recent (sentence 3). So the placement of 'Yet' in the sentence has to be changed. Sentences 2 and 3 can now be read:

'Most of the plants that are important to people, for example corn and wheat, were domesticated in pre-historic times, yet records of the domestication of plants are very recent. They can help predict some problem areas in domesticating a plant.'
Notice that sentence 2 is made to carry the contrast mentioned above with the help of part of sentence 3. Sentence 2 now becomes quite long. So the second part of sentence 3 (Summary A) is made to stand alone here.

Are the other sentences linked? Look at the connection between sentences 3 and 4. The linking word 'however' appears at the beginning of sentence 4. This indicates that only some problem areas in domesticating plants can be predicted, but all problems cannot be predicted/guessed in advance. This would seem to be a suitable way of joining the two sentences. Sentence 4 goes on to outline the reasons why all problems cannot be predicted in advance.

A new paragraph is started at this point. Why is it necessary to separate the passage into two paragraphs? The reason is that the passage moves from a general statement of the issues to a short case study of the jojoba plant. A new paragraph is needed to indicate this change in focus. What is the point of connection between the paragraphs? Paragraph 2, sentence 1 states that jojoba is an example of a plant that scientists are trying to domesticate. This word 'example' very clearly indicates the nature of the relationship between the jojoba tree and the rest of the discussion that has taken place earlier.

How is sentence 2 of paragraph 2 linked to sentence 1? It repeats the word 'jojoba', indicating that it is going to make a statement about it. So sentence 2 merely says something more about sentence 1.

Sentence 3 is connected to sentence 2 by means of the pronoun 'its'. This also makes a statement about the jojoba tree. Sentence 4 is connected to sentence 3 by means of the word 'this' (sentence 4), which refers to jojoba oil (sentence 3). Sentence 5 makes a general statement about the effect that domesticating the jojoba plant will have on the productivity of the land. It is therefore connected to the whole of paragraph 2 and is also linked to the word 'solutions' in paragraph 1.

Write the new version of the summary here. (Only sentences 2 and 3 have changed).

Summary B
If you wish to shorten this summary further, what can you do?

Different statements are made in paragraph 1, namely those given below. *Which of these are absolutely essential for you to retain? Your decision about what to retain in paragraph 1 should be guided by the nature of the information presented in paragraph 2, so choose only those ideas which are required to connect paragraphs 1 and 2.*

(i) People's dependence on plants.
(ii) The domestication of plants in prehistoric times.
(iii) The fact that records of the domestication of plants are very recent.
(iv) Problems areas in domesticating plants can be predicted by studying records of the domestication of plants.

Perhaps the points that can be removed are (iii) and (iv) because these are not absolutely essential. If the first two are removed, the whole meaning of the passage will collapse. The next thing to learn in order to condense a passage further is to be able to combine two or even three sentences into one by creating complex sentences with subordinate

clauses. Notice the way in which statements i-iv have been written. *What changes have been made to the form in which these statements occurred in Summary A/B?*

'People depends on plants' People's dependence on plants
'plants ....were domesticated in pre-historic times' – The domestication of plants in pre-historic times.

The verb 'depend' has been turned into 'dependence'– a noun; the verb 'were domesticated' has been turned into a noun – 'domestication'. As nouns, these become the subjects of new sentences and can take other verbs in order to combine two sentences/clauses. Consider the following sentence as an opening sentence for Summary C:
'People's dependence on plants has led to the domestication of plants and grains that are important for man's existence.'
This is based mainly on sentence 1 of summary A/B, though 'the domestication of plants in prehistoric times' is drawn from sentence 2. The change of verb into noun has enabled us to produce this shorter version because the main parts of the two sentences, namely, 'People depend on plants' and 'plants.... were domesticated' can be combined into one sentence: 'People's dependence on plants has led to the domestication of ....', 'the principal ingredients of human diet' – 'important for man's existence.'

The second sentence of Summary C can read:
'Most of the important plants, e.g, corn and wheat, were domesticated in prehistoric times, but scientists are still trying to domesticate more plants.'
What changes have been introduced here to make it different from Summary B? Note them down here before reading further.

The changes that have been made are:

(i) for example – e.g.
(ii) 'but scientists are still trying to domesticate more plants' (Summary C) is taken chiefly from paragraph 2, sentence 1 (Summary B), namely, 'The jojoba is an example of a plant that scientists are trying to domesticate.' It is stated here as a generalisation that links it to the description of the jojoba plant in the second paragraph.

The first sentence of paragraph 2 can read:
'The jojoba is one example of successful domestication in recent years.'

The first part of this is drawn mainly from sentence 1 quoted above. However, this also contains the words 'successful' domestication and 'in recent years'. Both these words/phrases are drawn from the sense of the passage from those parts of Summary A/B that have been left out of Summary C so far:

The second sentence of paragraph 2 can read:
'It is a wild desert bush found in some parts of the United States and Mexico which has fruit consisting largely of liquid wax.'

What are the changes that are made here? Note them down in the space given below.'

Notice that the following changes have been made:
The jojoba – It.
That grows in – (which is) found in.
Its fruit is 40-60 per cent liquid wax.

Two sentences from the previous summaries are combined to form a complex sentence with two subordinate clauses. The subordinate clauses are:

(i) found in some parts of the U.S. and Mexico
(ii) which has fruit consisting largely of liquid wax.

The third sentence of paragraph 2 can read:

'This can be used to produce oil for making cosmetics and high-quality machine oils.'
In what ways has Summary A/B been changed to produce this sentence? Write down your answer here.
In order to get this sentence, two sentences from Summary A/B have been combined, namely, 'called jojoba oil' and 'This can be used in making cosmetics and high-quality machine oils.'

The last sentence of paragraph 2 can read:

'In addition, by domesticating the jojoba, unproductive desert land can be changed into productive agricultural land.'

What changes have been made in Summary A/B in order to produce this sentence?

Note down your ideas here.
The main change consists in bringing in the words 'In addition.' This indicates that there are two advantages in cultivating the jojoba: (i) it can be used to produce oil, and (ii) unproductive desert land can be changed into productive agricultural land.

Now read Summary C as a whole.

Summary C
People's dependence on plants has led to the domestication of crops and grains that are essential to human existence. Most important plants, e.g., corn and wheat, were domesticated in prehistoric times, but scientists are still trying to domesticate more plants.

The jojoba is one example of successful domestication in recent years. It is a wild desert bush found in some parts of the U.S. and Mexico, with fruit consisting largely of liquid wax. This can be used to produce oil for making cosmetics and high-quality machine

oils. In addition, by domesticating the jojoba, unproductive desert land can be changed into productive agricultural land.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7
Do you think this is better than Summary B? Why/why not?

4.4 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to:
how to separate essential from the non-essential ideas
how to separate details from ideas
how to remove repetition or re-statement from major points or ideas
giving importance to words which link sentences and ideas; and
becoming aware of how ideas in a passage are systematically linked to one another. All of these tasks are regarded as techniques of summarisation. The next unit will expose you to more techniques of summarising. If you want to be well-focused in writing, learn how to summarise using the techniques suggested in this unit.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

Fill in the blanks.

1. What is the first thing you do in summarisation?
2. In summarisation, you delete

(a) .....
(b) .....
(c) .....

3. In summarisation, you reduce the size of a sentence by
4. The following steps are to be taken in actual summarisation: Firstly, you Secondly, you Thirdly, you Fourthly, you

4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 5 WRITING SUMMARIES II: MORE ON TECHNIQUES OF SUMMARISING

Unit structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Techniques of Summarising
5.3.1 Identifying Main Ideas and Supporting Details
5.3.2 Removing Redundancy and Repetition
5.3.3 Combining Ideas into a Coherent Summary
5.3.4 Generalising Details and Examples
5.3.5 Condensing Information and Improving Coherence
5.4 Summary
5.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

5.1 Introduction

In Unit 4, you were introduced to some important techniques of summarising. You learned how to identify essential information, remove non-essential details, eliminate redundancy and repetition, and retain the main ideas of a passage.

In this unit, you will take the process further through practical examples. You will work through three passages and examine, step by step, how their main ideas can be identified, selected, condensed and connected to produce effective summaries.

As you work through the examples, pay particular attention to the relationship between **main ideas and supporting details**, the removal of unnecessary information, the use of linking words, and the need to avoid repetition. You will also see that a good summary does not always follow the exact order or wording of the original passage.

Try this before you continue: Think of a passage you have recently read. If you had to explain its message in three sentences, which information would you retain and which would you leave out?

Continue reading to find out how experienced summarists make such decisions.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- summarise any passage you read
- recognise factors that make summaries effective.

5.3 Techniques of Summarising

The only way you can learn how to summarise is for you to do it practically. In this section, you will be guided through the process of summarising the passage on *Integrated Pest Management.* Example 1 illustrates these steps.

The first passage, **Integrated Pest Management**, shows how to identify the main ideas in individual paragraphs and combine them into a coherent summary. The second passage, **Earthworms Back in the Garden**, demonstrates how to select general ideas from a passage containing numerous details and examples. The third passage, **How a Volcano Affects the Earth**, focuses particularly on condensing information, removing repetition and improving the connections between ideas.

As you work through each example, do not merely read the suggested answers. First attempt each Self-Assessment Exercise yourself, then compare your response with the discussion that follows.

5.3.1 Identifying Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Example 1
You are now going to read a passage on how agriculturists are learning to deal with creatures that harm crops. In recent years, there has been a growing use of insecticides, but the passage below suggests that other ways of dealing with harmful pests are being developed and successfully used. Now read the passage.

Integrated Pest Management

Paragraph 1

1. (1) Agricultural pests are winning the battle against the poisonous chemicals in pesticides. (2) As each new chemical pesticide is used, the insects or rodents gradually become used to it. (3) The pests change themselves so that they are not killed by the poison.(4) Therefore, farmers, scientists, and food planners are trying a new method to control the pests that attack their crops. (5) This method is called Integrated Pest Management, or *IPM.*

Paragraph 2

2. Integrated pest management is a plan that combines several different methods to destroy insects and rodents. These methods are specifically developed for individual areas and crops. The control methods include using the pests' natural enemies, controlling the pests' breeding environment, and developing stronger seed strains. Chemical poisons are used only when necessary. The *IPM* method accepts the fact that it is useless to try to destroy pests completely with chemical poisons. Its aim is to control the pest population so that crops can still grow well.

Paragraph 3

3. Cotton farmers in Texas have been using the *IPM* method. The farmers find this the best combination of control methods for their needs. In 1977, three-quarters of the cotton fields in Texas received no insecticides at all. That year's cotton crop was better than average. The *IPM* methods showed the farmers a better way to control the pests in their fields.

Paragraph 4

4. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has been studying agricultural pests and chemicals. It has been found that 223 pests are resistant to or unaffected by insecticides. Rodents, including rats, are also gaining resistance to poisons. In 1965, another UN organisation, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, listed 182 resistant pest types. Three years later, there were 228 species on the resistant list. The 1977 survey raised the number to 364 species. Because so many pests are becoming resistant to chemical poisons, it is necessary to find another method of control. By using Integrated Pest Management, farmers can still control and limit pests without depending on chemical poisons.

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Glossary

Pesticides: substances used to destroy troublesome or destructive creatures like insects, mice, etc.
rodents: animals like rats, rabbits, and squirrels, which bite at things with their strong teeth.
strains: varieties.
resistant to: offering resistance to; opposing; not being affected by.

We are now going to summarise the passage by identifying the important ideas in each paragraph.

Let us start with paragraph 1. Re-read this paragraph and find a line that states the main idea. Write down that line here. It is not always possible to find the main idea stated in a single sentence. Quite often, it is to be put together from many different sentences. If the main idea can be found in one sentence, that sentence is called a topic sentence.

Did you choose sentence 1 as your topic sentence?

'Agricultural pests are winning the battle against the poisonous chemicals in pesticides.'

Notice that sentence 2 merely explains the meaning of sentence 1. Sentence 3 provides a bit more information on the same point. What about sentences 4 and 5? You can see that these provide a new point. The two sentences (4 and 5) can be combined to form:

'Therefore, farmers, scientists and food planners are trying a new method to control the pests that attack their crops, namely, Integrated Pest Management *(IPM)'*

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
What is the relationship between sentences 1 on the one hand and sentences 4 and 5 on the other hand? Write down the answer here, before looking ahead.

Sentence 1 states the general position, the problem. Sentences 4 and 5 state the solution to this problem. Note that both the problem and the solution make up the topic of paragraph 1.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
What is the relationship of the rest of the passage to these sentences? Rapidly look over paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 and state the nature of that relationship here, before looking ahead. The rest of the passage develops the idea of Integrated Pest Management, what it consists of, how it is used, and its effects. It is therefore an expansion of the solution to the problem stated in paragraph 1.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3
Now, look for the important sentences in paragraph 2 which develop the main idea. Write them down here:

Have you written down the following?
'Integrated Pest Management is a plan that combines several different methods to destroy insects and rodents. Its aim is to control the pest population so that crops can still grow well.

As you can see, the first and the last sentences of this paragraph have been chosen because they contain the main idea. However, is this information enough to summarise paragraph 2? If you look again, you will find that crucial items are left out. What are these? Go back to paragraph 2 and find out what other information is required to be stated. Write this down here:

The points to be taken from paragraph 2 read thus:

'Integrated pest management is a plan that combines several different methods to destroy insects and rodents. Its aim is to control populations so that crops can still grow well, by using the pests' natural enemies, controlling the pests' breeding environment, and developing stronger strains of seeds.'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Can you cut out any words from here? Write down what you can remove.

Now check your answer.

(i) 'Integrated Pest Management' has already been mentioned in full in the sentence we have retained from paragraph 1. The same sentence also states its short form 'IPM' in brackets. Therefore, the next sentence to be included in the summary, i.e. form paragraph 2, does not need to repeat 'Integrated Pest Management' in full. It can be referred to simply as *'IPM'.*

(ii) The word 'pests' is repeated in the summary of paragraph 2. We can therefore change the second use of 'the pests' to 'their'. The sentences will be read:
'... by using the pests' natural enemies, controlling *their* breeding environment.'

5.3.2 Selecting Relevant Details from Examples

Condensing Paragraph 3

Now condense paragraph 3. Bear in mind what has already been stated in the summaries of paragraphs 1 and 2 above, and choose only what seems to be necessary from paragraph 3 to continue the argument.

Here is a hint: a specific example has been given here. This is too long to repeat. Choose only one aspect of the example to make the required point that the *IPM* method is successful. Write this down here if you have not already written it in the blank given above.

Perhaps the most important part of the example is 'The cotton crop in Texas in 1977 was better than average'. To produce this, parts of two sentences have been combined. The other details are not required in a summary.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5
Now read paragraph 4 and note down the main idea expressed in it. Don't get confused by the details. Try to find the general point.

State it here.

Have you noted down the following:

'The U.N. Environmental Programme has found that a large number of pests are resistant to insecticides, so it is necessary to find another method of control.'

Notice that this sentence is drawn from different parts of the paragraph. 'The United Nations' has been shortened to 'The U.N.' but not 'U.N.E.P'. The U.N. is a well-known organisation, so it will be recognised by its initials, but the Environmental Programme

run by the U.N. is not generally so well-known, so it needs to be stated in full. A number of figures are given about the pests that have been studied and found to be resistant to insecticides. These cannot be stated separately but have to be contained within a generalisation: 'a large number of pests.' The last sentence but one of the paragraph is the main sentence for the summary.

5.3.3 Combining Ideas into a Coherent Summary

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

Now rewrite all the main points that have been put down separately together here:
Let's now read this summary.

Agricultural pests are winning the battle against the poisonous chemicals in pesticides. Therefore, farmers, scientists, and food planners are trying a new method to control pests that attack their crops: Integrated Pest Management (IPM). IPM is a plan that combines several different methods to destroy insects and rodents. Its aim is to control pest populations so that crops can continue to grow well by using the pests' natural enemies, controlling their breeding environment, and developing stronger seed varieties. The cotton crop in Texas in 1977 was better than average. The U.N. Environmental Programme has found that a large number of pests are resistant to insecticides, so it is necessary to find another method of control.'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7
Now consider this summary carefully.

(i) Are all the points connected to form a single argument? And are all the sentences properly linked? If you read carefully, you will find that one of the sentences has no proper linking word to connect it to the previous sentence. Which sentence is this? What linking words would you add? Answer these questions here before reading ahead.

The last sentence but one is not related to the previous one. It is necessary to add something else, such as: *'As a result of using the IPM,* the cotton crop in Texas in 1977 was better than average'. By the addition of these words, a reason is given for the improvement of the cotton crop.

(ii) Is there any repetition of ideas anywhere in this summary? Write down the sentences that repeat the same information.

You will have noticed that the first and the last lines of this summary repeat the same points in different words. So, perhaps, it is possible to cut out one of the lines. The last sentence can very easily be removed because mention of the U.N. Environmental Programme is not particularly important to the development of the argument. So the summary is complete without the last summary.

Let us go over the steps we took to write this summary.

(i) We isolated the main point or points in each paragraph:
(ii) We then put them all together as a summary.
(iii) Finally, we looked at the summary to check for repetition of ideas and removed the repetition. The summary also checked the connection between one of the examples and the main idea. In that case, linking or connecting words were required in order to make it read properly. You must follow these steps when writing a summary.

5.3.4 Generalising Details and Examples

Example 2
You will now read another passage. This deals with a related topic. It discusses natural ways to fertilise the soil. The method suggested here is the use of earthworms to freshen the soil. Now read the passage.

Earthworms Back in the Garden

Paragraph 1

1. ‘Earthworms are the answer for every garden problem, according to Harold John Weigel. They can increase crop production, turn and freshen soil, and produce faster growth. Simply take care of the earthworms, and the earthworms will take care of the garden. Weigel is extremely enthusiastic about earthworms. They are tremendous creatures, “the intestines of the Earth.” Weigel says, quoting Charles Darwin.

Paragraph 2

2. Weigel is so excited about the benefits of worms that he is writing a book about them. He gardens using thousands of earthworms. He has persuaded his wife to put worms in her houseplant pots. He even suggests eating worms, which he claims are 70 per cent protein. He dreams of armies of earthworms helping replace topsoil across the country. It is a fact, he says, that topsoil is disappearing every year through erosion. Wind and water carry away the soil, and nature needs centuries to replace it.

Paragraph 3

3. Within one year, one thousand earthworms and their descendants can change approximately one ton of organic matter into one of the highest-yield growing materials known, according to Weigel. Worms eat organic materials and produce what is known as worm castings. If 1,000 pounds of earthworms are working one acre of land every twenty-four hours, then they will produce 1,000 pounds of castings that function as a high-grade topsoil. They produce the same amount

of topsoil in one day that nature could produce in 700 years through decomposition and erosive forces such as wind and rain.

Paragraph 4

4. Planting gardens in worm castings offers plants more than just all the necessary nutrients. For example, castings are very porous, and water flows easily through them. They are highly absorbent, easily holding water. In addition, worms tend to be happiest around plant roots. Water can then flow directly to the roots through the worm channels. The worms create a planting area of even consistency. Thus, the earthworms act as natural ploughs.

Paragraph 5

5. Worms offer all these benefits, yet they make few demands. They need only moisture, darkness and food from the soil. Weigel gets his information on the benefits of earthworms from books and from the Wormgrowers Association. That little-known group, which is active in many states, suggests that commercial farmers reintroduce earthworms in places where they have been killed through the use of synthetic fertilisers and other gardening chemicals.'

(From Zukowski-Faust, J., Johnson, S. S. and Atkinson, C.S. Between the Lines, Copyright ©1983 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Inco., reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

Check Your Progress 1
Re-read paragraph 1 and draw out the main idea from it. You can begin in this way: 'Earthworms are the answer for every garden problem.'

Check your answer against the one we provide at the end of the unit.
You were expected to complete the above sentence by giving examples of the problems earthworms can solve, as listed in paragraph 1. Notice that the punctuation marks and the colon, in the answer given by us, indicate that an explanation, or details regarding something, are going to follow.

Now re-read paragraph 2 and draw out the main ideas from it. You will find that it contains two ideas. Write them down here.

Check your answer with those given at the end of the unit. The paragraph is about the benefits of worms, and the two benefits mentioned here should be selected for the summary. If you have chosen anything else, it can only be about Weigel's excitement and the usefulness of worms in general. In a summary, we are not much concerned with the view of an individual such as Weigel, but with the facts themselves. The usefulness

of worms in general has already been stated in the summary of paragraph 1, so that doesn't need to be repeated.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 9

Now re-read 3 and note down the main points. Choose the most general statements. Specific examples should not be included unless they also express a general idea which has not already been stated. Write down your points here.

Check your answers with those given at the end of the unit. You will find that a large part of the first and the last sentence expresses the main points. All references to Weigel are left out. The point regarding worm castings, though important, is not really necessary for the main argument that runs through the whole piece.

Now read paragraph 4. Just select those points that have not already been stated. Choose adjectives and adjective-like phrases that are used to describe the effect of worms on the soil. You can begin your sentence this way;

'Worms make the soil
It is not necessary to give all the details, even though they are interesting. In summary, you basically need to provide the main points that are important for the whole passage. Check your answer against the one we gave you.

Now read paragraph 5 and note down the main points. You will notice that this paragraph deals with the needs of worms. So, first, state the three things that they need, starting with the words:

'Worms need only
Another point is also being made here regarding a Worm Growers' Association, which is of interest in the context. This could also be mentioned. Put in a line about this.

Check your answer against the one we gave you.

Now, if the whole summary we have produced is written up, it will read like this:
'Earthworms are the answer for every garden problem: they can increase crop production, turn and freshen soil and produce faster growth. Earthworms, it is claimed, are 70 per cent protein, so they can replace the topsoil, which is disappearing every year through erosion. Within one year, 1,000 earthworms and their descendants can change approximately 1 ton of organic matter into one of the highest-yielding growing materials known. They produce the same amount of topsoil in one day as nature could in 700 years through decomposition and erosion. Worms make the soil porous, absorbent and of even consistency. Worms need only moisture, darkness and food from the soil. A Worm Growers' Association is active in many states.'

Let us look at the summary carefully now to see if any changes are needed to make it read as a connected passage. The first part, all the way up to '... and of even consistency',

is concerned with the function of earthworms. Each point that is being made up to this stage consists of a statement of yet another function of the earthworms, so no further connecting words are required.

However, the sentence 'Worms need only moisture, darkness and food from the soil' is concerned not with the function of worms but with the needs of these worms. It is, therefore, necessary to indicate that a different kind of idea is being brought in. A line from the original passage can be used in order to connect this sentence with the rest of the summary. Let us see how the summary will read with this addition:

'.... Worms make the soil porous, absorbent and of even consistency. Worms offer all these benefits, yet they make few demands: they need only moisture, darkness and food from the soil.'

Notice that the addition of this line indicates very clearly what the passage has dealt with so far and the contrast with what it is going to deal with next.
What about the last sentence of the summary? Does it fit in at that point in the summary? There is actually no connection between that and the sentence before it. It may perhaps be preferable to drop the mention of the Worm Growers' Association.

Notice that the summary does not necessarily follow the sequence of ideas of the original passage. It may follow the same sequence, or it may not. What is important is that a clear line of argument develops, even though in the original passage the line of argument is not so clear.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 10
Now rewrite the final version of the summary here. Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

5.3.5 Condensing Information and Improving Coherence

Example 3
You are now going to read a passage about volcanoes and how the fiery substance they throw out with such force can affect large parts of the earth. It deals with certain specific examples of volcanoes and their general effect. Now read the passage.

How a Volcano Affects the Earth

Paragraph 1

1. (1) The Northern Hemisphere is experiencing a time period of increased volcanic activity. (2) The eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980 is evidence of this activity. (3) It was a major eruption because the amount of volcanic matter was so great. (4) Experts estimated that two cubic kilometers of earth was thrown into the atmosphere. (5) They can make a guess like this based on evidence. (6) The smoke and volcanic matter were forced straight up 60,000 feet into a high part

of the atmosphere, the stratosphere. (7) This is where that great winds that circle the Earth are found. (8) Eruptions of this size might take place only once every decade.

Paragraph 2

2. Eruptions of this type are influencing the Earth's climate. Because of the particles that are added to the Earth's stratosphere, the air itself becomes cloudy. This means that the transparency of the atmosphere decreases because less light can pass through. This decrease in light is connected to a drop in the surface temperature of the Earth. It reduces approximately ½^{O}F, about a quarter of a degree Celsius. This drop in temperature affects the weather patterns for the year.

Paragraph 3

3. Volcanic eruptions seem to come in cycles. For example, in North America there was a series of eruptions in the early 1900's. There were few volcanic eruptions in the time period between 1925 and 1945. Then from 1945 to 1970 the number of annual eruptions doubled from about approximately 16 to 18 a year to 37 to 40 a year. Beginning in the late 1970's, the volcanic activity again increased.

Paragraph 4

4. Scientists do not know what causes volcanic activity to increase. They believe that volcanoes occur where there is a weakness or thin spot in the Earth's crust. This weak spot, a part of a fault, allows the hot liquid rock, molten rock, deep under the surface to come through, to break the surface. These weak spots occur where the enormous plates of crust rock under the continents meet. There is a meeting of plates all around the Pacific Ocean. This is what creates the "ring of fire", the circle of volcanoes around the pacific.

Paragraph 5

5. There is probably a relationship between the volcanoes and earthquakes. Usually a volcanic eruption follows an earthquake some distance away. For instance, after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, Mount Lassen in Northern California erupted in 1914. In Chile a major earthquake in 1960 was followed by a major volcanic eruption. The goal of the scientists is to be able to predict earthquakes, volcanoes, and the weather by studying these physical conditions.
(From Zukowski-Faust, J.; Johnson, S.S.; Atkinson, C. S.: Between the Lines copyright © 1983 by Holt. Rinehart and Winston. Inco., reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

Glossary
Volcano: a hill or mountain with openings through which gases, lava, ashes, etc. come up from below the earth's crust and bury everything around in a thick layer of this hot, molten substance.
eruption: outbreak; bursting forth.
molten: melted.
fault: (here) place where there is a break in the continuity of layers of rock.

It is better to avoid repetition. 'Volcanic eruptions' can be replaced by 'they'. The first two sentences have been very brief. If the third is also equally brief, the effect is very 'cut and dried,' and the writing doesn't flow. In order to introduce a little change, the third and fourth sentences can be joined by 'and.' It is possible to change 'volcanic activity' in the fourth sentence to 'this,' but perhaps if we did this, the sentence might not remain so clear. So we can't remove *all* repetition. The first four sentences do not need any connecting words because each is an expansion of the same idea. But the fifth sentence stands out alone and requires a linking word. The kind of word we add will depend on the nature of the connection between the last two sentences. Scientists are mentioned in sentence 4, and the relationship referred to, 'between volcanoes and earthquakes', does not appear to be the author's discovery. It is scientists who have drawn such a relationship. Moreover, there is a contrast between the two sentences. Scientists do not know what causes volcanic activity, but they do feel that there is a relationship between volcanoes and earthquakes. This contrast also has to be expressed. In order to bring out all this, we can therefore add 'It is felt, however, that' to the beginning of sentence 5.

5.3.6 Expanding a Summary Without Losing Its Main Ideas

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 11
Write out the improved version of this summary here.
You can check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit. Suppose we want a more detailed summary. What points would you add from the original passage?

Re-read it and write down the points here. Begin with paragraph 1:
If you want to extend the summary a little, you might want to add an example from Mt. St. Helens and provide the bare minimum of information about it. You could probably say:

'The Northern Hemisphere is experiencing a period of increased volcanic activity. One example of this was the major eruption of Mt. St. Helens in 1980. The smoke and volcanic matter were forced straight up 60,000 feet into the stratosphere. Eruptions of this size might take place only once every decade.'

Notice that in sentence 6 of paragraph 1, the meaning of 'stratosphere' is indicated in the line itself. Let us see how this is done by analysing the sentence.
'The smoke and volcanic matter were forced straight up 60,000 feet'

noun phrase verb adverbial of location *into a high part of the atmosphere, the stratosphere?* adverbial of locationnoun phrase

The sentence contains a noun phrase, a verb, and two adverbials of location. The second adverbial contains a noun phrase, which is then separated from another noun phrase with a comma. The second noun phrase, coming as it does after the first noun phrase, repeats the information of the first. Thus, the meaning of 'the stratosphere' is the same as 'a high part of the atmosphere.'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 12

Check Your Progress 2
Now pick out the topic sentence in each paragraph of this passage and write it down here:
Paragraph 1:
Paragraph 2:
Paragraph 3:
Paragraph 4:
Paragraph 5:
Check your answers with those given at the end of the unit. Do you notice a pattern in the placement of the topic sentences? State the pattern you perceive.

It seems as if the topic sentence in this passage occurs in the first line of every paragraph. This is a common pattern in descriptive passages of a factual kind. However, it must be borne in mind that you cannot always expect topic sentences to occur at the beginning of paragraphs.
If we link together these topic sentences, we can achieve a fairly accurate summary of the passage.

Short Summary
1. 'The Northern Hemisphere is experiencing a period of increased volcanic activity.
2. Eruptions of this type are influencing the Earth's climate.
3. Volcanic eruptions seem to come in cycles.
4. Scientists do not know what causes volcanic activity to increase.
5. There is probably a relationship between the volcanoes and earthquakes.'

Supposing we were content with the bare bones of the information given here and did not wish to pack in any more information from the passage for our summary, can we leave the above paragraph as it is? What changes in language do you find necessary to introduce, such as the linking of sentences and the removal of repetition? State the changes you would make.

The changes we would suggest are the following: the first and second sentences can remain unchanged. In the third sentence, however, we have the words 'volcanic eruptions.' It is necessary to bring in this example, for it is the one of interest. Having

introduced the example, you then have to bring in something about what happened, but not too much. So, only one detail is introduced, namely. 'The smoke and volcanic matter were forced straight up 60,000 feet into the stratosphere.' Notice that 'the high part of the atmosphere' is removed because it means the same thing as 'stratosphere', and the latter is shorter.

Now, find the other important points from paragraph 2 which you feel should be added to the summary.

Paragraph 2
This paragraph deals with the fact that the earth's climate is affected by volcanoes and the way it is affected. If we want to introduce some details, they must be mentioned only very briefly. The language must also be suitably condensed. We can state the following:

'Volcanic eruptions influence the Earth's climate. It is affected by the particles that are added to the earth's stratosphere. This makes the air cloudy so that less light passes through, leading to a drop in the surface temperature of the Earth.
Only the main line of argument regarding the drop in the temperature of the earth is brought in. Other details, which seem a little less important, are left out. Notice how parts of different sentences are combined in the last sentence of the summary of paragraph 2 given above. Separate sentences from the original text are joined together (i) with 'so that' indicating that the cloudiness of the air allows less light to pass through, and (ii) with 'leading to' indicating again, a further result, namely the drop in the temperature that is caused.

Next, find the important points in paragraph 3. State them here.

Paragraph 3
In this paragraph there are a number of examples and we have to find a way of putting them under a generalised statement. The first line can be retained as it is, with another part which generalises and condenses the rest of the paragraph added on. This would then read thus:
Volcanic eruptions seem to come in cycles, occurring with greater regularity at certain intervals of time.'

Now find the important points in paragraph 4 which you might wish to add to your summary. State them here.

Paragraph 4
A number of details are given in this paragraph and we have to decide which ones are important. Perhaps we can summarise the paragraph thus:
'Scientists do not know what causes volcanic activity to increase. They believe that volcanoes occur where there is a weakness or thin spot in the Earth's crust which allows the hot liquid rock deep under the surface to come out.'

The first sentence is kept as it is and also the second. Parts of the third sentence are added on to the second, making it a complex sentence. It is also possible to put a full stop after 'Earth's crust' thus ending the second sentence and beginning the next sentence with 'This allows the hot liquid rock ... to come out.'

Now find the important points in paragraph 5 to your summary. State them here.

Paragraph 5

This paragraph contains two examples, of which one might be selected. The last line states a generalised goal which is not so relevant to the way the passage has developed, so it can be omitted. The summary could then read:

'There is probably a relationship between the volcanoes and earthquakes. Usually a volcanic eruption follows an earthquake some distance away. For example, in Chile, a major earthquake in 1960 was followed by a major volcanic eruption.'

Notice that now, as we are expanding the summary, we have not bothered about the connecting words we had used in the short summary. We will consider what is required after we have put these paragraphs together.

Now let us write the summary as it stands. Read it through carefully to see if all the parts connect with each other. What improvements can you suggest?

Summary

1. 'The Northern Hemisphere is experiencing a period of increased volcanic activity.
2. One of the examples of this was a major eruption at Mt. St. Helens in 1980.
3. The smoke and volcanic matter were forced straight up 60,000 feet into the stratosphere.
4. Eruption of this size might take place only once every decade.
5. Volcanic eruptions influence the Earth's climate.
6. It is affected by the particles that are added to the Earth's stratosphere.
7. This makes the air cloudy so that less light passes through, leading to a drop in the surface temperature of the Earth.
8. Volcanic eruptions seem to come in cycles, occurring with greater regularity at certain intervals of time.
9. Scientists do not know what causes volcanic activity to increase.
10. They believe that volcanoes occur where there is a weakness or thin spot in the Earth's crust, which allows the hot liquid rock deep under the surface to come out.
11. There is probably a relationship between the volcanoes and earthquakes.
12. Usually, a volcanic eruption follows an earthquake some distance away: for example, in Chile, a major earthquake in 1960 was followed by a major volcanic eruption.'

Consider the summary as it stands, carefully.

1. Do you think that it should be written as one paragraph or two or more?

2. Do all the ideas as stated here follow proper sequence or should they be reworded?
3. Do any connecting words need to be added?
4. Are there any instances of a noun previously mentioned that need to be written as a pronoun?

State your views here.

We are now going to write a revised summary, making some of the changes referred to above. Read this carefully.

Revised Summary

1. 'The Northern Hemisphere is experiencing a period of increased volcanic activity. One example of this was the major eruption at Mt. St. Helens in 1980, when the smoke and volcanic material were forced straight up to 60,000 feet in the stratosphere. Eruptions of this size, however, might take place only once every decade.
2. Volcanic eruptions seem to come in cycles, occurring with greater regularity at certain intervals of time. Scientists do not yet know what causes volcanic activity to increase. However, they believe volcanoes occur where there is a weakness or thin spot in the Earth's crust, allowing hot liquid rock deep beneath the surface to rise.
3. It is found that volcanic eruptions influence the Earth's climate, which is affected by the particles that are added to the Earth's stratosphere. This makes the air cloudy, so less light passes through, leading to a drop in Earth's surface temperature. There is probably also a relationship between volcanoes and earthquakes. Usually, a volcanic eruption follows an earthquake some distance away. For example, in Chile, a major earthquake in 1960 was followed by a major volcanic eruption.'

5.4 Summary

In this unit, we have shown you that we can write summaries of the passages we have read by:

- looking for the important ideas in each passage and the relationship between them; and
- adopting a proper arrangement for the main points in the summary and linking the various sentences in it with the use of connectives.

4 You should, from now on, practise summary writing on a daily basis.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Read the passage on Integrated Pest Management, which is example 1 of Unit 4, once again. Summarise that passage in just four sentences only.

5.6 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING/WEB SOURCES

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MODULE 8

Unit 1 Letters and Sounds in English
Unit 2 English Vowels and Consonants
Unit 3 Interviews
Unit 4 Seminar Presentation
Unit 5 Public Speech Making

UNIT 1 LETTERS AND SOUNDS IN ENGLISH

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcomes
1.3 Letters and Sounds
1.4 Word Stress
1.5 Intonation
1.6 Summary
1.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

1.1 Introduction

We are starting this module with another broad aspect of English use and communication skills. Over the next five units, we will study speaking skills. Indeed, you will agree with me that speaking is very important. We spend at least two-thirds of a day speaking to one another. In a mixed community like Nigeria, spoken English that all can understand is very important. That's why we devote this module to the art of speaking English intelligently and in a way that people can understand.
In this unit, you will learn something about English letters and sounds as well as stress and intonational patterns. To speak English well, you have to learn correct pronunciation.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- make distinctions between the English letters and sounds
- describe the English stress patterns
- produce the correct English sounds and stress patterns
- produce the correct English informative pattern.

1.3 Letters and Sounds

One of the difficulties of English pronunciation is that there is no perfect correspondence between letters and sounds, as there is in Indian languages.
Look at the following words:

even, these, green, read, field, size, machine, key, people. The spellings e, e...e, ee, ea, ie, ei, i, ey, eo in these words represent the same vowel sound, which also occurs in the usually spelt word *suite* (meaning a connected series of rooms to be used together, and pronounced exactly like *sweet*).

Now look at the following words, which have similar spellings:
bough (meaning a branch of a tree), **cough, though, rough** and **through.** These words are all spelt with **-ough,** but this spelling gives a number of different pronunciations: **bough** has the same vowel sound as in **cow; cough** has the same vowel sounds as in **cot** and has the sound /f/ at the end (We shall use symbols to represent sounds and place them between slant bars to distinguish them from the letters of the English alphabet); **though** has the same vowel sound as in **go; rough** has the same vowel sound as in **rush;** and **through** has the same vowel sound as in **too**. In **bough, though** and **through,** the letters **gh** are silent, but in **cough** and **rough,** they are pronounced /f/.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
List 5 words each (with, as far as possible, different spellings for the vowel sounds) having

(i) the same vowel sound as in *see.*
(*Example;* extreme, priest, receive, seat, police)
(ii) the same vowel sound as in *sit,*
(iii) the same vowel sound as in *late,*
(iv) the same vowel sound as in *set,*
(v) the same vowel sound as in *sat,*
(vi) the same vowel sound as in *shut,*
(vii) the same vowel sound as in *cart,*
(viii) the same vowel sound as in *hot,*
(ix) the same vowel sound as in *shoot,*
(x) the same vowel sound as in *note.*

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
List 5 words each to show how the following vowel letters can have different sounds, different words:

a, e, i, o, u.
(*Examples:* able, any, bag, basket, village)
You have seen that in English, there is no one-to-one correspondence between letters and sounds. There are, in fact, more sounds in the language than there are letters in the alphabet. It is, therefore, necessary to learn to produce all the vowel and consonant

sounds in English and not to confuse them with the letters of the English alphabet. Each sound is distinct, and the substitution of one of these sounds for another may either bring about a change in meaning or lead to the production of a word that does not sound like an English word at all. To avoid this confusion, you must be able to distinguish between one sound and another.

For example, you should be able to distinguish between pairs of words like:
(i) **pea**k and **pick**,
(ii) **date** and **deb**t,
(iii) **set** and **sat,**
(iv) **cut** and **cart**,
(v) **heard** and **hard**,
(vi) **cut** abnd **cot**,
(vii) **last** and **lost**,
(viii) **full** and **fool,**
(ix) **here** and **hair**,
(x) **pull** and **full**,
(xi) **ledger** and **leisure**,
(xii) **seat** and **sheet**.

Thus, to speak English well, you have to maintain the meaningful distinctions in the language. For the correct pronunciation of words, you must learn to refer to the dictionary all the time. In the dictionary, symbols represent sounds, and each symbol represents one sound only. It is important to learn these symbols and the sounds each one represents. In later units, we shall introduce you to the vowel and consonant sounds of English and the symbols used for them in Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Indian edition, and Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, third edition (revised).

1.4 Word Stress

Another thing that you need to learn is what is called word stress in English. Stress is an extra force used in speaking, on a particular word or syllable. A syllable is a minimal rhythmic unit of a spoken language. Words are made up of one or more separately pronounced parts, called syllables.

Examples: (All these words have been recorded for you on the cassette.) One syllable : course, part, one, block, two.

Two syllables by a dot)	:	open	o.pen (syllable division shown
		English	En.glish u.nit
		unit listen	lis.ten
		speaking	speak.ing
Three syllables	:	foundation	foun.da.tion
		understand	un.de.stand
		whenever	when.ev.er
Four syllables	:	conversation	con.ver.sa.tion tel.e.vis.ion
		television	pro.nun.ci.a.tion
Five syllables	:	pronunciation	

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

How many syllables do the following words have?

(i) this (ii) section (iii) spoken (iv) better (v) prepare (vi) improve
(vii) broadcast (viii) discussion (ix) composition (x) before

In English words of two or more syllables, at least one syllable stands out from the rest and we say it has greater stress.

The mark ^{I}is placed before the syllable that carries the main stress of the word.

For example: ^{I}English, ^{I}speaking, im^{I}prove.

Some words also have secondary stress (weaker than the main stress) on another syllable.

The mark^{I} is placed before such a syllable. For example: ^{I}under^{I}stand, ^{I}conver^{I}sation

Here are some more examples taken from this unit's text. All these words have been recorded for you on the cassette.

Words of two syllables; stress on the first syllable:

^{I}unit ^{I}section
^{I}practice ^{I}letter
^{I}question ^{I}feature
^{I}study ^{I}after
^{I}dealer^{I}broadcast

Words of two syllables; stress on the second syllable:

pre^{I}sent (verb)	cor^{I}rect	be`low
re^{I}cord (verb)	cas^{I}sette	your`self

between dis^{I}cuss
complete re^{I}call

Words of three syllables; stress on the first syllable: ^{I}bulletin ^{I}radio
^{I}bicycle ^{I}exercise
^{I}customer ^{I}possible
^{I}similar ^{I}afterwards
^{I}carefully ^{I}specimen

Words of three syllables; stress on the second syllable: ob^{I}jective com^{I}plete
re^{I}cording a^{I}mendment
im^{I}portant con^{I}dition
dis^{I}cussion a^{I}nother
when^{I}ever con^{I}tinue

Words of three syllables; main stress on the third syllable and secondary stress on the first syllable:
^{I}intro^{I}duce, ^{I}under^{I}stand, ^{I}maga^{I}zine

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Say all the words given above with the correct stress pattern.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5
Make the stress syllables in the following words and say them with the correct stress pattern. You may consult the dictionary, if you like.

1. comprehension
2. conversation
3. pronunciation
4. correspondence
5. shopkeeper
6. accompany
7. available
8. university
9. television
10. constitution

Why then do you need to know about stress in English? You need this knowledge because mispronouncing a word in English can lead to misunderstanding.
For example:

^{I}export (verb) means to send a good out of the country ex^{I}port (noun) are the goods sent out.

In a sentence:

^{I}**Export** the goods and let me have the **ex^{I}port** tariff.

Unless you put the correct stress, you will clearly be misunderstood. Also in the two sets of commands

ITurn on the red light and
Turn Ion the red light. The stress pattern makes a lot of difference in meaning. The first meaning is you should **switch on the red** light, while the second meaning for the second sentence is to make a turn whenever you get to the red light.

Thus, using the correct stress patterns is important in spoken English. In many Nigerian languages, speakers place strong stress on every word (e.g., the Igbo and Yoruba peoples). If you transfer this strong stress pattern to every word in English, it may be difficult for you to be heard and understood. Start learning English stress patterns today.

1.5 Intonation

We shall now introduce you to intonation patterns in English.

(a) Tone Groups

A longer sentence is usually divided into what may be called breath groups, or sense groups. We also call them tone groups.

Example
When I went to see him/he was still in bed.
(The tone group division is shown by the oblique bar /).

Listen to the following sentences in the cassette and divide them into tone groups:

1. By the time we got home, it was already dark.
2. I'll send him an answer as soon as I can.
3. If you need anything else, just ask me.
4. By refusing to answer, you'll only make matters worse.
5. Going through your papers, I was surprised to find that you'd studied journalism.

(b) The Nucleus

The last important word in each group has what is called the nucleus. On the stressed syllable of this word, there is a movement of the pitch of the speaker's voice from high to low or low to high.

(c) Tones

The change in pitch from high to low is known as the falling tone, and the change in pitch from low to high is known as the rising tone.

The Falling Tone
We shall show the falling tone with a slanting mark pointing downward, placed before the nucleus.
The falling tone is generally used in
(a) Statements; for example:
1. I haven't the Itime.

2. I'm Igoing `home.
3. There's Ino reIreply.

(b) Questions beginning with a question-word such as *what, how, when,* etc.; for example:

1. IWhat'is the Itime?
2. IWhere's he Igone?
3. IWhen will they come?
4. IWhy are they Ilate?
5. IHow many have you Igot?
6. IHow much d'you Ineed?

(c) Commands; for example:

1. IClose the Idoor.
2. IBring it back at Ionce.

(d) Exclamation; for example:

1. What an Iexcellent iIdea!
2. How extra Iordinary!

(e) Question tags, when agreement is expected; for example:

1. It's Irather Ihot today, /Iisn't it?
2. This is a Idifficult Iquestion, /Iisn't it?

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

Now look at the following words and sentences which have a falling tone on the nucleus, and listen to them on the cassette. Then say each word and sentence with a falling tone. Make sure that the pitch of your voice moves from a higher level to a lower level on the nucleus.

1. toImorrow

They're Icoming toImorrow.

2. Ilight

ISwitch on the Ilight.

3. Itime

IDon't 'waste my Itime.

4. I papers

I Where are the I papers?

5. I finish

I When d'you ex I pect to I finish it?

6. I coffe

Let's I go and have some I coffee.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7

Now here are some short dialogues for you to practise. Listen to them on the cassette and then read them aloud yourself.

1. A : I Why don't you I buy a I car? B : I I haven't got the I money.
2. A : I Have some I coffee.
   B : I'd I rather have some I juice.
3. A : I Open the I door. B : But it's I jammed.
   A : Well I get the I carpenter to I open it.
   (A stressed syllable after the nucleus is marked at the bottom.)
4. A : I What's the I matter with you? B : I've had a I sleepless I night.
5. A : I Who is that `man? B : He's a rep I orter.

A : I I don't like his I looks.

B : I'll I send him a I way, then.

6. A : I'd I like to have a I word with you. B Just I leave me a I lone.

A : I Give me a I chance to ex I plain things.

B : I'm I not interested. I Go a I way.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

Listen to the following dialogues recorded on the cassette and mark stress and intonation. After you have checked your answer, read each dialogue aloud.

1. A : I'm leaving tonight.
   B : When will you return?
2. A : It's rather dark in here. B : Switch on the light then.
3. A : You must complete it by Wednesday. B : I don't think I can.
4. A : We're going to the zoo tomorrow. B : That's splended!
5. A : Which one d'you want? B : I'll have this one.

A : This one's taken already.

B : Then I don't want any.

(d) **The Rising Tone**

When we use a rising tone on the nucleus, the pitch starts at a low level and keeps on rising till the end of the group. We shall indicate this tone with a slanting mark pointing upward, placed at the bottom of the line before the nucleus.

This tone is generally used in:

(a) questions that demand the answer *yes* or *no;*
for example:

1. I Have they I gone?
2. I Will he a I gree?
3. D'you I know them?

(b) 'Incomplete' utterances which form part of sentence, quite often subordinate clauses. For example:

1. I If it I rains / we'll I go by I taxi.
2. Al I though she was I ill, / she I took her e I xam.
3. It's I time for the I lecture / but I no one has I come.
4. By the I time I I got there / it was al I ready I dark.
5. I'd I take you I sightseeing / if I I had the I time.

(c) *Wh*- questions which are said in a warm friendly way: for example:

1. I What's your I name? (to a small child)
2. I How's your I mother?

(d) Polite requests or encouraging invitations: for example:

1. I Could I I borrow your I pen?
2. I Please, I pour me some I water?
3. I Do come I in.

(e) Alternative questions; for example:

4. Would you like I tea, / I coffee, / or a I soft drink?
5. Shall we I walk / or I go by I bus?

1.6 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt:

the distinction between the English letters and English sounds; that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the English letters and English sounds; the stress patterns of English words which can make you to be understood or not understood; the English intonational patterns.

The next unit will expose you to more of the English sounds.

1.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

© Materials are adapted from: Indira Gandhi Open University. School of Health Sciences and School of Humanities. February 2001 (reprint) and July 1997 (reprint), HSTIT Functional English, FEG-1 Foundation Course in English 1.

Bausal, R.K (ed.). (1997). *Foundation Course in English 1, Foundation Course in English 2, Foundation Course in English 3.* New Delhi: Indira Gandhi Open University.

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Audio and Video Cassettes of all exercises.
(All exercises are to be recorded on a cassette and videos).

UNIT 2 ENGLISH VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

Unit structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcome
2.3 English Vowels
2.4 English Consonants
2.5 Summary
2.4 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

2.1 Introduction

We have seen in Unit 1 that one important feature we need to learn to speak English well is to notice the differences between sounds and the letters of the alphabet. In English, there is no perfect relationship between spelling and sound. To learn the correct pronunciation of words, therefore, we need to look words up in the dictionary all the time. In some dictionaries, the pronunciation of words is shown by the use of symbols. Each symbol stands for only one sound. If we learn to recognise the sound that each symbol stands for, we can learn to pronounce all the new words we come across correctly. In this unit, we will discuss another very important aspect of spoken English. These are the English vowels and consonant sounds. Indeed, the two sound systems form the bedrock of spoken English. Your knowledge of them is very important. Without the correct pronunciation of the English vowel and consonant sounds, your spoken English will become impossible to understand. To study this unit, you need the cassette on spoken English.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- **distinguish** between English letters and sounds;
- **identify** differences between English spelling and pronunciation;
- **apply** appropriate stress patterns when pronouncing English words; and
- **use** appropriate rising and falling intonation in spoken English.

2.3 English Vowels

In this lesson, we shall present the symbols for the vowel sounds in English, as used in *Longman Dictionary* of *Contemporary English* and in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,* 3rd edition (revised). These vowels are used by most educated people in English, and this kind of pronunciation is generally known as 'Received Pronunciation' or 'Standard Southern British'.

Here is a list of the vowels of British Received Pronunciation. The symbol for each vowel sound is given, and a keyword in which the sound occurs.

All the vowel sounds and the key words have been recorded for you on the cassette.

Symbol	**Key word**
2.3.1 / i: /	sheep
2.3.2 / ¹ /	ship
2.3.3 / e /	bed
2.3.4 / æ /	bad
2.3.5 / a: /	calm
2.3.6 / □ /	pot
2.3.7 / •: /	caught
2.3.8 / u /	put
2.3.9 / u: /	boot
2.3.10 / ^ /	cut
2.3.11 / Î: /	bird
2.3.12 / «: /	cupboard (second syllable)
2.3.13 / eI /	make
2.3.14 / «u /	note
2.3.15 / aI /	bite
2.3.16 / au /	new
2.3.17 / •**I** /	boy
2.3.18 / Iu /	here
2.3.19 / e« /	there
2.3.20 / u« /	poor

The slanting bars (/ /) indicate that the symbol between them represents a sound and not a letter of the alphabet.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Here is a list of words. You can listen to them on the cassette. Write down the symbol for the vowel sound used in each word and say each word with the correct vowel sound.

You may check your answers with those given by us at the end of the unit.

1. foot
2. neat
3. said
4. ned
5. late
6. pan
7. boot
8. cow
9. sight
10. knit

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Given below are ten pairs of words. They have been recorded for you on the cassette. The words in each pair are distinguished by the vowel sounds. Write down the symbol for the vowel sound used in each word, and say each pair, bringing out the distinction clearly.

1.	(a)	read	(b)	raid		
2.	(a)	heart	(b)	hot		
3.	(a)	cut	(b)	cart		
4.	(a)	wrist	(b)	rest		
5.	(a)	match	(b)	much		
6.	(a)	pull	(b)	pool		
7.	(a)	lend	(b)	land		
8.	(a)	bought	(b)	boat		
9.	(a)	vice	(b)	voice		
10.	(a)	such	(b)	search		

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Now look at the list of words given below. Some vowel letters in these words have been underlined. Write down the symbols for the vowel sounds these letters stand for. Say all these words with the correct vowel sounds.

1.	about	6.	exact	11.	journey
2.	become	7.	floor	12.	librarian
3.	cottage	8.	geese	13.	museum
4.	dreaded	9.	hesitate	14.	photograph
5.	envelop	10.	item	15.	pure

When you look up new words in the *Longman Dictionary* for pronunciation, you will notice that for some words, the symbol / / is printed in italic, that is, it is slanted. This means that the speaker may choose to pronounce it or not in that part of the word. Notice also that in some places / / is placed above / /. This means that the speaker has a choice between the vowel / / and the vowel / /. Either of these vowel sounds can be used.

You will also notice that one syllable of every word has an upright mark above and before it, for example, Ipurify. The upright mark placed above and before `purify' indicates that this syllable of the word stands out from the rest and has greater stress. It is important to place the stress on the correct syllable of each English word.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Here are some words from the text of this unit. Write down the symbols for the vowel sounds used in these words according to British Received Pronunciation. You may consult the dictionary, if you like. After checking your answers, try to say the words with the correct vowel sounds and the correct stress patterns.

1. objective
2. cassette
3. comprehension
4. conversation
5. pronunciation
6. father
7. practice
8. talk
9. suggestion
10. question

It should be noted that there are acceptable Nigerian variants of British R.P. vowels. These are not acceptable to us at present in the country. The major vowel sounds and symbols cited here are the acceptable ones. No other variations of the sounds are acceptable in Nigeria at the moment.

Key Word	**Vowel in British Received Pronunciation**
caught	/ •: /
corn	/ •: /
course	/ •: /
cut	/ Ã /
bird	/ Î: /
make	/ eI /
note	/ «U /

Vowel Contrasts

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Listen to the following pairs of words on the cassette and then read them aloud yourself, making a clear distinction between the words in each pair. Add three more pairs to illustrate each contrast.

(a)	/ i: / seek sleep	/ I / sick slip
	reach leave deed	rich live did
(b)	/ e / pen bet	/æ/ pan bat
	men lend letter	man land latter
(c)	/ e / sent tell	/ e / (or Indian / e: /) saint tale
	get bell chest	gate bale chaste
(d)	/ / odd not	/ / (or Indian / o: /) ode note
	got cost cot	goat coast coat

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

Say the following words correctly as shown. You can also listen to them on the cassette.

comprehension /k•mprihens«n/ secrets/ Isi:krrts /

mystery / Imist ri /

centuries / Isent z /

recent / Iri:s nt /

times / Itarmz /

scientists / Isai ntrsts / careful / I / observation / Iobz Iverfen / experiment (n.) / kIsperrm nt/ke □ l

2.4 English Consonants

In the first part of this unit, you learnt the vowel sounds in English and the symbols used for them. In this unit, you will learn the consonant sounds and the symbols used for them in dictionaries. After learning these symbols, you will be able to find out the pronunciation of English words from *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* and *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English.*

English has twenty-four consonant sounds. These are listed below and have been recorded for you on the cassette. Listen to each sound and a key word in which it occurs.

	Symbol	**key word**
1.	/ p /	pen
2.	/ b /	back
3.	/ t /	tea
4.	/ d /	day
5.	/ k /	key
6.	/ g /	gay
7.	/ tS /	cheer
8.	/ dÎ /	jump
9.	/ f /	few
10.	/ v /	view
11.	/ T /	thing
12.	/ /	then
13.	/ s /	soon
14.	/ z /	zero
15.	/ □□ /	fishing
16.	/ Z /	pleasure
17.	/ h /	hot
18.	/ m /	sum
19.	/ n /	sun
20.	/ N /	sung
21.	/ 1 /	led
22.	/ r /	red
23.	/ j /	yet
24.	/ w /	wet

Notice that the symbols for the consonants 1-6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, and 24 are the same as the letters of the alphabet. Only eight symbols are new and have to be learned.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7

Here are ten words. You can listen to them on the cassette. Write down the symbols for the consonant sounds in these words. After you have checked your answers with those given by us at the end of the unit, say the words with the correct vowel and consonant sounds.

1.	thief	2.	catch	3.	yard
4.	there	5.	lamp	6.	measure
7.	zoo	8.	share	9.	song
10.	joy				

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

Given below are eight pairs of words, and the words in each pair differ in only one consonant sound. You can listen to these words on the cassette.

Write down the symbols for the consonant sounds that bring about the difference.

1. peas, peace
2. jew, zoo
3. sew, show
4. pact, fact
5. vine, wine
6. go, know
7. harm, charm
8. ledger, leisure

After you have checked your answers against ours, say each pair, clearly highlighting the difference.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 9

Underline the letters in the following words which represent the consonant sound shown in brackets. Mark X under the words in which this consonant does not occur.

Example: /that, think. □ /
X
(a) / □□ / – ocean, dictionary, scissors, pressure, decision
(b) / w / – quality, crown, language, whether, whose, question, blow.
(c) / T / – think, this, other, theft, thought, then, therefore.
(d) / f / – shepherd, conference, geography, afraid, stuff, although, of.
(e) / j / – ear, few, lower, year, day, cure, toy, future.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 10
Each of the following words contains one of the two consonants shown in brackets. Arrange the words in two separate lists according to the sound used.

Example: /w, v / – west, vest
/ w / / v /
(a) / s, z / – raise, dice, as, reverse, loose, ass, laws, rivers, loss, lose

b) / / – promotion, shore, pleasure, special, assure, fresh, garage

c) / / – link, finger, tenth, listen, known, hang, uncle, knob, song, knock

2.5 Summary

This unit has exposed you to the following:
(i) the English vowel sounds and vowel contrasts;
(ii) the English consonant sounds; and
(iii) how these sounds are recognised and produced.

Constant practice of these sounds makes you a good speaker of English.

2.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

© Materials are adapted from: Indira Gandhi Open University. School of Health Sciences and School of Humanities, February 2001 (reprint) and July 1997 (reprint) HSTIT Functional English. FEG-1 Foundation Course in English I.

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UNIT 3 INTERVIEWS

Unit structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Learning Outcomes
3.3 Preparing for an Interview
3.4 Unfolding Personality: Specimen Interviews
3.5 Summary
3.6 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

3.1 Introduction

An interview is an important form of oral communication used to assess a person's suitability for a particular position, programme, or responsibility. Unlike a written examination, which primarily tests knowledge and written expression, an interview offers the interviewer an opportunity to observe how a candidate communicates, thinks, responds to questions, and presents ideas.

An interview may therefore be described as a personality assessment because it gives the interview panel an opportunity to gain an insight into a candidate's personality and suitability for the position. Through a purposeful but usually conversational interaction, interviewers may assess qualities such as reasoning ability, confidence, adaptability, tact, responsibility, imagination, perseverance and interpersonal skills.

In Nigeria, interviews are conducted in many settings, including employment, admission, scholarships, professional appointments, internships and promotions. English is widely used in formal interviews because it serves as a common language among people from different linguistic backgrounds. It is therefore important to communicate clearly and appropriately in English during an interview.

A successful interview requires more than knowing the subject matter. A candidate needs to prepare adequately, understand the requirements of the position, communicate ideas clearly, respond appropriately to questions and demonstrate a professional attitude.

In this unit, you will learn how to prepare for an interview and how effective communication, appearance, attitude, and responses can influence the impression you make on an interview panel. You will also study specimen interviews involving candidates for different professions and examine what makes some candidates more effective than others.

Think About It

Imagine that you have been invited for an interview for a job you strongly desire. What would you do in the days leading up to the interview to prepare yourself?

Continue reading to find out how preparation can improve your performance at an interview.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- **prepare** adequately for an interview by considering the position, subject matter, appearance and current affairs;
- **demonstrate** effective communication strategies when responding to interview questions;
- **evaluate** interview responses and behaviour in order to identify qualities that create a positive professional impression.

3.3 Preparing for an Interview

Preparation is the first step towards success at an interview. Even if you are confident and experienced, you can improve your chances or score higher by being mentally ready before stepping into the interview room and taking a seat.

Know the Position

First, if you are a candidate, you must do your homework on the subject matter well. For instance, if you are a candidate for a salesman's post, read a good book on salesmanship and try to understand the salient points well in advance. In fact, the best time to begin preparing is the day you finish your written test, and there's a chance of your being called for an interview. Last-minute preparation will put an unnecessary strain on you and make you a bit nervous. Secondly, try to relate what you have learnt from *books to your own previous experience* in the line, if possible. For instance, if you have worked as a salesman, imagine how you could have improved upon your performance or how you would work on the same job in a bigger firm. If you are applying for your first job, you must think of the situations that may arise in this job. You can think of how you will do your best as a salesman in light of what you have read in books. Remember that at the interview, you may be given a practical problem to solve. You will impress the board if you answer directly.

Besides preparing on the specific subject itself, you must give some attention to your dress and appearance, because these reflect a man's personality. In fact, it is said that the first impression is sometimes the last impression, and if you fail to make the right impact in the beginning, you are less likely to impress the Interview Board later. The man who is dressed in a slovenly way with ill-fitting clothes and buttons missing from shirt sleeves gives the impression that he is careless about work in general. Nobody would want a prospective employee to do his work slovenly! At the same time, you shouldn't be so colourfully dressed as to draw too much attention to your clothes.

Your preparation is incomplete without a general overview of current affairs. It is customary to ask candidates questions about events that are happening around them. At some interviews, the interview board would like to know if the candidate is fully aware of trends in culture, politics, the economy, etc. Therefore, you must show that, besides a thorough knowledge of your own field, you also have wider interests.

Figure 3.1: Preparing for an Interview



SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Say which of these suggestions for the preparation for an interview are helpful and useful.

(i) The well-prepared candidate is one who wears the best suit for an interview.

(ii) The candidate who reads the newspapers and periodical magazines and keeps abreast of the times impresses the board more than the one who is only well-versed in his own subject.

(iii) Before the interview, one should make a list of situations that are likely to arise in the job one has applied for and be mentally prepared to tackle them.

(iv) One does not have to worry too much about one's general appearance.

(v) The best time to begin preparation for an interview is a day or two before, so that everything one reads is fresh for the interview.

3.4 Unfolding Personality: Specimen Interviews

An interview does not merely test what a candidate knows. It also provides an opportunity for the interview panel to observe the candidate's attitude, confidence, judgement, honesty, communication style and ability to respond to unexpected questions.

The following specimen interviews illustrate how candidates can create different impressions through their answers and behaviour.

Here is part of an interview for a Sales Officer's job. Read it carefully.
David, aged 28, enters the interview room dressed in a pleasant light-blue suit with a matching blue-striped tie. His shoes are polished, and his general appearance is neat and proper. He walks without affectation, addresses the Chairman and says, Good morning, Sir.

Chairman: Good morning. Please sit down.
(Skimming, through the biodata sheet in front of him) Mr. David, where are you working at present?

David: At Levers' Brothers Nigerian Limited, Zaria.

Chairman: What is the nature of your work there?

David: I have to do everything to promote sales, from advertising through mass media to obtaining orders from retailers.

Chairman: What are the products you deal in?

David: Mainly detergents, tooth pastes, creams, etc.

Chairman: How long have you been working there?

David , ever since the firm's branch was founded. This is my third year going, Sir.

Another member: Why do you wish to change your job?

David: Sir, there are better job prospects in this company. You have now entered the field of computers, too. And my first love was really computers.

Second member: What immediate applications do you foresee for computers in our country?

David: At present, the government is careful about not being over-ambitious in the use of computers. This is quite natural when we already have the problem of unemployment. But a good computer climate is being built up, especially in factories, where repetitive work is involved, and in offices, where an instant retrieval system is required to maintain records.

Third member: From your experience in sales, what do you think counts most in gaining success in this line?

David: First and foremost, it's good advertising. The wider the coverage, the greater the chances of getting orders. Secondly, assurance of quality. The company's reputation is, in fact, established in its first few years.

Chairman: But what about personal contacts? An officer in a high position can, through personal influence, secure a large order for the company.

David: Yes. That is an important factor, too. But an entrepreneur who depends entirely on this risks losing his credibility when the patron is removed from power.

Vocabulary

affectation: behaviour which is not one's natural manner.
promote: increase (sales)
mass media: the means of giving news and opinions to large numbers of people; for example, radio and television.
retailers: those who sell goods to customers for their own use, not for resale.
VCRs Video Cassette Recorders.
VCPs Video Cassette Players.
founded established. *prospects* chances (of success). *foresee* see ahead of time.
climate the general temper of people.
repetitive done again and again.
retrieval system a method of finding stored information when it is needed.
entrepreneur one who plans for a business and gets it going.
credibility being trustworthy.
patron one who supports and encourages a company.

Let's analyse the part of the interview you have read above. The following facts show the candidate's suitability for the post of Sales Officer.

(i) His dress and appearance are neat and proper, and this gives the first impression of a man who is careful about his dress and appearance. Such a man will be methodical in most things he does.
(ii) He greets the chairman of the board and sits down only when he is asked.
(iii) He describes his present job specifically: to 'promote sales through mass media' and 'obtain orders from retailers'.
(iv) His reason for wanting to leave the present job is candid. His first love is computers, and he has better job prospects here.
(v) He knows the salient facts about computer applications in India but is probably over-enthusiastic to display his knowledge. He was not asked about the government's attitude towards computers.
(vi) His ideas about success in sales are convincing and based on long-term values. He thinks advertising and 'promise of good quality' will ensure success on a long-term basis, individual contacts and patronage will only safeguard the interests of the company for a short time.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Give the meanings of these words used in the conversation: 'promote' 'prospects'
2. Explain the metaphorical use of 'climate' in 'computer climate'.
3. 'The wider the coverage, the greater the chances of winning orders. Another sentence like this would be 'The greater the demand for goods, the higher the prices.'

Can you write another sentence with this structure?

Here's a conversation at an interview for the post of a doctor at a village hospital. Read it carefully and answer the questions that follow:

Rinde Olaofe is a recent MBBS graduate seeking a job. He is a 29-year-old man.

'May I come in, Sir?' 'Yes, please?'

'Good morning. Sit down, Mr Olaofe. Where did you do your MBBS? 'At ABU Teaching Hospital, Sir.'

'Do you have any experience in the medical field?' 'None, except as a houseman.'

'You know this is a post for a doctor at a Government village hospital.' 'Yes, Sir.'

'You know conditions in a village may not be quite favourable for a young city-bred person like you. No entertainment, except your T.V. set and the incessant lowing of cows...?'

'Yes, sir. I'm aware of all the drawbacks there. I'd like to take up the challenge, anyway.'

'You call it a challenge. Why?

'Because it is difficult to explain things to illiterate villagers and convince them that a certain way of living is good for them.'

"Give us some concrete examples of these difficulties in communication you may encounter.'

'Well, for instance, villagers constantly ignore advice about the need for personal hygiene. Also, as a doctor, it will be my duty to propagate family planning. Here, I would inevitably face resistance. The illiterate villagers just don't want to give up their traditional ways of thinking.'

'What about the salary being offered?'

'It is a bit on the lower side, but I think I can manage.'

'There won't be much scope for additional private earnings.' 'I am quite aware of that, Sir.'

'Do you know some of the common diseases prevalent in the village where you're going?'

'Sir, I haven't yet had time to acquaint myself with these details. But I assure you...

'They'll do. You may go.'

Vocabulary

MBBS: Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery.

houseman: a junior doctor completing hospital training and living in the hospital.

citybred: brought up in a city.

incessant: never stopping.

lowing: the noise made by cows. *illiterate:* unable to read and write. *encounter:* meet; be faced by (a difficulty). *hygiene:* cleanliness, generally.
propagate: to spread and influence a great number of people
inevitably: adv. from inevitable: which cannot be prevented from happening.
resistance: opposition.
prevalent: existing commonly.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1(i) A doctor's job in a village is more difficult than in a town because:
(a) There are a few conveniences and comforts of life in a village.
(b) Villagers suffer from more complex types of diseases.
(c) Villagers are generally illiterate, and it is difficult to get them to follow any advice.
(ii) Randhir Patel wants to work in a village hospital because:

(a) He has no other job at present.
(b) He likes to do something challenging.
(c) He is fond of a quiet, peaceful life.

2. Tick the qualities listed here which apply to Randhir Patel. Then, based on the score, say whether you would consider him suitable for the job if you were on the interview board.
(a) Courteous
(b) Well-informed about the people he is going to work for.
(c) Understands the mental make-up of the villagers in general.
(d) Honest about his shortcomings.
(e) Shows he will be understanding and patient with the village folk and will be able to win them over.
(f) Doesn't want any financial benefits at all.

3(a) Conditions in a village may not be quite favourable for a young city-bred person.' What meaning would the sentence have if someone said: 'Conditions in a village will be quite unfavourable...'

(b) 'The salary is a bit on the lower side, but I think I can manage.' How would the meaning change if he said 'The salary is very low. But I'll have to manage somehow.'

Here's a conversation at an interview for the post of an engineer. It's an example of how one should not behave at an interview. Read carefully and notice the points about appearance, dress and manner.

Mr. Nwafor, a tall man in his thirties, with unkempt hair, is dressed in a three-piece suit of dazzling colour. A red-spotted tie dangles from his neck. Unbecoming horn-rimmed spectacles are perched on the bridge of his nose. There is an unmistakable limp in his gait. Without greeting the members of the board, he draws a chair to himself and seats

himself with the air of a man who is meeting his equals. He peers over his spectacles at the members as if to say, 'Well, what have you to ask?'

Chairman
(smiles to himself)Mr Nwafor, where are you working at present?
Nwafor: Johnball Engineering Co. I'm the Executive Engineer there. My work is to oversee the construction of bridges over rivers. The bridge over River Niger was built by me.
Chairman: Yes. Why do you wish to leave the Company?
Nwafor: The present Chief Engineer is a stick-in-the-mud. He won't listen to all the wonderful ideas I've got.
Chairman: Don't you think he might have better ideas as the Chief Engineer?
Nwafor:No. How can he? After all, he's not as qualified as I am. He got to the top by getting the support of some influential people. I have a degree in engineering from America.
Second member: Mr. Nwafor, notice you have some difficulty in walking. Any accident or ?
Nwafor (visibly): That is there from birth. But why do you ask personal questions?
Embarrassed: That is not the purpose of this interview.
Chairman: We know exactly what we should ask.
Nwafor: Well! (Throws his hands out in disgust.)
Third member: Mr. Nwafor, suppose you have a hand in signing the construction of a bridge to a contractor. It has to be built in a very short period because an important minister will be passing that way shortly. Only one contractor is ready to do the job that soon. You know he is unreliable. He is notorious for failing to use the correct sand-to-cement ratio in concrete. Will you give him the contract?

Nwafor: Yes. Why not? What is there in it? After all the work is done. The end justifies the means.

Chairman: They'll do. You can go now.
Nwafor gets up abruptly without smiling and limps awkwardly out of the room. He carries away a pencil which he had picked from the table (to fiddle with).

Vocabulary
stick-in-the-mud: a person who will not change or accept new things.
The end justifies the means: a bad action can be allowed if the result is good.

It is obvious that, for various reasons, Mr Nwafor is the last choice for the post. But now let's present Mr. Nwafor in a different light. After reading the conversation at this second interview, you should be in a position to compare the two.
Mr Nwafor is dressed in a simple, yet clean and well-pressed suit and a striped tie. He wears spectacles, which make him look somewhat scholarly. With an unassuming manner and gait, he walks up to the members.

Nwafor: Good morning, sir (smiles)
Chairman: Good morning, Please sit down. Er.... Where are you working? Mr. Nwafor.
Nwafor: At Johnball Engineering Co., Sir.
Chairman: What is your designation and the nature of your work there?
Nwafor: I'm the Superintending Engineer there. I supervise the construction of bridges.
Chairman: Which bridges have you built?
Nwafor: I've helped in the construction of the River Niger Bridge.
Chairman: You seem to be doing rather well there. Why do you want to leave?
Nwafor: Er. The present Chief Engineer is a good old man, but he won't accept new ideas in bridge building. He belongs to the old tradition, but in fact, so much research has gone into this field. So I thought I'd take a break.
Second member: We notice you have difficulty walking. Was it an accident?
Nwafor: No. It's a manufacturing defect, sir. (The members of the board have a laugh at this quip!)
Third member: Suppose you are in charge of a bridge which has to be built in a very short span of time because a minister will shortly be passing that way. There's only one contractor who's ready to undertake the task, but you know he's dishonest and does not use the right proportion of sand and cement in concrete. Will you give him the contract?
Nwafor: Certainly not. I would rather give up my job instead.

Vocabulary
Tradition: the body of principles, beliefs, practices, etc., passed down from the past to the present.
Break: a chance (to make things better)
quip: a remark meant to sound clever.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
1. Compare the candidates in the two interviews given above and give examples from the texts to show how they create quite different impression on the interviewers.

Features	**Candidate in Interview 1**	**Candidate in Interview 2**
Appearance dress, manner, etc.		
Attitude to work		
Attitude to others		
Self-estimate		

2. The extracts given below are from an interview for the post of a Personal Assistant. Make the statements more polite. (Example: 'Mr. present boss has got no common sense, really.')

Improved Version: (I find it difficult to understand my present employer. He just can't decide on the right thing to do.)

(i) The old man, my father, wants me to aim at higher things, some of which are impossible to achieve. (ii)Do you think I'm a fool? I understand that a P. A. has to keep office matters confidential.

3. Convey the following information in a modest way:
(Example: My present job is far below my real competence. *I feel I can take on greater challenges than those* offered in my present job.
My present pay is ridiculous! The company doesn't recognise my real worth.

4. Write a short conversation that may take place at an interview for the post of a Personal Assistant (about 100 words).

5. Write a short conversation that may take place at an interview for the job of a medical representative (about 75 words).

A candidate for an interview may hold some misconceptions. One of them is that he is going to a battle where his wits will be matched against those of others. That is, he fears the five or six members of the Board will be waiting to prove he is a big fool. Another wrong idea is that the interview will be the turning point in his career; it will make or mar him. All these fears are bound to unnerve a candidate unnecessarily and force him to adopt a defensive stance. He may thus lose his chance without showing his real competence. A lesson may be learned from the lives of many successful men in history. In fact, you might use their attitude as an auto-suggestion to calm yourself. First, the members of the board are human beings, just like you, and are prone to emotional fluctuations. Even the most hostile among them can be won over by patience and convincing talk.

Secondly, success in an interview is certainly important because it means a salary, but one does not have to be nervous or anxious about it.
Let's study this interview for a school teacher position.

Mrs. Zeba Imam, in her early thirties, is dressed in a sober saree. A bag hangs easily from her shoulder. She looks studious with her thick-rimmed spectacles on. She enters with a jaunty yet respectful gait.
'Good afternoon, sir.'
'Please sit down. Mrs. Imam.' 'Thank you. Sir.'
'Er. Where did you do your B. Ed.?'
'At the Faculty of Education, ABU, Zaria' 'And you have an M. A. in English.'
'That's right, sir.'
'Where are you teaching at present?' 'At the University of Ibadan.'
'What classes?'
'I teach English to all the classes from 4 to 5.'
'Now, why do you wish to change your present job?'
'I've taught at the junior and middle levels for ten years now. Last year I got my M. A. degree in English. Since then, I have felt I should teach higher classes, which would be more challenging.

'Do you mean to say you find teaching in the lower classes is beneath your dignity?'
'It's not that, sir. I mean, I want a change now. Something more challenging.'
'But I thought teaching pupils in the lower classes was the more challenging task.'
'It's true. But I feel a change will do me good.'

'What are some of the ways in which you can make the teaching of grammar interesting to your pupils?'
'I usually have them play various games and tell them stories. The grammar points are then drawn out from the sentences used. I also believe in using pictures a lot. If possible, can I show them some English films?'
'What's your attitude to the weak students?'
'Well, I believe in being as patient as possible with them. I give them an extra class once in a while to bring them up to the level of the class.'
'What was your special paper at the M.A.?' 'Fiction.'
'And what fiction have you been reading recently?' 'The Mayor of Casterbridge.'
'Is Hardy your favourite?'
'He is. I've read his book four times already. Every time I read his books, some new reality becomes apparent.'
'But I thought Hardy was a very pessimistic writer.'
'Even pessimism can have an appeal. It reflects our own inner disappointments in life.'
'Well, I suppose everyone has his likes and dislikes.'

Vocabulary

studious: eager to study.
jaunty: showing that one feels satisfied with oneself.
junior and middle levels: Classes 1 to 8
beneath your dignity: below your standard of social behaviour.
fiction: stories or novels about things that did not really happen.
apparent: easily seen.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

1. It is possible that the Interview Board already has Mrs. Imam's bio-data and work experience in front of them. Yet they ask her questions on these. Why is it so?
2. Why do you think Mrs. Imam wants to teach the higher classes after getting her M. A. degree in English?
3. Mrs. Imam seems to be an imaginative teacher. What gives us this impression?
4. The members of the Interview Board generally like to find out a candidate's views on life. How do they do that here?
5. Notice the structure of the sentence; 'I usually have them play various games...' It means she gets them to do something. Another example would be:

'I usually have them water the plants before they go.' Make another sentence of your own of this type.

6. 'I also believe in using pictures a lot.' 'I believe in being patient with them.'

In the sentences above, 'believe' is used in a sense different from what it is in 'believe in God, in communism, etc.'

It means that she considers certain things to be of worth. Make another sentence using 'believe' in the same sense.

7. Sometimes members of the Interview Board put questions in such a way as to hurt the self-respect of a candidate. This is not unusual if the member in question is bad-tempered. It is also possible that the board wishes to see how you react to such a question. It is, therefore, wise to respond by giving a balanced and logical answer. That is what Mrs Imam does when she is asked, 'Do you mean to say you find teaching in the lower classes beneath your dignity?'

Now, here is a provocative statement made in an interview. Give an answer that shows calm and tact on the part of the candidate.

'As an air hostess, you have to tolerate some rude remarks by passengers. You're being too sensitive is not going to help here.'

3.5 Summary

In this unit, you learned how to interact during an interview. More specifically, the unit informs you that:

(i) An interview Board tests whether you have the proper qualities for the job.
(ii) In order to perform well in an interview, you should know your subject matter well, be mentally prepared and be in control of the English medium.
(iii) In order to make a good impression in the very beginning, you should be properly dressed when you appear before an interview panel.
(iv) Your answers to the questions should be in good English and to the point. They should be said convincingly.

3.4 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

©Materials are adapted from: Indira Gandhi Open University. School of Health Sciences and School of Humanities, February 2001 (reprint) and July 1997 (reprint). HSTIT *Functional English.* FEG – 1 *Foundation Course in English – I.*

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Audio and Video Recordings of all the examples and exercises in this unit.

UNIT 4 SEMINAR PRESENTATION

Unit Structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Learning Outcomes
4.3 Inauguration of the Seminar
4.4 How a Seminar is Conducted
4.5 The Beginning of a Seminar Talk or Paper
4.6 Logical Development of the Talk or Paper
4.7 Concluding the Talk
4.8 Discussion
4.9 Summary
4.10 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

4.1 Introduction

A seminar is an organised academic or professional meeting in which participants present, examine and discuss ideas on a particular subject. A seminar may bring together students, lecturers, researchers, professionals, policymakers, and others with an interest in the topic under discussion.

In a seminar presentation, a speaker who has studied a subject presents information, arguments, findings or opinions to an audience. Other participants may then ask questions, make observations, seek clarification or offer alternative views. The discussion that follows can help participants examine the subject from different perspectives.

Seminars may be organised around academic, professional, social, economic, environmental or national issues. For example, a university may organise a seminar on climate change, artificial intelligence in education, entrepreneurship among Nigerian graduates, sustainable agriculture, digital learning or the challenges of educational access in rural communities.

A successful seminar presentation requires more than knowledge of the subject. The presenter must organise ideas logically, speak clearly, maintain the audience's attention, and use appropriate supporting materials. Effective delivery also requires appropriate articulation, stress, pace, intonation and voice modulation.

In this unit, you will learn how to prepare and deliver a seminar presentation. You will also learn how to organise the main ideas of a presentation, use evidence and supporting materials, conclude effectively and participate constructively in the discussion that follows.

Think About It

Imagine that you have been asked to give a 10-minute seminar presentation to your classmates on **"The Role of Technology in Open and Distance Learning in Nigeria."**

What would you say first? How would you arrange your main points? What evidence would you use? How would you conclude the presentation?

Continue reading to find out how an effective seminar presentation is organised.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- **describe** the main features of a seminar and explain how a seminar is inaugurated and conducted;
- **identify** effective ways of beginning a seminar presentation;
- **organise** the main ideas of a seminar talk in a logical sequence;
- **apply** appropriate techniques for concluding a seminar presentation;
- **explain** appropriate ways of participating in a seminar discussion; and
- **demonstrate** effective seminar presentation techniques through oral presentation activities.

4.3 Inauguration of the Seminar

The seminar is usually opened by a distinguished person invited by the organisers.

A specimen inaugural speech is given below:

"I welcome you all to this seminar on 'The problems of pollution in the Cities.' Your expertise in environmental studies will contribute to finding a solution to the major problem that threatens city life today. The keynote address, I notice, is to be given by Dr. N. Kumara Swamy, who has been associated with environmental studies in our country for the last four decades. His studies on the recycling of chemical waste in urban industries have earned him a worldwide reputation.

"A number of distinguished scholars are going to take part in the seminar. I have great pleasure in inaugurating this seminar and wish you success in your deliberations."

4.4 How a Seminar is Conducted

A seminar may continue for two or three days and be divided into several sessions. Each session covers a broad aspect of the topic, and related papers are presented at the same session. Each session is presided over by someone distinguished in the field. He invites the participants to present their papers. After each paper, he invites questions and

comments, and thus a discussion follows. He also moderates the discussion and prevents it from becoming a mere verbal duel or heated argument.

If you are giving a seminar talk or reading a paper, you must think of your main points, the order in which you will present them and the time at your disposal. You must avoid being monotonous and tiresome. You may, if you like, project the main points of your paper onto a screen by using an overhead projector, if one is available. Use charts or diagrams where needed. Use any audio-visual aids that you consider useful.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Say which of the following are correct statements:

Seminars are held to give experts in a subject an opportunity to discuss personal problems.
One of the aims of a seminar is to arrive at a solution to a problem in a particular field.
One of the aims of a seminar is to make recommendations to improve a system.
Discussions following a seminar talk must be heated and forceful.
The paper must be read objectively in a cold, dispassionate voice.

4.5 The Beginning of a Seminar Talk or Paper

'Here's the beginning of a paper at a seminar on Distance Education in India by Prof. G. Ram Reddy, Ex. Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University. The paper is entitled 'Distance Education: What, Why and How?' Notice the way in which the paper begins.

Example

Distance Education: What, Why and How? Introduction
In this paper, I would like to deal with three aspects of distance education:

(a) What is Distance Education?
(b) Why Distance Education in a country like India? and
(c) How of it? i.e. the forms of Distance Education in this country.

Though Distance Education has been catching up very fast in all countries, developed and developing, socialist and capitalist, western and non-western, it is still 'little known and little studied.' As Keegan points out, "Even a cursory reading of educational literature shows that distance systems are usually ignored. It merits not a paragraph in most volumes of educational philosophy, in guides to administrative process or in analyses of didactic strategy." However, its importance is being realised all over the world, and certainly in developing countries, more by policymakers than by educationists.
What is Distance Education?

What, then, is distance education? There is no one meaning of the term 'Distance Education.' It is known by a variety of names, viz., 'Correspondence Education,' 'Home Study,' 'Independent Study', 'External Study,' 'Off-campus Study', 'Open Learning,' 'Open Education,' etc. There is, what Fred Jevons calls, "a bewildering nomenclature". In Australia, its official name is External System. "This description is not very much appreciated because it carries vibes of the old London external system, which usually provides examination but not teaching." This system is also very prevalent in India. In some countries, the term 'Correspondence Education' is widely used. But it has increasingly been replaced by the term 'Independent Study' in North America. 'Home Study' is sometimes used to describe correspondence programmes offered by private schools in both North America and Europe. This is also disliked by many, mainly because some correspondence institutions have only a profit motive, particularly the private ones. No doubt, some of them enjoy a very good reputation, but several of them are far from it. Further, several correspondence institutions depend only on one medium, viz., the print material. Distance Education today places emphasis not only on print media but also on other media. In fact, a multi-media approach is the cornerstone of the Distance Education system.

(From Studies in Distance Education, edited by B. N. Koul and others. I. O./IGNOU 1988).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Why, according to the speaker, is it important to discuss Distance Education?
2. What is the difference between correspondence education and Distance Education?
3. Write a beginning in 100 words for a paper on "Prevention of Deforestation".

4.6 Logical Development of the Talk or Paper

As pointed out in section 3.3 in the introduction, the speaker has drawn our attention to the main concerns of his paper and defined Distance Education. He then discusses why Distance Education is important for India, the second major concern of his paper.

Why Distance Education?

Now, let me turn to the second question: the need for Distance Education in India. If we look at the educational scene in this country during the last four decades, certain trends are clearly visible, and the need for Distance Education arises as a result of the consequences of these trends. Broadly, the trends are:

(a) inequalities in education, i.e. the question of access to education;
(b) quality of education; and
(c) relevance.

Access to Education

Let us first examine the issue of access to education. It is true that over the last 40 years, there has been a remarkable expansion in education, particularly at the tertiary level. I do not think that in any other walk of life such a large-scale expansion has taken place. For instance, in 1951, there were only 22 universities in this country; today, there are about 160. Similarly, the number of colleges has gone up from 695 to 5,482, and the number of students has increased from 1,74,000 to 35,38,000. The expenditure on education has risen from Rs 114 crores in 1950-51 to over 6000 crores in 1948-85.

Despite this increase, the proportion of tertiary level student population in relative age groups, i.e. 17-23 years, is only 4.8% which compress very unfavourably with some of the countries like Philippines (25), South Korea (18), Japan (30) U.S.S.R. (18) and U.S.A. (55). These figures show that higher education in India lags far behind the above countries.

With the expansion of the school system, the number of students going to higher education is likely to increase. Even a conservative estimate for 2000 A.D. indicates that the likely enrolment in higher education is expected to double, i.e., roughly 61/2 million students. There are also well-reasoned estimates that enrolment will quadruple in the next 20 years, as it did in the last 20 years. It is clear that we will face a crisis of growing intensity unless the present problems are tackled.
I have quoted these figures to impress upon you the nature and types of inequalities in higher education in this country. This certainly is not a happy state of affairs. It is not in the interest of the development of the country, nor is it possible to live with this unjust system. It is certainly not possible in a democratic society that wants to improve the standard of living of its people. As a result, the pressure to expand educational opportunities will grow. If we look at the situation in the states, we find that tremendous pressure is being exerted on governments to open more and more institutions of higher learning, whether colleges or universities, and very few democratic governments can afford to resist such pressure, even assuming that such resistance is desirable. Experience shows that even strong democratic governments have yielded to and expanded the system. Therefore, the expansion of educational facilities becomes necessary.

Assuming that more educational facilities have to be provided in the country, what should be the approach to meet such demands? Obviously, one approach is to establish more and more institutions of higher learning, and that is how governments have been responding to this demand over the last four decades in this country. Now we see that even this phenomenal expansion has not met the demands, and inequalities continue to exist. This is mainly because of our approach to education. All in all, expansion meant increasing the number of formal educational institutions, which are subject to certain rigidities. For instance, formal systems have the following four characteristics:

(a) Teachers – full-time teachers to teach;
(b) Students – full-time learners to learn;

(c) Place – class rooms where learning can take place; and
(d) Interaction – face-to-face interaction between the teacher and the taught.

All of these are considered essential attributes for imparting education, and if they are not present, education cannot take place. Many in the population cannot afford to be full-time learners. At the same time, there are governments that cannot afford to employ full-time teachers and provide costly infrastructure in the form of buildings.

Formal education is very costly. As a result, large-scale expansion becomes very difficult. Even if society is prepared to provide these, there are sections in the population who cannot take advantage of them. The inevitable conclusion one draws from this is that, if large and varied sections of the population are to have access to education, our approach to it must change. We have to think of alternative systems that can supplement the existing system. Distance education is one such alternative, and it has the potential to transcend the barriers of time and space.
(From Studies in Distance Education)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1(i) What focal points does the speaker draw our attention to in this section of his paper?
(ii) Give two figures to prove that there has been an increase in educational facilities since 1951.
(iii) How can a democratic government deal with inequalities in higher education?
(iv) Why is it not possible to have a large-scale expansion of educational facilities through the formal education system?
(v) Draw up a table to show the increase in educational facilities and student enrolment from 1951 to the present time (that is, the time when the talk was given).

Here's an excerpt from the next section of the paper. It discusses a particular feature of the formal education system. Read it carefully and answer the questions that follow:

Relevance

Another criticism of our educational system concerns its relevance. That universities and other institutions of higher education are not only elitist but also irrelevant to the social needs is the often-repeated comment. This may be an exaggerated picture, but the fact remains that there is some substance in such a criticism. Where we need more technical education, we are providing more arts courses; where we need more intermediate-level technologies, we are producing more engineers and doctors; and where we need more continuing education to update the skills and knowledge of working people, we are providing more general education. In a changing society, more opportunities need to be provided for continuing and extension education. Very few institutions today provide opportunities for such education.

In the preceding paragraphs, I have explained some of the problems in our present-day educational system. To recapitulate, there are problems of access, quality and relevance.

Unless we reorganise and reorient our educational system, we will not be able to overcome them. We therefore have to think of alternative strategies. One such strategy, which is catching on all over the world, is Distance Education. Thanks to modern communication technologies, we can provide access to education to a large number of people, improve the quality of education, and offer relevant courses.
(From Studies in Distance Education)

(i) Name three courses which can help update the skills and knowledge of working people.

(ii) Each major section in a talk must be followed by a summary of the main points discussed. What sentences above do this?

4. In the next section of the talk, the speaker discusses which sections of society will benefit from Distance Education. Read this excerpt carefully.

The University Grants Commission also encouraged the starting of correspondence courses and said that these courses were expected to cater for the following categories of students:

(i) Students who have to discontinue their formal education owing to pecuniary and other circumstances.
(ii) Students in remote geographical areas.
(iii) Students who have to discontinue their education because of a lack of aptitude and motivation, but who might later on become motivated.
(iv) Students who could not find a seat or do not wish to join a regular college or university department, although they had the necessary qualifications to pursue higher education.
(v) Individuals who look upon education as a life-long activity and might like to improve their knowledge in an existing discipline or acquire knowledge in new areas.
(vi) In-service persons.

(From Studies in Distance Education)
Now, say what features of the Open University system listed below will be especially helpful to the categories of people listed above.

The main features of open universities are:

(i) They are, like their conventional counterparts, autonomous bodies and are free to take their own decisions and formulate their courses.
(ii) They use multimedia for instructional purposes and electronic media as important components.
(iii) There is a strong student support service.
(iv) The material is prepared by teams of experts.
(v) Entry qualifications are flexible and relaxed.

(vi) One can study according to one's own pace and convenience.
(vii) There is uniformity in the quality of education, i.e. the students have access to the same quality of education. E.g., students living in remote areas will especially benefit from electronic media. Lessons and instructions can be broadcast to them on T.V. or Radio.

4.7 Concluding the Talk

The conclusion brings all the different sections of the talk together, and the main points are brought into proper relationship. An anecdote, a story or a quotation helps to clinch the talk effectively. This is how Prof.

G. Rama Reddy concludes the talk. He draws inspiration from mythology.
To conclude, I have described the concept, the need, the arrangements, and the organisational form of Distance Education in the country. The origin of Distance Education lies primarily in the philosophy that society has a responsibility to provide educational opportunities to those who, for one reason or another, cannot access the conventional system. There is the case of Ekalavya in mythology, who wanted to learn under the guru, Dronacharya, who, as we all know, refused to take him as a student because he was neither a Brahman nor a Kshatriya. However, Ekalavya was determined to learn, and what happened subsequently is known to all of us. The legend goes that Ekalavya built a figure in the image of Dronacharya and started practising archery. Subsequently, his skills in archery surpassed those of the best pupil of Dronacharya. What happened subsequently is not relevant here. The point, however, that needs to be made is that today a motivated learner cannot be and must not be ignored for any reason whatsoever. In those days, a Dronacharya could refuse to take an Ekalavya as a student, and the society would tolerate it. Today's democratic society cannot afford to overlook the interests of Ekalavyas, nor can Dronacharyas say 'no' to them. Distance Education and the Open Universities facilitate this. Open Universities are universities for the modern Ekalavyas. The availability of communication technologies makes this possible today. It is said that there was a time when, if a student wanted to learn, he had to go to Aristotle. Today, we have the means to take Aristotle to the student. Therefore, let us take full advantage of the technologies available for extending educational opportunities to all those who want to have access to them.
(From Studies in Distance Education)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Here is an extract from a newspaper about a proposed seminar on 'Child Bonded Labour'.
Write a suitable conclusion to a talk on the subject based on the points in this extract. (100 words)

Seminar on Child Bonded Labour
HT Correspondent

New Delhi, June 2. About 50 per cent of the 70 million children working in different industries in India today may come under the definition of child bonded labour, said the general secretary of Bandhua Mukti Morcha here today.

Addressing a Press conference, he said it is a sad comment on the sensibilities of our society that the phenomenon of child bonded labour has attracted very little attention. This most heinous crime against childhood and humanity is yet to be recognised as a desperate problem at all levels of our society, he added.

The South Asian region accounts for the highest incidence of child labour in the world, and India has the "lion's share". The majority of these poor children are engaged in the unorganised agricultural sector, followed by the carpet industry spread in Mirzpur. Bhadoi belt of Uttar Pradesh, which accounts for more than one lakh child workers.
The concentration of child labour can also be seen in the glass and bangle-making industry of Firozabad, UP; stone quarries and brick kilns; the lock industry of Aligarh (UP); the match and fireworks industry of Sivakasi (Tamil Nadu); and the diamond industry of Jaipur and Surat. Besides, it is common to find child workers employed in hotels and dhabas throughout the country, he added.

The Bandhua Mukti Morcha has decided to organise a five-day international seminar on 'Child Servitude in South Asia' here from June 30.
(From The Hindustan Times, 3 June '89)

4.8 Discussion

The discussion in a seminar talk might bring up a disagreement in views or take the form of a question seeking clarification. Since copies of the paper to be presented at the seminar are distributed to participants ahead of the session, you should read it and note any points you need clarified or disagree with. These points may then be raised during the discussion. Criticism must always be constructive and offered as a contribution to the study of the topic discussed.

Here is an excerpt from another paper entitled 'Support Services in Distance Education' presented by Prof. Bakhshish Singh at the same seminar. Read this excerpt carefully and see what questions might arise in your mind about the use of support services like audio, video, TV, and radio, library facilities and counselling (giving advice and tutorial help to the student). Ask yourself whether the speaker's recommendations are feasible in India.

Support Services in Distance Education
Audio cassettes and video tapes are also very effective teaching media. They have an advantage over the radio and TV in that they enable the learner to have control over the learning material; he can listen to or view the programmes at any time convenient to him. He can stop the cassette or videotape at any stage, go over any section of the cassette or tape as often as he needs and use it again and again for revision or recall. Phonograph records and Flexi discs are also good devices, which are cheaper and more

easily accessible. Educational film strips and films, too, could be very useful as effective media in the teaching-learning processes.

The telephone has great potential to provide two-way interaction between the learner and the teacher, and among the learners themselves. It is particularly useful when an institution has to deal with students scattered across vast areas and in countries with a shortage of specialists. Some of the latest innovations in telephones are Tele-tutoring and Tele-confessing. Tele-tutoring can be developed into a very useful student support service in the Distance Education system. The institutions that have adopted these innovations assign learners to telephone tutors, who can discuss their problems with the tutors over the phone. The learners and the tutors do not have to travel for interaction, seminars, etc.

Distance Education institutes in developing countries may not be in a position to make use of all the innovations in modern communication technology, but they should chalk out a phased programme for integrating these devices into their teaching-learning system to make it more effective. In the first phase, we should take immediate steps to adopt devices that are readily available and within the reach of our learners, e.g., Radio, Television, Telephone, Audio-Cassettes, and Video Tapes. In the second phase, we should try to develop the various adaptations of Radio, Television and Telephone. In the third phase, we should keep an eye on the future and work to develop the latest, most sophisticated communication technologies in collaboration with developed countries.

Study Centres

A network of study centres is vital to a distance education institute, providing useful support to students in their learning pursuits. Each study centre should have a counsellor who is competent to provide general counselling, advice, and guidance to students on the methodology of learning through the Distance Education system and on the general aspects of the various courses. He should also be able to provide the public in that area with detailed information and guidance on courses available at the institute that may be relevant to their needs. The centre should also have subject tutors who may be available to the students for consultation and guidance. These tutors could also handle the evaluation of students' assignments and teach at the face-to-face contact programmes. Tutorial support is crucial for learners and serves as a great morale booster. It helps them to overcome the feeling of isolation.

The study centre should also have a good library, audio and video equipment, a telephone and listening laboratory facilities. It should have suitable working hours that are convenient for students and must remain open on Sundays and holidays as well.

The study centres can also organise the distribution of course materials.
Some of the variations of study centres and face-to-face contact programmes tried by some Distance Education institutes in different countries are:

Mobile Learning Centres

Mobile Learning Centres, as devised by North Island College on Vancouver Island, Canada, are smaller, more compact versions of the static, conventional Study Centres. Each mobile unit has study carrels for about 4 students, a tutor's cabin, radio-telephone storage for files, library books, audiovisual viewing equipment for multiple viewing of different programmes by different students, a microcomputer station, and space for laboratory work. It is staffed by a single tutor who serves multiple roles, guiding diverse learners to study as independently as possible. However, he has the support of two other tutors – the subject tutor for evaluating students' assignments and the local telephone tutor for sorting out learners' problems that he cannot resolve.
Students can avail themselves of the services of the mobile learning centre by prior appointment. They are free to spend any length of time talking to the tutor individually or as a group, using resource materials, writing assignments, etc. These mobile units serve the purpose of publicity vans also and enthuse a number of persons in the areas visited to enrol for various courses. The mobile learning centre could form a very useful support service for Distance Learners, and should be especially suitable for developing countries.
(From Studies in Distance Education)

Did some questions arise in your mind on reading the excerpt above? Here is one that might have arisen:

'In our country, not many students have telephones at home. Also, the telephone service is unreliable because phones are often out of order. As a number of people need to use the telephone for important business activities and emergencies, it would be improper to use the phone for a long time to discuss an academic problem.'
The speaker can refute the points by saying:

'In my talk, I did say 'Distance Education institutes in the developing countries may not be in a position to make use of all the innovations of modern communication technology...'

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

1. State some other objections to the use of technology discussed in the excerpt above and give possible refutations. Put this in the form of a discussion.
2. If you were the person who gave the talk above, how would you answer this question: "How can people living in remote mountain and desert areas of India, where there are very poor transport facilities, make use of the study centres?" You may base your answer on the case of North Island College in Canada cited later in the paper. (100 words)

4.9 Summary

(i) A seminar is a gathering of experts who read papers on some important national or international affairs.

(ii) The seminar is sometimes inaugurated by a distinguished person who says a few words about the theme of the seminar and welcomes all the participants.
(iii) The seminar is organised into a number of different sessions. A particular aspect of the main theme or topic is addressed in each session.
(iv) Begin your papers by outlining the major concerns.
(v) Link the different aspects of your paper properly and logically.
(vi) Conclude by summarising the main points you have made.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks

1. In a seminar presentation, the speaker makes
(a) of the subject, gives the
(b) of it and presents his
(c) on it.
2. Conferences and Seminars bring
(d) ..... of a particular subject together to present
(e) of their views.
3. The methods of presentation of seminars are:
(f).....
(g)….....
(h). .....
(i). .....
(j). .....
4. The parts of a seminar paper include
(k)…….....
(l). .....
(m). .....
(n). .....

4.10 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

© Materials are adapted from: Indira Gandhi Open University. School of Health Sciences and School of Humanities. February 2001 (reprint) and July 1997 (reprint), HSTIT Functional English. FEG – 1 Foundation Course in English I

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UNIT 5 PUBLIC SPEECH MAKING

Unit structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Beginning a Public Speech
5.4 Developing the Body of the Speech
5.5 Concluding a Public Speech
5.6 Summary
5.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

5.1 Introduction

In the previous unit, you learned about a seminar presentation. A seminar presentation is usually delivered to an audience with a particular academic or professional interest in the subject. Public speaking is broader. A public speaker may address people from different educational, professional, social and cultural backgrounds.

Public speaking, therefore, requires more than knowledge of the subject. The speaker must be able to introduce the subject appropriately, organise ideas logically, maintain the audience's attention, and conclude the speech effectively.

In Nigeria, the way a public speech begins may also be influenced by the nature of the occasion and the people present. At formal public events, for example, appropriate recognition of dignitaries and observance of protocol are important aspects of speech delivery.

In this unit, you will study the major stages involved in making an effective public speech. You will examine how to begin a speech, develop its main points, maintain audience attention, and conclude effectively. You will also study a Nigerian example of a formal welcome address and identify the language features that make it suitable for oral presentation.

As you study the unit, pay attention not only to **what the speaker says**, but also to **how the speaker says it**. Effective public speaking depends on organisation, audience awareness, appropriate language, emphasis and delivery.

Activity

Think of a speech you have heard recently at a graduation ceremony, wedding, political gathering, school event, religious programme or public meeting. What made the speech interesting or memorable?

Continue reading to find out the features that make a public speech effective.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- begin a public speech appropriately;
- develop the main points of a public speech;
- carry the audience along as you make the speech; and
- conclude a public speech effectively.

5.3 Beginning a Public Speech

Making a public speech in Nigeria is quite different from making one in another country. In the previous unit, we used the example of a seminar presentation in India. We dare not use such examples in public speech in Nigeria. The socio-cultural context of a country determines how a speech is presented.

In Nigeria, protocol (official recognition and respect) is very important. To illustrate public speech in Nigeria, we will use a special address delivered by the National Coordinator of the National Open University of Nigeria at the opening ceremony of the course materials development meeting held in Lokoja on 4th March, 2002.

Welcome Address by the National Coordinator, National Open University of Nigeria (NOU) at the NOU Opening
Ceremony of the Course Materials Development Meeting held at the Banquet Hall of Kogi State, Lokoja, on 4 March, 2002

Protocols

The Executive Governor of Kogi State, His Excellency Prince Abubakar Audu
The Honourable Minister of Education, Professor Babalola Borishade. The Honourable Minister of State for Education, Alhaji Bello Usman, Tafidan Gusau.

The Chairman, Senate Committee on Education, who is also the Chairman of the Occasion, Senator Dr Alex Kadiri, and the Chairman of the House Committee on Education, Dr Garba Matazu.

The Deputy Governor of Kogi State, His Excellency Chief Patric Adaba The Special Adviser to Mr President on Education, Chief S.K. Babalola, Distinguished Senators and Members of the National Assembly, and especially those who are from this state and have found time to come to their grassroots to support this occasion Permanent, Federal Ministry of Education Members of the Kogi State Executive Council Members of the Kogi State House of Assembly Chairpersons and Chief Executives of Federal Parastatals Directors of the Federal Ministry of Education and other Ministries International Development Partners, especially our Experts from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Vancouver BC Canada Distinguished Participants
Friends, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen.

As the Executive Governor has the singular privilege of welcoming you to his State, my brief is relatively simple. I warmly welcome you all to this historic occasion that has brought over 125 top-rate academics from Nigeria's institutions of higher learning and 3 International Experts from the Commonwealth of Learning to Lokoja, the Capital of Kogi State, for a one-month-long course on materials and Instructional Development for the National Open University of Nigeria.

Some questions that might agitate people's minds regarding why we are here include three significant ones, such as 'What is open and distance learning?' 'Why Open University?', 'Why Lokoja out of the 36 state capitals?

It is often said that if one thinks that education is very expensive, try ignorance. This seems to epitomise the situation Nigeria has found itself in since the opening on July 22, 1983, of the first National Open University, which was suspended by a budgetary pronouncement made by General Buhari on April 25, 1984. For a country of Nigeria's size and population, mass education has to take root in the implementation of the various aspects of the National Policy on Education. To fulfil the promise of providing Education for All, it will be difficult, and perhaps impossible, to provide classroom-based, time-dependent education. The cost is simply prohibitive, just as its logistics are daunting and horrendous. The only viable solution is to consider a cost-effective, efficient, and quality-oriented alternative that allows as many as wish to undertake learning without any hassle whatsoever. It has been almost 19 years since the first National Open University. The Nation has now realised how much we have lost and continue to lose if we tread the path that keeps a large segment of our population illiterate. Imagine the cost to this nation of the 19 years we have lost, and how expensive the ignorance those years have brought to individuals and the nation has been. Nigeria today can only provide tertiary education to less than 20 per cent of those who require it, while over 60 million Nigerians are still illiterate. No nation can claim to be responsive to the needs of its citizens without building on education as the most important foundation for national, corporate, and personal development. Education is the key to becoming a clever country, and the guide towards becoming a Knowledge-based Society. However, we know that no nation can afford to provide education to all its citizens through the traditional face-to-face classroom model.

As a result, all nations of the world, especially developing countries, desirous of a cost-effective, convenient, conducive, efficient, and comprehensive way to educate all their citizens, have embraced open and distance learning. ODL has become a mainstream activity, and Nigeria has no choice but to embrace it, considering our population, socio-economic needs, and all current development indicators. It is in this regard that President Olusegun Obasanjo has told the nation, 'Enough of our groping in the dark and wallowing in ignorance and illiteracy, and that it is time to face the issue of enhanced access to and equitable provision of educational facilities to all Nigerians very squarely'. The current administration, through the dedication of our indefatigable Honourable Minister of Education, has continued to pursue Education for All and take elitism out of education.

The only way to do this is for the country to embark upon open and distance learning. This is a time-tested mode of teaching in which learners are removed from the teacher in time and space. It uses a variety of media and technologies to provide and/or improve access to good-quality education for large numbers of learners wherever they may be. Open and distance learning accomplishes a number of goals, including: access and equity in educational opportunities, meeting special needs of workplace training, moving people to where the jobs are, internationalisation of tertiary education curricula, and ameliorating the effect of internal and external brain drain in tertiary institutions.

It is therefore not difficult to see the need for restarting the National Open University at a time when the number of those who need to be educated continues to increase beyond bounds, just as it is becoming extremely expensive for the Government, both State and Federal, to fund education through the traditional mode of instructional delivery. With an Open University, thousands of Nigerians will realise their dreams of tertiary education in a system that remains open 24 hours a day and 365 days in a year and never threatened by either ASUU/NASU or other strikes, has no student demonstration, has no cultism, takes off the anxiety from parents of how to educate their children without breaking a bank; and maintains the family ties because learners are not necessarily required to relocate.

What has Lokoja got to do, therefore, with open and distance learning to warrant our assembling here today? For those who might not have considered it, there are very many reasons why Lokoja is central to the national movement to re-establish the Open University in Nigeria. I will mention only three due to time constraints, to illustrate the genesis and journey so far in open and distance education in Nigeria. First, Lokoja occupies a historic place in the making of a nation called Nigeria today. Lokoja was the first administrative and commercial capital of Nigeria when Lord Lugard became the Governor General of Nigeria, following Mungo Park and the Richard and John Lander expeditions along the River Niger in the 1830s. It opened up the city to all Nigerians and allowed all and sundry to draw from the fountain of the Niger with an insatiable quest for knowledge and discovery. Second, Lokoja was a prominent centre for the slave trade in the 18th and 19th centuries due to its strategic location and later served as a centre for freedom. The late Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther spearheaded an antislavery crusade in Nigeria and erected the Iron of Liberty at a spot where slaves were set free in Lokoja. At the same spot, he established the first primary school in Northern Nigeria for all Nigerians seeking freedom from ignorance. The third and also significant place of Lokoja was its role as a practice ground for distance education by many Northern Nigerian Emirs in the 1800s. During the colonial era, a number of Northern feudal lords who vehemently opposed colonial rule and the European imperialists' domination of their territories were banished to Lokoja as punishment. What the Colonialists did not realise was that these Emirs used distance education to keep in constant touch with their subjects and were continually a step ahead of the colonialists, who were continually amazed by how informed and intelligent the people they sought to colonise were. Notable among the deposed Emirs who perfected the traditional form of distance learning were the late Emirs of Bida, Mallam Mohammed Bashir, deposed in 1901; the

late Emir of Zaria, Mallam Aliyu Dansidi; and the late Emir of Kano, Mallam Aliyu Abdullahi, deposed in 1903. These forerunners of the Nigerian style of open and distance learning are buried in Lokoja and should constitute an interesting tourist attraction.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, when the Honourable Minister approved our holding the first Course Writing and Instructional Material Development Meeting in Lokoja, he must have realised that we would be bringing open and distance learning back to its origin in Nigeria.

And here we are in Lokoja, defying the intense heat at this time of the year to write 183 courses and adapt 235 others in 54 programmes carefully chosen to kick-start the re-establishment of the National Open University in Lagos. This time around we are committed to make the National Open University second to none in Africa and will rival the best in the world through the courses we shall develop in this town. Our one-month workshop is only three days old and we have already started to see the signs of success, commitment, excitement and enthusiasm by all.

I would therefore like to use this opportunity to thank all of you for coming to witness history in the making. I thank all those who have helped with the arrangements for this workshop, especially my small core of staff, who have found it difficult to work with a Nigerian who has adopted the Chinese way of working around the clock. Many organisations and International Development Partners have supported this Workshop. Notable amongst them are the Commonwealth of Learning, which sent us three world experts, and UNESCO, which has promised us lots of support. Permit me to thank the Education Tax Fund (ETF), which boldly decided to sponsor this Workshop at a time when all lights seemed dim in the search for funding. Let me thank all our distinguished members of the House of Assembly who have come to demonstrate their support for the course of educating the ordinary people

Nigerians who constitute the bulk of their electorate. I must not fail to thank the President of Nigeria for his visionary leadership to pursue, at all costs, education for all, especially through distance learning. The Honourable Minister of Education, Professor Borishade, has spent sleepless nights with a lot of groups and committees set up to work out the restarting of the National Open University so tirelessly that he can now recite anything connected with ODL by heart, even though he is a nuclear engineer. To demonstrate his unflinching interest in the project, he has decided to spend three days with us at this Workshop. I cannot quantify the enormous support and unreserved enthusiasm with which the Kogi State Government has showered us since we began planning this Workshop. Both the Deputy Governor and the Governor, at different times, personally drove to the Confluence Beach Hotel to ensure we were comfortable. Yesterday, during a visit to our Hotel, the Governor made all the state's facilities available to us and insisted that he would allow us to function only in the best possible atmosphere. He therefore democratically insisted that we must be his guests at the Opening Ceremony by flinging the doors of this Banquet Hall open. Finally, I must

thank the Almighty God for making today a reality in the journey we have embarked upon in taking the distance out of education.

Today, a major educational milestone has been reached, and irrevocable and irreversible steps are being taken to make education openly accessible, affordable, and equitable for all Nigerians.

With the support of all of you here and the goodwill of all Nigerians, we will continue to march towards the goals of Education For All, anywhere, anytime, and through any appropriate and convenient means of communication.

God bless Nigeria. Thank you very much.
Professor Olugbemiro Jegede
(Source: National Open University and Distance Learning, 2002)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Read the beginning of this welcome address and provide your observations regarding the way the speech started. Use the space below. You may listen to the speech in your cassette provided in the study package.

Have you completed the exercise? Then go to the discussion that follows. Compare your responses with the ones I give below:

(i) The speech started with a long list of people to recognise before the speech actually began. This is called a protocol list. In an important public speech in Nigeria, you must observe these protocols; if not, you may be regarded as impolite, uncultured and undiplomatic. The protocols are ordered by the importance of the people you expect to be present at the gathering. How many people were listed in that speech? About 16 of them in all were given special recognition.
(ii) You must always end with Ladies and Gentlemen. This is to give prominence to the gathering and to show that those who gathered are responsible people.
(iii) You give the background of what the speech is about. This background must be captivating, e.g.

As the Executive Governor has the singular privilege of welcoming you to the State, my brief is relatively simple.

The background component of the speech should include a word of welcome, the reason for the gathering, some questions or issues to be discussed in the speech and the premise on which the speech will be based.

The beginning of a public speech is important because it establishes the relationship between the speaker, the audience, and the occasion. In formal Nigerian settings, appropriate recognition of important persons and observance of protocol may be

necessary before the speaker proceeds to the main purpose of the speech. The following figure illustrates the basic progression from protocol and welcome to the introduction of the main subject.

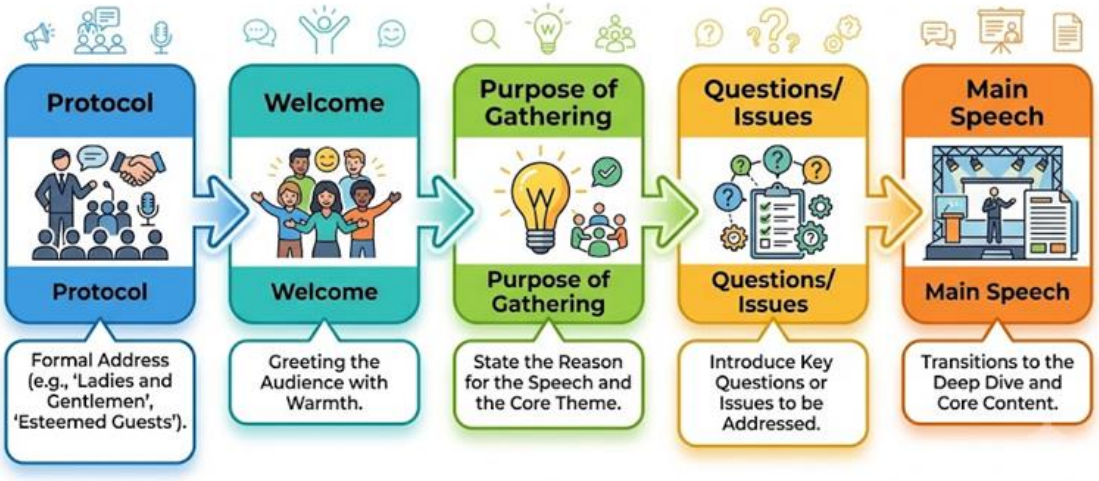

Figure 5.1: Basic Structure for Beginning a Public Speech

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

(a) What were the words of welcome in the National Coordinator's Speech?
(b) What are the questions raised?
(c) On what premise will the speech be based?
(d) What are the reasons for gathering?

If you have answered these questions, turn to my discussion.
Let's discuss the questions.

(i) Words of welcome

I warmly welcome you to this historic occasion.

(ii) Reason for gathering

.... for a one-month-long course on the materials and instructional development of the Open University of Nigeria.

(iii) Questions for thought

(a) What is Open and Distance Learning?
(b) Why Open University?
(c) Why Lokoja out of all the 36 state capitals?

The search questions prepare listeners' minds for what to expect in the speech.

On what premise will the speech be based:

(i) If education is very expensive, try ignorance.
(ii) For a country the size and the population of Nigeria, mass education has to take firm roots...

(iii) To fulfil the promise of education for all...

5.4 Body of the Speech

In speech, quite different from essay writing, the body of what is to be said should be presented as if it is to be spoken. It should have personal pronouns such as *I, we, he, they,* etc. It should also be linked together by *spoken expressions* such as *As I'm going to start the lecture, My first point, The first thing we will be considering in this speech or talk is...* But like any other writing, a speech meant to be presented orally should be sequential. The order must be logical, avoid jargon that most of the audience may not understand, capture the listener's attention, and be easy to follow.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Let's turn to the speech, the welcome address by the National Coordinator of the Open University of Nigeria, once again, to search for the following qualities of speech written to be presented orally:

(a) spoken expression
(b) logical presentation of ideas
(c) absence of jargons
(d) attention getting
(e) easy to follow.

List examples of all of these in the speech. Use the space below.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Turn to the discussion that follows this exercise once you have completed the exercise.

Do you find some of the characteristic features of public speech in the body of the welcome address? Let's find out.

(a) Spoken expressions

1. However, *we know that* no nation can afford to provide education to all its citizens through the traditional classroom – based face-to-face mode.
2. What has Lokoja got to do, therefore, with open and distance learning to warrant our assembling here today...? *I will mention* only three due to time constraints...
3. *Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,* when the Honourable Minister approved that we hold the first course Writing and Instructional Materials Development Meeting in Lokoja, he must have realised that we would be bringing open and distance learning home to its origin in Nigeria.
4. *And here we are in Lokoja,* defying the intense heat at this time of the year...

5. *I would therefore like* to use this opportunity to thank all of you for coming to witness history in the making.
6. *I thank all those who have* helped with all arrangements... especially my small core of staff...
7. *Permit me to thank* the Education Tax Fund (ETF) for boldly deciding to sponsor this workshop.
8. *I must not fail to thank* the President of Nigeria for his visionary leadership...
9. *I cannotquantify* the enormous support and unreserved enthusiasm with which the Kogi State government has showered...
10. Yesterday, on a visit to *our Hotel,* the Governor placed all facilities of the state at *our disposal...*
11. Finally, *I must thank* the Almighty God for making today a reality...

All instances of spoken expressions are cited in the examples above. Cross-check them with the ones you identified. The spoken expressions cycled made the welcome address read like a public speech.

Logical Presentation of Ideas

The welcome address was presented in a logical manner. It systematically answered the questions raised at the beginning of the speech throughout the subsequent paragraphs. The second paragraph illustrates the internal cohesion of the idea presented in the 2nd paragraph: if one thinks education is very expensive, try ignorance.

(i) National Open University was suspended
(ii) mass education has to take firm roots
(iii) cost of classroom-based and time-dependent education prohibitive
(iv) the only viable solution is to consider a cost-effective alternative
(v) loss in keeping the part of a large segment of our population illiterate, with tertiary education to less than 20%.

The second paragraph, as analysed above, starts with a topic sentence. The points raised by the speaker under the topic sentence are used to support the very expensive nature of the lack of mass education. No doubt this is a very logical presentation of ideas.

Absence of Jargons

The speaker was aware that he was speaking to a mixed-bag audience. Thus, he selected his words very carefully to avoid the jargon typical of the field of Distance Education.

Attention Getters

The speaker used many expressions in the welcome address to capture and hold his audience's attention. These include:

The only way to do this is for the country to..... It is therefore *not difficult to see...*
What has Lokoja got to do, therefore, with open and distance learning...
For those who might not have considered it first, *Lokoja* occupies...
Second, Lokoja was a prominent...

The third and also significant place of Lokoja...
Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.....
And here *we are in Lokoja...*
Today, a major educational milestone

In speech situations, whenever a speaker draws attention to a particular thing or to his audience, he is trying to wake the audience up and help them follow his speech. For example, the mere mention of *the only way to do this* draws attention to an important fact. *Not difficult to see* that the audience tries to find out why it is not difficult to see. The repetition of *"Lokoja" draws the audience's attention to its importance*. Anytime words like *first, second,* and third are mentioned, the audience is anxious to hear the point that follows. The words are meant to draw attention to the fact that an important point is about to be mentioned.

Easy to follow
By drawing attention to major points, asking an important question, answering it, and giving a point and supporting it with evidence, the speaker makes his speech easy to follow. The voice, the rising and falling tones, and the use of voice to signal emphasis are desirable in making a speech easy to follow.

The body of a public speech should guide the audience from one idea to another in a clear and logical manner. Unlike a purely written academic essay, a speech is intended to be heard, so the speaker needs to use expressions that signal transitions, emphasise important points, and maintain audience attention. The following figure illustrates the relationship among the key elements that make the body of a public speech effective.



Figure 5.2: Key Elements of an Effective Public Speech

5.5 Concluding a Public Speech

A public speech is not successful until it is concluded well.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Read the concluding part of the speech or listen to it on your audio recorder and bring out the ways the speaker concluded the speech.

Do not turn to the discussion of this exercise until you have attempted it.
Now that you have completed the exercise, let's discuss the concluding parts of the speech of the National Coordinator, National Open University of Nigeria.

As you would have noticed, the concluding parts of the speech were presented in stages.

Stage 1: thanking those who had made the occasion and the event possible.

State 2: establishing the irrevocable as well as irreversible steps taken to make education accessible to all.

Stage 3: soliciting the support of all to march ahead towards the goals of Education for all...

Stage 4: final concluding salutation and prayer that God bless Nigeria. Thank you very much.

What do you learn from the way this speech is concluded? The concluding parts of public speech should have:

(i) appreciation component which recognises the contributions of various people
(ii) the major focus that the speaker wants the audience to take home
(iii) valedictory statement in the form of a final salutation and prayer.

Public speeches should never end abruptly. It must not leave the audience confused. The final thing to be taken home must be emphasised. It should motivate the listeners to want to hear more. It must have a lasting impression on the audience.

5.6 Summary

In this unit, you have learned the essential steps for delivering an effective public speech. You have examined how to begin a public speech by observing appropriate protocols, welcoming the audience, introducing the purpose of the gathering, and raising questions that prepare listeners for the main discussion.

You have also learned how to develop the body of a public speech in a logical and sequential manner. A good public speech should use spoken expressions, avoid unnecessary jargon, maintain the attention of the audience, and present ideas in a manner that is easy to follow. The use of questions, examples, supporting evidence, emphasis, and appropriate voice modulation can help the speaker maintain audience interest.

Finally, you have learnt how to conclude a public speech effectively. A good conclusion should bring the major ideas together, emphasise the key message the audience should remember, appreciate those who contributed to the occasion where appropriate, and end with a suitable final salutation or prayer. A well-planned conclusion gives the speech a clear and lasting impression.

The major points to remember are:

1. A public speech should begin appropriately, taking account of the audience, occasion, and relevant protocols.
2. The introduction should welcome the audience, establish the purpose of the speech, and prepare listeners for the main discussion.
3. The body of the speech should present ideas logically and sequentially.
4. Spoken expressions, attention-getting devices, appropriate language, and voice modulation make a speech easier to follow.
5. The conclusion should summarise or reinforce the main message and leave a lasting impression on the audience.

5.7 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

The Audio and Video Recording of the Welcome Address of the National Coordinator, National Open University and Distance Education, Professor Olu Jegede.

MODULE 9

Unit 1 Articles, Concord and Sentences
Unit 2 Tenses
Unit 3 Gerunds and Participles
Unit 4 The Active, Passive and the Infinitive
Unit 5 Modal Auxiliaries

UNIT 1 ARTICLES, CONCORD AND SENTENCES

Unit Structure

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Learning Outcomes
1.3 Main Content
1.3.1 Articles
1.3.2 Concord of Number and Person
1.3.3 Types of Sentences
1.4 Summary
1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
1.6 Possible Answer to Self Assessment Exercise

1.1 Introduction

Have you ever wondered why we say *"a book" in one sentence but "the book"* in another? Or why do we say *I am*, but *they are*? What about the different ways we put words together to form statements, questions, commands and other types of sentences? These may seem like small details, but they are important to effective communication in English.

In this last module, Module 4, of this course, we shall be treating another very wide topic on grammar and usage. Grammar concerns the rules and structure of English, while usage refers to how these structures affect how we use English in real communication.

In this unit, you will learn about three important areas of English grammar: **articles, concord and sentences**. We begin with articles, such as *a, an* and *the*, which are small words but play an important role in making our meaning clear. We then move to concord, which concerns agreement between words in a sentence, especially between the subject and the verb. Finally, we examine the English sentence and some of its major types.

As you work through the unit, you will encounter examples and exercises that will help you recognise these grammatical features and use them more accurately. The discussion is intended to give you a useful foundation. If you wish to explore these grammatical

items further, you can consult some of the grammar books available in libraries and other learning resources in Nigeria.
So, get ready to look more closely at some of the small but important features that make English sentences clear, accurate and meaningful.

Getting Started!
English is a language that is structured in its own peculiar way. The language has many parts. These include *nouns* (boy, girl, life, etc.), verbs (e.g. go, come, see, stand, etc), adjectives (e.g. tall, short, beautiful, ugly, etc.), *adverbs* (quickly, slowly, hurriedly, etc) and so on. A small but very important component of an English sentence is the article.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify and use the English articles correctly in sentences;
- recognise and use concord correctly in English;
- distinguish between the different types of English sentences;
- construct simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences correctly; and
- identify common errors involving articles, concord and sentence structure.

1.3 Exploring Articles, Concord and Sentence Structure

This section introduces three important aspects of English grammar: **articles, concord of number and person, and types of sentences**. The discussion provides examples and exercises to help you apply the rules in practical situations.

1.3.1 Articles

Think about this:

What is the difference between saying *"I saw a man" and "I saw the man"*? What does the choice of *a* and *the* tell the listener?

As you read this section, keep this question in mind. You will soon see how articles help speakers and writers indicate whether they are referring to something general or specific.

In this section, you will learn the use of articles.
a and *an* are called indefinite articles, and *the* is called the definite article.

Look at the following sentences:

1. Yesterday I met an old man in Lagos.

An *old man* here does not refer to any particular person; it is preceded by the indefinite article *an* (*An* is used before a vowel sound and *a* before a consonant sound).

2. The man standing there is a friend of mine.

Here, I am referring to a particular man, one who is 'standing there'. So I use the definite article *the*. As I have a number of friends and this man is one of them, I have used the indefinite article *"a" before "friend"*.

The three English articles may appear to be very simple words, but each has a particular function. The figure below provides a quick visual guide to the two broad categories of articles and will help you organise the examples that follow.

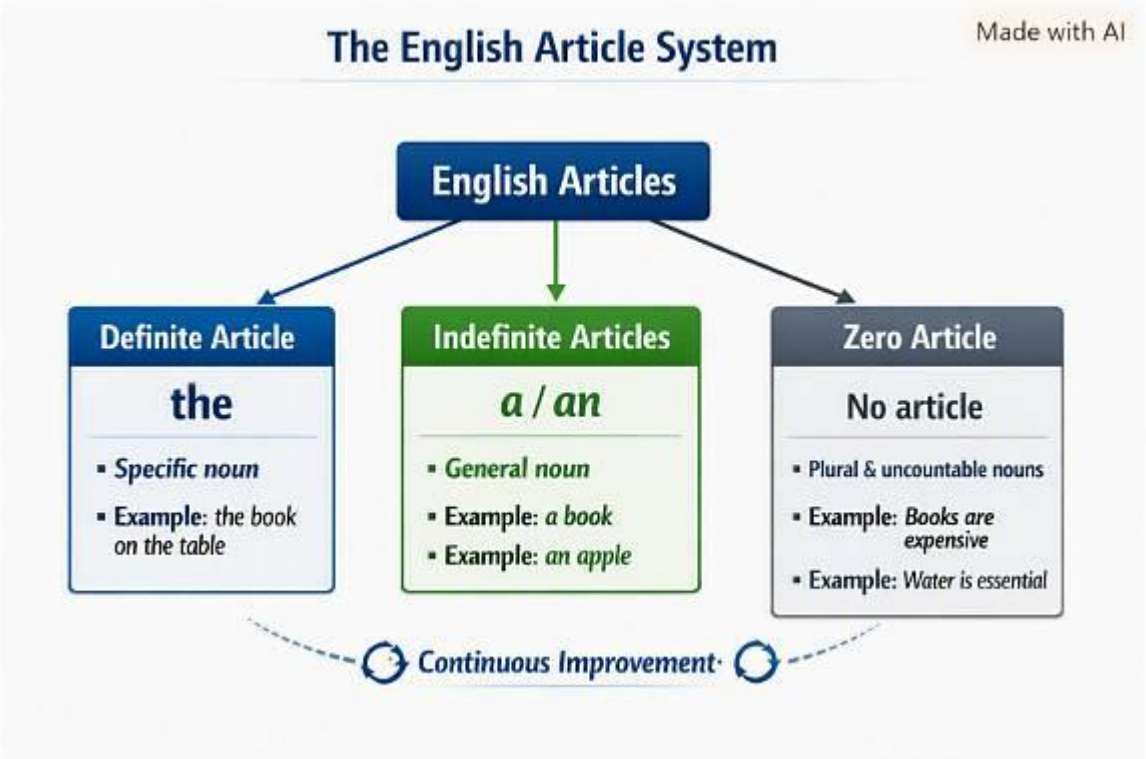

Figure 1.1: The English Article System

As shown in Figure 1.1, *a* and *an* are indefinite articles, while *the* is the definite article. The examples that follow will help you see how these forms work in actual sentences

You have now seen how articles are used to indicate whether a noun is being referred to generally or specifically. Try the following exercise to check whether you can apply these rules in sentences.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Fill the gaps with appropriate articles.

1. People standing there are on strike.

2. Are you going to post office?
3. When I was coming to school, ... bus came from behind and hit my bicycle.
4. Please, close door. It is rather cold today.
5. I had to stand for long time.
6. What beautiful shirt!
7. He belongs torich family.
8. One of our neighbours is teacher.
9. I thought you were honest man.
10. I am not good judge of poetry.
11. arrest of our leaders caused the riot.
12. Swaraj Bhaman was occupied by soldiers.
13. There was warrant for Shastriji's arrest.
14. ..... news spread quickly throughout
. city.
15. I was awakened by loud cry.

The common errors of the Nigerian users of English are to omit articles where they should be used and to use them where they should not be used. Always use the articles correctly.

Articles are only one part of accurate sentence construction. Another important feature is **concord**, which ensures that words in a sentence agree appropriately with one another. Let us now examine how this agreement works.

1.3.2 Concord of Number and Person

Think about this:

Which is correct: *She are coming* or *She is coming*? Why?

The difference between these two sentences illustrates the importance of concord. As you work through this section, pay attention to how the form of the verb changes according to the person and number of the subject.

This section will give you practice in what is called 'concord', that is, agreement in grammar, and the use of the verbs:

(i) *be* and its various forms *am, is, are, was, were,*
(ii) *do, does,*
(iii) *have, has.*

Let's see how these verbs are used.

(a) be

Look at the following sentences.

1. I *am* afraid I shall not be able to help you.
2. It *is* about this that I wish to speak.
3. What *is* the nature of this life of ours?
4. *Is* this simply part of the order of nature?
5. Man *is* the only creature that consumes without producing.
6. Our lives *are* miserable.
7. We *are* born, we *are* given just so much food.
8. Mr. Jones *was* too drunk to remember to shut the door.
9. Mrs. Jones *was* already snoring.
10. All the animals *were* now present.

Notice that verb **be** has the forms *am, is, are, was, were,* depending on the tense (present or past), the person (first second, or third), and the number (singular or plural) of the subject.

The verb *be* has several forms. Choosing the correct form depends largely on who or what the subject is and whether the subject is singular or plural. The table below provides a quick reference that you can use while studying the examples.

Table 1.1: Forms of *Be* According to Person, Number and Tense

Present Tense					Past Tense				
First Person		Second Person	Third Person		First Person		Second Person	Third Person	
Singular	Plural	Singular and Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular and Plural	Singular	Plural
Am	are	are	is	are	was	were	were	was	were

Notice from the table that *am, is, are, was,* and *were* are not interchangeable. Their use depends on the subject and the tense of the sentence. The examples that follow illustrate these differences in actual communication.

Here are some more examples:

1. am (used with I in the present tense)

Examples
I am a Nigerian. I am writing a book on Nigeria. (I am is written as I'm in an informal style.)

2. is (used with he, she, it and singular nouns, in the present tense.)

Examples
(i) Chief Obasanjo is the President of Nigeria.
(ii) My friend Ramesh is working hard these days.
(iii) It is very cold today.
(iv) English is spoken in a large number of countries.
(*is,* is often combined with the subject and written as 's in an informal style. Example: He's, she's it's)
3. are [used with plurals and with you (2nd person singular) in the present tense].

Examples
(i) You are very good at Mathematics.
(ii) My friends are at the Zoo today. We are also going there.
(iii) Children below five are allowed to travel free on Indian Railways.
(are is often combined with the subject and written as 're in an informal style Examples: You're,we're, they're)
4. was (used with i, he, she, it and with singular nouns, in the past tense.)

Examples
(i) I was in Zaria yesterday.
(ii) Einstein was a famous scientist.
(iii) Mohan was writing a letter when I went to see him.
(iv) The hall was decorated for yesterday's meeting.

5. were [used with plurals, and with you (2nd person singular in the past tense)

(i) We were expecting you yesterday.
(ii) You were not at home when I rang you up.
(iii) A lot of people were present at the meeting.
(iv) Ten people were killed in a bus accident yesterday.
6. When the grammatical subject is there, we use *is* or *are*, *was* or *were*, depending on the number of the true subject following the verb.

Examples
(i) There is a girl in that room.
(ii) There is a man hiding behind the bushes.
(iii) There are fifty students in this class.
(iv) There was an interesting programme on television yesterday evening.
(v) There were hundreds of people at the meeting this morning.

You have seen how *be* changes according to person, number and tense. Now test yourself by choosing the form that correctly agrees with each subject.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Fill in the blanks with the correct forms of the verb be (am, is, are, was, or were).

1. A dozen people..... injured in yesterday's accident.
2. you busy now?
3. I..... going to the cinema tonight.
4. There ..... many people in India even now who cannot read and write.
5. I..... surprised to meet Raj yesterday evening.
6. I think this .....the most interesting of Hardy's novels.

The same principle of agreement can be seen with the verb *do*. Let us see how *do* and *does* are used with different subjects.

(b) do

The present tense forms are *do* and *does*.
Of these, *do* is used with plurals and with *I* and *you*; *does* is used with the third person singular.

Examples

(i) I do not smoke cigarettes.
(ii) Do you play tennis?
(iii) We do not wish to hurt you in any way.
(iv) Shyam does not speak Bengali.
(v) Does your father know that you are here?

Check your progress by completing the following sentences with the appropriate form of *do*.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Fill in the blanks with *do* or *does*.

1. you know how to make a cup of tea?
2. I not think I can come with you.
3. your father work at the bank?
4. he comes to office by bus?
5. How we get there?

We can also observe this pattern with *have* and *has*. Although the forms are different, the basic principle remains the same: the verb must agree with its subject.

(c) have

The present tense forms are *have* and *has.*
Of these, *have* is used with plurals and with *I* and *you. Has* is used with the third person singular.

Examples
(i) My friends Sunil has dark hair.
(ii) I have bad cold.
(iii) Have you read *Animal Farm*?
(iv) I have not seen many English films.
(v) We have not been able to help him in any way.

Now apply what you have learnt about *have* and *has* by completing the following sentences.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Fill in the blanks with *have* or *has.*

(i) They got a school in their village?
(ii) Now, you learnt the secret of happiness.
(iii) I my breakfast at a restaurant.
(iv) The teacher advised me to improve my spelling.
(v) he arrived already?

How would you know whether a sentence is giving information, asking a question, giving an instruction or expressing strong emotion?

1.3.3 Types of Sentences

How would you know whether a sentence is giving information, asking a question, giving an instruction or expressing strong emotion?

As you read this section, look at the purpose of each sentence and the way its structure contributes to its meaning.

Sentences in English belong to fourmain types according to grammatical structure.

English sentences can be classified in more than one way. One useful way is to consider **what the sentence does**, while another is to consider **how the sentence is constructed**. The figure below brings these two perspectives together.

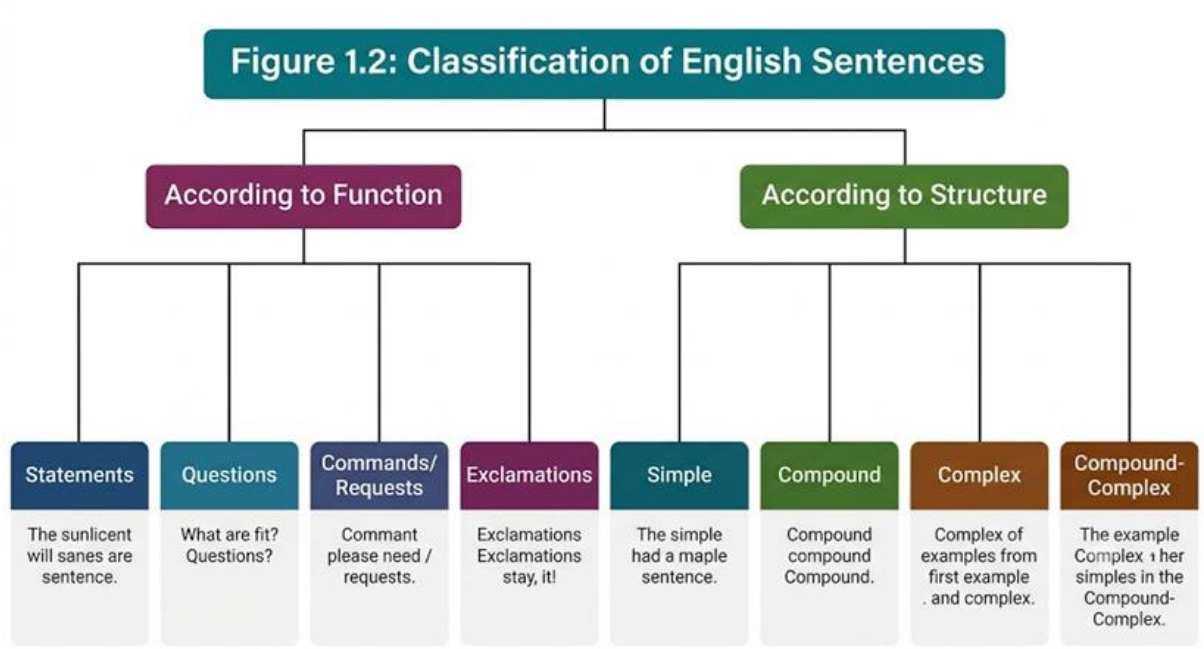

Figure 1.2: Classification of English Sentences

The figure provides an overview of the classifications discussed in this section. We will first consider sentences by function and then examine them by grammatical structure.

(a) Statements (assertive sentences)

Examples

(i) Work is necessary to keep the world going. (affirmative)
(ii) We do not generally speak to farmers 'growing' animals. (negative)

(b) Questions (interrogative sentences)

Examples

(i) Why do people work?
(ii) Does everyone do the same kind of work?

(c) Commands and Requests (imperative sentences)

Examples

(i) Think about these questions.
(ii) Look around the room you are in.

You have now examined sentences according to their grammatical function. The following exercise gives you an opportunity to identify these types in practice.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

To which of the grammatical types do the following sentences belong?
(i) They are all busy growing things. .....
(ii) Which set shall we put them in? .....
(iii) Think of all the different kinds of workers.
.....
(iv) Do not forget the last point. .....
(v) Why are there so many different kinds of workers?
.....
(vi) Each man built his own house and made what furniture he needed.
.....
(vii) Are some kinds of work more important than others?
.....

(d) Exclamatory Sentences
This sentence ends with an exclamation mark (!).

Example
You will see a surprise! Life is short!
Hey! Who goes there?

English sentences are also looked at from another perspective. This is in terms of their complexity: simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex sentences.

Sentences can also differ in the number and relationship of the clauses they contain. A sentence may express one complete idea, or it may combine several related ideas. Let us examine these structures through examples.

Examples
(a) Simple Sentences
(i) Susan is a girl.
(ii) Mathew is a man.
(iii) Abdullahi is intelligent.

All these sentences have only one subject (Susan, Mathew and Abdullahi) and only one predicate: *is a girl, is a man* and *is intelligent.*

(b) Compound Sentences
(i) Ngozi and her husband went home.
(ii) John came home, and Mary saw him.

All these sentences have more than one subject (Ngozi and her husband) and, in some cases, more than one predicate (*came home* and *saw him*).

(c) Complex Sentences

(i) The man that *you saw yesterday* was the former President of Nigeria.
(ii) This is the dress *which my first son* bought for me.

All these sentences have clauses (*that you saw yesterday* and *which my son bought for me*) embedded in the subject.

(d) Compound Complex Sentences

(i) John and Mary, whom you have let down and some food items have finally taken us to court.
(ii) Without any doubt, the agreement and the violation of it, take us to the condition that we find ourselves now.

In all these sentences, we have compound subjects (*John and Mary*) and *the agreement and the violation*) and complex embeddings (e.g. *to the condition that we find ourselves*.).

1.4 Summary

The summary should not simply repeat the section headings. It should reinforce what the learner has gained:

In this unit, you have explored three important areas of English grammar and usage: **articles, concord and sentence structure**.

You learnt that *a* and *an* are indefinite articles, while *the* is the definite article. You also learned that articles help to indicate whether a noun is being referred to generally or specifically.

You examined **concord**, particularly the agreement between subjects and the verbs *be, do,* and *have*. You saw how forms such as *am, is, are, was, were, do, does, have,* and *has* change according to the subject, person, number and tense.

You also examined sentences according to their **function**, including statements, questions, commands or requests, and exclamations. In addition, you learnt to distinguish between **simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences** according to their structure.

These grammatical features are not isolated rules. They work together to make communication clear, accurate and meaningful. As you continue with the course, try to notice how articles, concord and sentence structures are used in your own speaking and writing.

1.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 2 TENSES

Unit structure

2.1 Introduction
2.2 Learning Outcomes
2.3 The Simple Present Tense and the Present Continuous Tense
2.4 Ways of Expressing the Future
2.5 The Past Indefinite or the Simple Past Tense
2.6 The Past Continuous Tense
2.7 The Present Perfect Tense
2.8 The Present Perfect Continuous Tense
2.9 The Past Perfect Tense
2.10 Summary
2.11 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

2.1 Introduction

Think about the different things you do in a typical day. You may attend a lecture in the morning, complete an assignment in the afternoon, and plan to meet a friend later in the evening. When you talk or write about these activities, you need to show **when** they happen and whether they are completed, continuing, repeated, or expected to happen.

This is where **tense** becomes important. Tense helps us locate an action, event, or situation in relation to time. It also helps us show whether an action is continuing, completed, repeated, or expected to occur.

For example, compare these sentences:

- I **study** English every day.
- I **am studying** English now.
- I **studied** English yesterday.
- I **will study** English tomorrow.

The verb forms change because the time and nature of the actions change.

Tenses are therefore important in both spoken and written English. One common difficulty among Nigerian users of English is maintaining the appropriate tense relationships, particularly when several actions or events are discussed in the same sentence or passage.

In this unit, you will be introduced to major tense forms in English. The treatment is necessarily selective because the study of tense is a wide area of English grammar. The unit, however, provides practical explanations and activities that will help you recognise and use important tense forms accurately.

As you work through the unit, pay attention not only to the form of each tense but also to **why a particular tense is used in a particular situation**.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify and use the simple present and present continuous tenses;
- identify and use appropriate forms for expressing the future;
- identify and use the simple past tense correctly;
- identify and use the past continuous tense correctly;
- identify and use the present perfect tense correctly;
- identify and use the present perfect continuous tense correctly; and
- identify and use the past perfect tense correctly.

2.3 The Simple Present Tense and the Present Continuous Tense

Before you begin this section, consider this question:

When would you say "I work in Abuja" and when would you say "I am working in Abuja"?

In this section, you will learn to distinguish between the simple present tense and the present continuous tense.

The simple present tense has the simple form of the verb (called plain infinitive), with -s or -es added when there is a third-person singular subject.

The Simple Present Tense

The simple present tense has the simple form of the verb, called the plain infinitive, with **-s** or **-es** added when there is a third-person singular subject.

Example: He speaks English with an Indian accent.
The present continuous tense has a form of the verb *be* (agreeing with the subject in number and person) and the -*ing* form of the verb (called the present participle).

Example: I am painting a picture.

The simple present tense is generally used to refer to:

(i) a habit

Example: I go for a walk every morning.
(ii) something which is always true

Example: The sun rises in the east.
The present continuous is generally used to refer to an action going on at the moment of speaking.

Examples: The child is crying. Look! He is coming now.
Some verbs are generally not used in the present continuous even when they refer to the real present.

Examples
I hear a strange noise.
I like some of the television serials. I know the Principal very well.
We have no stamps in stock. He wants to be a teacher.

This bag contains all my books. I remember your friend, Susan.

Common Errors in Nigeria
(i) I am hearing a strange noise.
(ii) I am liking some of the television serials.
(iii) I am knowing the principal very well.
(iv) We are having no stamps in stock.
(v) He is wanting to be a teacher.
(vi) This bag is containing all my books.
(vii) I am remembering your friends Susan.
All these are wrong.

In standard English, these forms are generally inappropriate when the verbs express states rather than ongoing activities

Before looking at the figure below, think about how the meaning changes when an action is presented as a habit or as something happening now. The figure below provides a quick visual guide to the distinction.

Figure 2.1: Choosing Between the Simple Present and Present Continuous

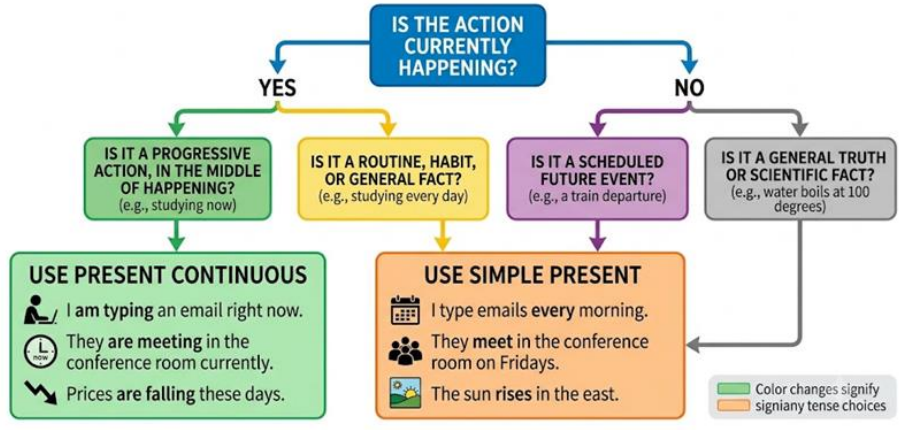

Figure 2.1: Choosing Between the Simple Present and Present Continuous

The figure reinforces the distinction explained above. The simple present emphasises regularity, habit, or general truth, while the present continuous emphasises an action in progress at the present time.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Fill in the blanks with the simple present or the present continuous forms of the verbs given in brackets.

1. She (have) a small shop in the market.
2. I ..... (do) my home work now. My brother . (play) in the garden.
3. I ..... (go) to the doctor. My father ..... (suffer) from pain in the stomach.
4. Every time you ..... (visit) him, he (think) you (want) some help.
5. He (seem) to be very busy.
6. You cannot go now. It (rain)

You have seen how English uses different tense forms to describe present situations. We shall now move from the present to the ways in which English expresses actions, intentions, arrangements, and events expected to occur in the future.

2.4 Ways of Expressing the Future

What different expressions can you use to talk about something that has not happened yet?

English does not use only one form to express the future. The choice depends on what the speaker wants to communicate. For example, a future expression may indicate an intention, a prediction, a planned arrangement, or an official schedule.

Here are some examples:

1. I shall see you in the evening. (simple future)
2. We are going to spend the vacation in Delhi. (intention)
3. It is going to rain. (likelihood)
4. The train is going to start. (action about to take place)
5. My father is going to Bombay next month. (planned programme)
6. I'll be staying here for a week. (planned programme)
7. The President arrives here next Monday. (official schedule)

In everyday Nigerian English, similar distinctions occur:

I will call you after the lecture.
This can express a decision or intention.

I am going to Abuja tomorrow.
This can indicate a plan or intention.

The meeting starts at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow.
This can refer to a fixed or scheduled event.

Before you study the figure, consider the difference between **a decision**, **a plan**, **a prediction**, and **a fixed arrangement**. The figure below summarises how different English forms can communicate these meanings.

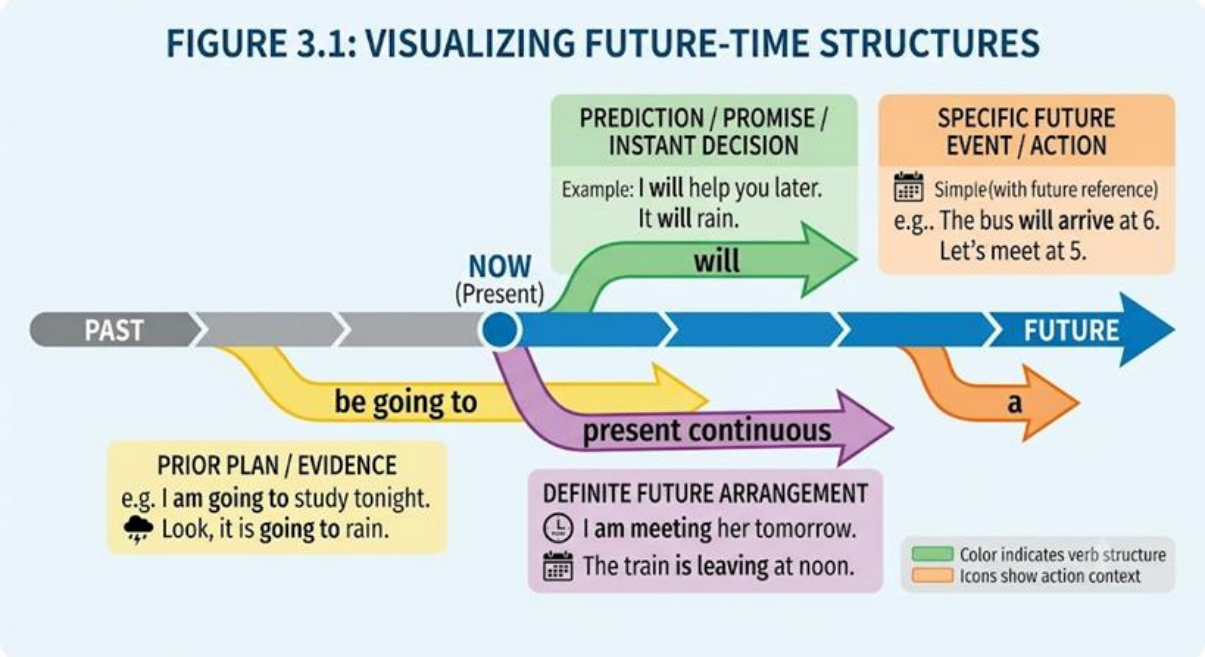

Figure 2.2: Common Ways of Expressing Future Meaning

The figure helps you see that future meaning can be expressed through different grammatical forms. The appropriate form depends on the context and the speaker's intended meaning.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
Fill in the blanks with the correct forms of the verbs given in brackets to indicate the future.
(i) I (leave) for Calcutta tonight.
(ii) I doubt if I (be) able to come to the meeting.
(iii) I ..... (go) the station this evening to meet my friend Gopal.
(iv) I think you should take an umbrella. It (rain)
(v) I not (work) in this office any longer.

Future expressions help us talk about events that have not happened. We shall now move backwards in time to examine the simple past tense, which is used to describe completed events or situations in the past.

2,5 The Past Indefinite or the Simple Past Tense

How would you describe something that happened yesterday, last week, or many years ago?

The simple past tense is commonly used to describe events that took place in the past. The event is viewed as completed and is not necessarily connected with the speaker's present situation.

Examples
(i) The Nightingale heard him, and she looked through the leaves and wondered.
(ii) His eyes filled with tears.

Notice

(a) that these events took place in the past and are not related to the narrator's (speaker's) present;
(b) that we form the simple past tense:
(i) by adding - *d* or - *ed* to the regular verbs look – looked
fill – filled narrate – narrated
or (ii) by adding *t*
dream – dreamt learn – learnt
or (iii) by changing some letters of the word eat – ate
teach – taught
or (iv) by not changing the verb at all cut – cut
hit – hit shut – shut;

(c) that with most verbs we indicate or interrogate by using *did* as a helping verb.

The point to remember is that with *did,* we use the simple present form of the main verb.

Examples
The Student **did** not **dance** with the girl.
Did the Nightingale **sacrifice** her life in vain?

The simple past tells us that an event happened in the past. Sometimes, however, we want to emphasise that an action was **in progress** at a particular time in the past. This is the function of the past continuous tense.

2.6 The Past Continuous Tense

What is the difference between “I studied” and “I was studying” when talking about yesterday?

The past continuous tense emphasises the continuity or progress of an event at a particular time in the past.

It is formed by using **was** or **were** with the **-ing** form of the verb.

This tense emphasises the continuity of events in the past.
It is formed by using *was* or *were* with the *-ing* form of the verb.

Examples
The butterfly **was running** after a sunbeam.
The student **was** still **lying** on the grass where the Nightingale had left him.

The past continuous focuses on an action that was in progress at a particular time in the past. We shall now examine the present perfect tense, which connects a past event with the present.

2.7 The Present Perfect Tense

Can you describe something that happened in the past but still has a connection with the present?

The present perfect tense is used to describe a past event while emphasising its effect or relevance to the speaker's present situation.

It is formed by using **has** or **have** with the past participle form of the verb.

Uses of the Present Perfect

The present perfect can be used:

(a) to describe past events and

The statement suggests that the experience of reading the novels is relevant to the speaker now.

(b) to emphasise their effect on the speaker’s present.

The winter has chilled my veins.

The effect of the cold is still felt.

It is formed by using *has* or *have* with the past participle form (sometimes called the third form) of the verb.

Examples
I **have read** all the novels written by Hardy. (And **I still** remember them).
The winter **has chilled** my veins. (And at the moment of speaking, I am **still** cold).
As the present perfect is linked to the speaker's present, we never use it with past time expressions.
It would be incorrect to say:

- I have written a letter an hour ago. (The sign *before an example indicates an unacceptable form.)

The correct form would be:

either

I have written a letter.
or

I have just written a letter.

The present perfect tense is often used with expressions such as just, since, and for.

The present perfect shows a connection between a past event and the present. When we want to place greater emphasis on the **duration or continuing nature of an activity**, we often use the present perfect continuous tense.

2.8 The Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Pause for a moment and reflect on this question.

If an activity started earlier and is still continuing now, which tense would best express it?

Continue reading to find out.

This tense is used to describe an action that started in the past and continues. It is formed by using *have* (or *has*) with *been* and the *-ing* form of the verb.

The present perfect continuous tense is used to describe an action that started in the past and is still continuing.

It is formed by using have or has, followed by been and the -ing form of the verb.

Examples

(i) The farmers **have been ploughing** their fields for two hours now. (They are still ploughing them.)

(ii) My friend **has been studying** English since 10 o'clock. (She is still studying.)

Notice the difference between these two sentences:

(i) The farmers **were ploughing** their fields when it started raining. (The action continued for some time in the past.)

(ii) The farmers **have been ploughing** their fields for some time now. (The action began in the past and is still continuing.)

Sometimes, the present perfect continuous is also used for an action that has just finished after it has continued for some time.

Example

I am very tired. **I have been playing** cricket.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Put the verbs given in brackets in the simple past tense.

One morning, Akbar (go) for a walk with Prince Salim and Birbal. After some time, they (come) to the bank of a river. It ..... (be) a hot morning and they ..... (sit) down in the shade of a tree. A few minutes later, Akbar (say), "Shall we go and bathe in the river?" Birbal put his hand into the water and. (say), "I wouldn't like to bathe."

Akbar and Prince Salim..... (take) off their clothes and ..... (give) them to Birbal. Then they..... (get) into the water and (bathe) in it.

Akbar..... (say) to Prince Salim, "Birbal is standing in the sun and holding our clothes. He looks like a washerman's donkey," Akbar..... (call) out to Birbal and ..... (say), 'You're carrying a donkey's load.' Birbal ..... (bow) and very respectfully ..... (say), "No, sir, I'm carrying the loads of two donkeys."

Use the correct forms of the verbs given in brackets.

A famous Irish barrister, who..... (be) a very witty person, ... (appear), before a judge who ..... (not like) him and (not try) to hide the fact.

While the barrister..... (argue) his case, the judge ..... (not seem) to be paying any attention to him. He..... (pat) his huge dog, which ..... (sit) beside him, and (say) something to it. The barrister..... (stop) and (look) at the judge and the dog. "Go on,". (say) the judge.

"I beg your pardon,"..... (answer) the barrister, "I ..... (think) your lordship (be) in consultation."

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Put the verbs given in brackets in the present perfect or the present continuous tense:

(i) I not (see) a film since December.....
(ii) Which book you (read) since this morning?.....
(iii) I (try) to swim for years but I not (succeed) yet .....
(iv) The judge (examine) three witnesses since morning .....
(v) The servant (wait) for an hour now. Your mother not (give) him any work yet. .....
(vi) I (read) this essays five times but I can't understand it.....
(vii) The old man (sleep) in the garden all day.....
(viii) You (eat) for ice creams already. .....
(xi) What you (do) since I saw you last?
(x) The lions in the zoo (roar) for a quarter of an hour; they will soon be given food.

You have now examined several ways of referring to present and past situations. We shall conclude our study of the major tense forms in this unit by examining the past perfect tense, which helps us establish the order of two past events.

2.9 The Past Perfect Tense

When two things happened in the past, how can you show clearly which happened first?

The past perfect tense helps the speaker or writer show that one action occurred before another action in the past.

It is formed by using **had** with the past participle form of the verb.

In this section, we shall discuss the essential uses of the past perfect tense. There are several examples of this tense. The past perfect tense is used:

(i) to show that one action took place in the past before another action:
Karrim's wife *had* already *fallen* into the river when he got there.

(ii) to express the continuation of an action up to a certain time in the past:
Gajpat *had looked after* the baby on several occasions by the time the encounter with the hyenas took place.

(iii) to express a hypothetical (=supposed) condition:
If Karim *had looked* for his wife during the day, he would not have got lost.

(iv) after *wish* to express what is impossible:
Karim said to his wife, "I wish you *have not fallen* into the river."

(v) in Reported Speech, to talk about things that had already happened at the time when we were talking.
She said that she *had* accidentally *fallen* into the river.

In the following exercises, we shall concern ourselves only with the first two uses of the Past Perfect.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5
Match the questions in Column A with the appropriate reply in Column B. Also, fill in the blanks with the past perfect forms of the verbs in brackets.

A		**B**
1.	Did you put the milk (already read) all the books.	a. She realised that she ..... in the fridge?
2.	Did you have a good Sheela's wedding? (already put) it in before I got	b. No, Mother had already dinner at put…..... home.
3.	Why didn't you go to the Aviansh? (already finish) eating by the time I got there.	c. No, they..... movie with
4.	Why did Anita drop out (already see) it.	d. Because I..... of the class?
5.	Did you register the letter? his driving test.	e. He (just pass)
6.	Why was Hamid so happy yesterday?	f. No, the post office..... (already closed) when I got there.

The sequences (or order) of two past actions are illustrated with the following examples:

Examples
(a) Before Morrison put Manning's head on the oven, he **had taken off** his shoes.
(b) He **had put** a cushion under Manning's head, but it did not look natural.

Let's examine the sequence (the order) of the two past actions/activities/events referred to in each of the above sentences:

1st action/activity/event 2nd action/activity/event

(a) had taken off (his shoes) (then) put (Manning's head in the oven)
(b) has put (a cushion under Manning's head) (then he realised it) did not look (natural)

Notice that for the earlier action/event, the past perfect is used; for the later action/event, the simple past is used. The past perfect is thus used to describe an earlier event viewed from a point in the past. It is formed by using *had* with the past participle form (the third form) of the verb.

The past perfect describes the **earlier** event, while the simple past describes the **later** event.

When two events happened in the past, learners may find it difficult to determine which event should take the past perfect form. The following simple timeline can help clarify the sequence.

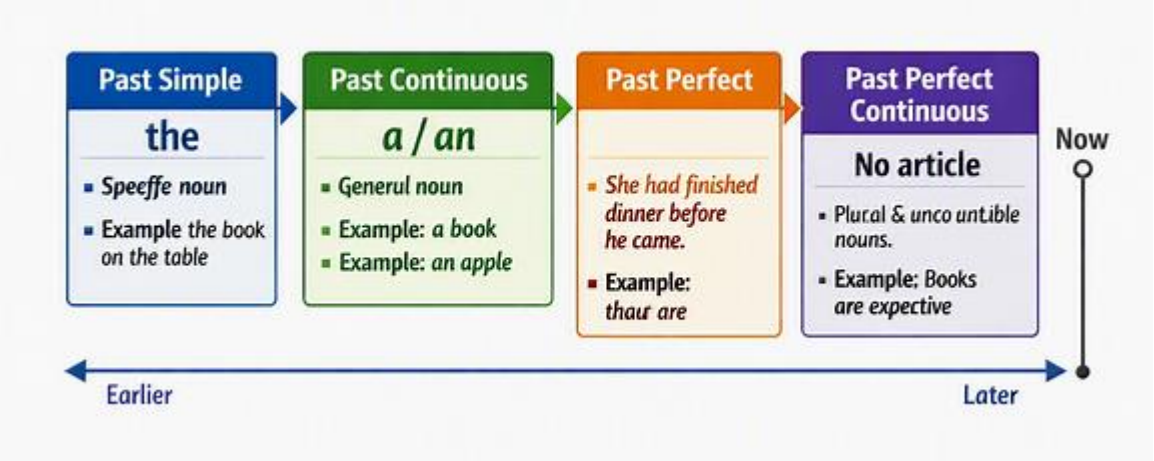

Figure 2.3: Sequence of Past Events

The figure reinforces the central point of this section: the past perfect is used to place an earlier event before another event that is already in the past.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

Use the past perfect forms of the verbs given in brackets in these sentences:

1. The farmers sowed the seeds after they. (plough) their fields. It started raining before they. (finish) sowing the seeds.
2. We return home later at night and were very hungry. My mother..... (already) ..... (cook) rice and vegetables. After we..... (wash) our hands we had our dinner. Mother ..... also..... (make) some sweets. We had the sweets and then went to bed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7

Complete the following paragraph using the correct simple past or the past perfect forms of the verbs given in brackets.

Early in the morning Jim Corbett and his dog Robin went tot he forest. The previous evening Corbett..... (wound) a leopard. They went to the spot Corbett..... (fire) from. Robin..... (examine) the ground where the leopard (stand).
He..... (come) to the bushes where the leopard ..... (leave) a lot of blood. Corbett..... (fire) at the leopard at short
range. He. ..... (see) the bullet enter the leopard's body. He..... (know) the leopard was dangerous as he ..... (have) fifteen hours to nurse his anger against men. Robin.....
(lead) Corbett into the thick jungle. Suddenly the dog.....
(stop). Corbett saw what..... (attract) the dog's attention. He..... (see) the leopard's tail. He. (see) the tip of
the tail moving. He knew the leopard would attack him. Corbett just. (get) the rifle on the shoulder when the leopard sprang
at him.
(Adapted from Jim Corbett: Man-Eaters of Kumaon).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

Question A
Use the correct form of the verb out of those given in brackets.

1. "I (have/has) no money. I (am/is/are) hungry, thirsty and tired," murmured David to himself.
2. He made an effort and went to a small shop in Dover. A young girl (was/were) coming out of the shop with a basket of rice on her arm. "What (do/does) you want? I (have/has) no money," she said.
3. "I (do/does) not want any money. Please tell me the address of Miss Betssey Trotwood."
4. "I (am/is/are) her domestic help. Come along with me," she said. David followed her. He looked at himself. His shoes (was/were) torn, his hat (was/were) crushed, and from head to toes he (was/were) powdered with chalk and dust.
5. Soon they came to the house of Miss Trotwood. She (was/were) there in the garden.
6. "Who (are/is/am) you?" she cried, "I (do/does) not like boys. Go away."
7. "I (are/is/am) your nephew, Aunt," David said. "I am (are/is/am) David Coperfield."
8. She sat down with thump on the grass, looked at David up and down and said, "So you (are/is/am) my brother's son."
9. David (was/were) so miserable that he started crying. She caught him by the collar of his torn shirt and took him inside.
10. Mr. Dick (was/were) inside. She told him, "This boy (is/am/are) my brother's son. You (are/is/am) a man of the world. Tell me what I should do with him."
11. Mr. Dick (look/looked) at David, smiled and said, "Give him a bath."

12. The bath (was/were) a great comfort. After the bath David (was/were) wrapped up in shawls and (was/were) taken to bed. *(Adapted from Charles Dickens: David Copperfield)*

Questions B

Fill in the blanks with the present perfect or the present continuous forms of the verbs in brackets. The first two have been done for you.

Dr. Singh's class does not seem to be getting anywhere at all today. The students have been working (work) at different things since 9 o'clock but none of them has finished (finish) his work. Dr. Singh asked Sheela to write a poem for the college magazine but she.....
(just/write) the title of the poem. Abid..... (paint) a picture for a long time; nobody knows that it is because he (not do) even half of it. Murali..... (write) an essay about the college since the morning but he ..... (complete) only the first paragraph. Vasudevan and Gurucharan. (work) on the science project for three hours but ..... (not finish) it yet. Poor Singh! He..... (walk) up and down the class trying to get the work completed soon.

You have now studied several forms of the English tense and examined how each is used to express time and the relationship between actions or events. To reinforce what you have learnt and help you distinguish between the different tense forms, watch the video below. As you watch, pay particular attention to the form of each tense, the time it expresses, and the situations in which it is appropriately used. Click on the link/image or scan the QR Code to access the video.

https://youtu.be/5aPXb509tEA



2.10 Summary

In this unit, you have explored the major tense forms used to express time and the nature of actions in English. You have learned that tense is not simply about whether an event happened in the past, present, or future. The choice of tense also helps you show whether an action is habitual, currently in progress, completed, continuing, planned, or occurring before another past event.

Specifically, you have learnt:

- how to distinguish between the simple present and present continuous tenses;
- how different grammatical forms can be used to express future meaning;
- how to form and use the simple past tense;
- how the past continuous expresses an action in progress in the past;
- how the present perfect connects a past event with the present;
- how the present perfect continuous emphasises an activity that began in the past and continues into the present or has a present effect; and
- how the past perfect establishes the order of two events in the past.

The exercises in this unit are intended to help you develop accuracy through practice. As you continue to speak and write in English, pay close attention to the relationship between the time of an event and the tense you use to describe it.

2.11 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 3 GERUNDS AND PARTICIPLES

Unit Structure

3.1 Introduction
3.2 Learning Outcomes
3.3 Gerunds, Participles and Their Uses
    3.3.1 Gerunds
    3.3.2 Participles
    3.3.3 Why is a Participle Important?
3.4 Summary
3.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
3.6 Possible Answer to Self-Assessments Exercise

3.1 Introduction

This unit continues our discussion of grammar and usage in English. In the previous units, you learned about different grammatical forms and how they are used to construct meaningful and grammatically correct sentences. In this unit, we turn our attention to two forms that can sometimes be confusing because they are closely related to verbs: **gerunds and participles**.

Have you ever come across an English word ending in **-ing** and wondered what function it performs in a sentence? For example, in *"Swimming is good exercise," the word "swimming"* names an activity. However, in *The children are swimming, swimming* forms part of the verb. Although the two words have the same **-ing** form, they perform different grammatical functions.

A **gerund** is a verbal noun. It has the form of a present participle but can perform the function of a noun in a sentence. Examples include *flying, dancing, stealing,* and *reading*. A **participle**, on the other hand, is a form of a verb that can be used in compound verb forms or as an adjective.

These forms occur frequently in both spoken and written English. As you study this unit, pay particular attention to the functions of gerunds and participles and to the differences between them. The exercises provided will also give you opportunities to practise using these forms accurately.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- recognise gerunds in English
- use gerunds accurately in English
- recognise participles in English

- use participles accurately in English.

3.3 Gerunds, Participles and Their Uses

Gerunds and participles are both related to verbs, but they do not always perform the same function in a sentence. A gerund can perform the function of a noun, while a participle can be used as part of a verb or as an adjective.

Before we examine the two forms separately, consider this question:

When you see a word ending in -ing, does it always function as a verb?

The answer is no. The function of an **-ing** form depends on the way it is used in the sentence. Continue reading to see how gerunds and participles differ.

3.3.1 Gerunds

A gerund is a verbal noun, that is, a noun which describes an action or experience and has the form of a present participle (the *ing* from). It is interesting to note that gerunds can stay in different positions in a sentence to perform different functions.

Example
'building' in the sentence:
The building of the bridge was slow work.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Rewrite the following by adding -*ing* to the verbs in brackets.

1. He gave me (smoke) a long time ago.
2. I don't feel like (work) after lunch; I prefer (sleep).
3. Who enjoys (go) to hospital?
4. Is it worth (bother) about?
5. (See) is (believe).
6. Why did he go to prison?

He was accused of (pass) secret information to the enemy.
7. (Smoke) is not allowed inside the hall.
8. You can't make an omelet without (break) eggs.
9. Try to avoid (make) a noise.
10. Aren't you looking forward to (meet) your family after so many months?

The different positions that gerunds take are illustrated here: Flying can be dangerous. (beginning of a sentence)

I like flying planes (used as a complement).
I saw him when he was flying. (used as a verb complement).

You have seen that gerunds can occur in different positions in a sentence. The figure below provides a simple visual summary of some of these functions. Study the figure and then compare the examples with the explanations above.

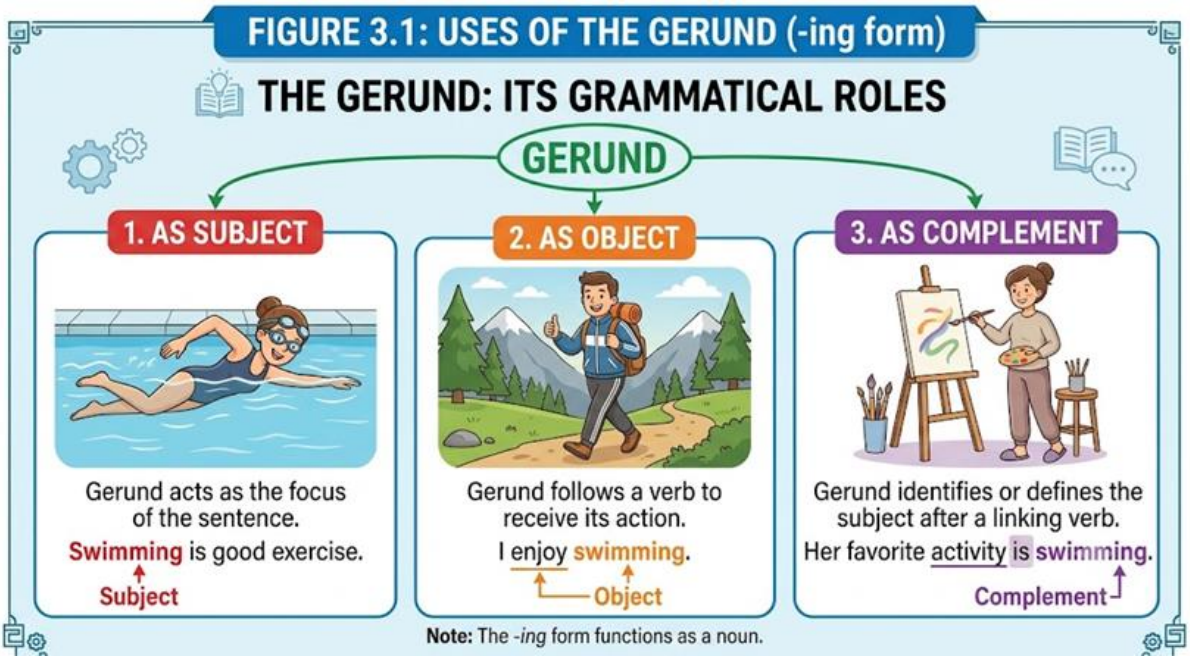

Figure 3.1: Functions of Gerunds in English Sentences

The figure shows that a gerund can function as the subject, object or complement of a sentence. In each case, the **-ing** form refers to an activity or action, but its grammatical function depends on its position in the sentence.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Change the verbs in brackets by adding *-ing* or inserting *to*, as appropriate in the examples:

Examples

(i) You still have a lot (learn), if you'll forgive my (say) so. You still have a lot to *learn*, if you'll forgive my *saying so*.

(ii) Would you mind (come) with me to Mohan's house; I wish (congratulate) him on his (win) an award in the Quiz Contest.. Would you mind *coming* with me to Mohan's house; I wish *to congratulate* him on his *winning* an award in the Quiz Contest.

1. You'll never regret (help) a friend in need.
2. The doctor asked him (leave) the room without (give) him a chance (say) what his problem was.
3. Your hair wants (cut) why don't you find time (go) to the barber?
4. Fancy (have) (work) for a crazy person like him; I'd rather be without a job.
5. The doctor advised him (stop) (drink).

6. He gave a beard (avoid) (be) recognised by the police.
7. Don't (switch) off the light before (go) to bed.
8. Yesterday I was fined for (exceed) the speed limit; the constable said it was (make) me remember the rule for ever.

Gerunds are very important in English usage. They are used to make writing compact with a few words. By using gerunds, you can reduce "I saw the plane that was flying to London" to "I saw the plane flying to London."

Having examined gerunds and their functions, we can now turn to participles. Although participles may also have an **-ing** form, their grammatical functions are different from those of gerunds.

3.3.2 Participles

"Swimming is enjoyable" and "The swimming boy won the race"?

Participles are the two forms of a verb called *the present participle and the past participle,* which may be used in compound forms of the verb or as adjectives.

Consider the following examples:

Example
Why *are* we *going there?*
(present participle used to form present continuous tense)

The problem *can* also *be considered.*
(past participle used to form the passive voice).

A *loving* mother (present participle used as an adjective).

He had a *worried* look.
(past participle used as an adjective)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3
Fill in the blanks in the following sentences using the verbs given below. Add *-ing* to each verb before using it.

revolve, smile, slide, nag, move

1. We need a __door here.
1 He had a serious accident while getting off a ___bus.
2 A ____chair is better than an ordinary one, but it is much more expensive.
3 It is as uncommon for a peevish person to have a _____face as it is for a cheerful person to have a peevish one.

4 His wife is always complaining about something. No wonder people call him 'the husband of ____wife'.

A distinction must be made between a participle (or perfect tense) and a past tense. This distinction is illustrated in the table below.

Present	**Past**	**Participle**
go	went	gone
see	saw	seen
do	did	done
consider	considered	considered
write	wrote	written
read	read	read
cut	cut	cut
say	said	said
play	played	played

As you can see from all of the examples in the table, it is possible for the past tense to be the same as the participle, as in *'considered'.* But on other occasions, the past and the participle are different (e.g., wrote and written). In some others, they are the same e.g. *cut -cut* and *read-read* (although the pronunciation is different).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Write five phrases each for the types of verb: + *-ing* + noun (e.g. *a pressing problem, a moving train)* and verb + -ed + noun. (e.g. a *tired man, caged birds)*

3.3.4 Why is a Participle Important?

We have examined what participles are and how they function in English. It is equally important to use participles correctly because errors in their formation or use can affect the grammatical accuracy of a sentence.

What could happen to the meaning or correctness of a sentence if the required participle is omitted?

As a user of English, you must always get your participle correct. The common errors linked to the use of the participle in Nigeria are the omission of the participle in spoken or written English and the confusion between the participle and the past tense.

It is very common to hear Nigerians saying:
1. Your case will be *consider*. (considered)
2. You have been *inform* about the case. (informed)
3. He felt *unconcern* about the issue. (unconcerned)
4. Life without women can be a *defeat* life. (defeated)
5. He interrogated me and got me *confuse*. (confused)

In all the situations above, the participle has been wrongly used. You become unintelligent and illiterate if you speak or write English like this. People laugh at you. They cannot count you among the educated.

Note the correction of the five sentences:

1. Your case will be *considered.*
2. You have been *informed* about the case.
3. He felt *unconcerned* about the issue.
4. Life without women can be a *defeated* life.
5. He interrogated me and got me *confused.*

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks with the correct verb forms.

May I request you 1 _____ in your materials for 2 __. 3____them from the typist for 4 _____will not be a problem. We found it necessary to 5 _____ traffic to the secretariat to 6
_____ the computer operators 7 _____ without distractions and interruption. Request for 8 _____may however be brought up to 10
a.m. For the past few days the hotel had 9 _____ to the times of meals, especially 10 _____ the __of meals on time. Some great improvement in the variety and quality of food served has also 12
_____. Could you assist by 13 ___to the time scheduled for means?

You have now examined gerunds, present and past participles, their functions and some common errors associated with their use. To reinforce what you have learnt, watch the video below. As you watch, pay attention to the differences between gerunds and participles and to the ways each form functions in a sentence.

https://youtu.be/kFz3OteqB9s



2.4 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt about:

1. **gerunds**, which are verbal nouns formed with the **-ing** form of a verb and can perform functions normally associated with nouns;
2. the different positions and functions of gerunds in English sentences;
3. **participles**, including the present participle and past participle;
4. the use of participles as parts of verb forms and as adjectives;
5. the difference between the simple past form and the past participle;
6. common errors involving the use of participles; and
7. ways of identifying and correcting incorrect participle forms.

The exercises and activities in the unit have provided opportunities for you to practise these forms. Continue to observe how gerunds and participles are used in your reading, writing and everyday communication. Regular practice will help you use these grammatical forms more accurately and confidently.

2.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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Bansal, R.K. (ed.). (1997). *Foundation Course in English – 1, Foundation Course in English – 2, Foundation Course in English – 3.* New Delhi: Indira Gandhi Open University

Handa, U. (2001). *Functional English, 2 – Writing Skills, 3 – Study Skills, 4 – Speaking Skills.* New Delhi: Indira Gandhi Open University.

UNIT 4 THE ACTIVE, PASSIVE AND THE INFINITIVE

Unit structure

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Learning Outcome
4.3 Main Content
4.2.1 The Active Voice
4.2.2 The Passive Voice
4.2.3 To + Infinitive
4.4 Summary
4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources
4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise

4.1 Introduction

You have already learnt about several important aspects of English grammar, including articles, concord, sentences, tenses, gerunds and participles. In this unit, we continue our study of grammar by looking at three other important areas: **the active voice, the passive voice and the infinitive**.

Think about how you normally describe an action. You might say, *"The student submitted the assignment."* Here, the student performs the action. You could also say, *"The assignment was submitted by the student."* The information is similar, but the focus has changed. This difference is one of the important ideas you will explore in this unit.

You will also learn about the **infinitive**, particularly the *to + verb* form, and how it is used in different sentence structures. For example, in *"I went to the library to study,"* the infinitive *to study* tells us the purpose of going to the library.

As you work through the unit, pay attention to the relationship between the subject, the verb and the object in active and passive constructions. Also, notice how the infinitive functions in different contexts. The examples and activities provided will give you opportunities to practise these forms and apply them to your own spoken and written English.

By the end of the unit, you should be more confident in choosing between active and passive constructions and in using infinitives accurately.

4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define the active and passive forms
- write correct sentences using active and passive forms
- define the infinitive verbs
- write correct sentences using the infinitive verbs
- state the importance of these forms to the accurate use of English.

4.3 MAIN CONTENT

The three grammatical areas discussed in this unit are closely related to the way actions are expressed in English. We shall begin with the **active voice**, where attention is usually placed on the person or thing performing an action. We shall then examine the **passive voice**, where the focus can shift to the person or thing affected by the action. Finally, we shall consider the **to-infinitive** and its different uses.

4.3.1 The Active Voice

Before you continue, think about this:

When you say *"The student submitted the assignment,"* who performs the action? What happens to the focus if you change the sentence to *"The assignment was submitted by the student"*?

Active voice is a form of direct statement whereby the subject of a sentence takes an object without any inversion. In an active voice, the subject and the object of the sentence are not interchanged. Let's illustrate this.

Subject	Verb	Object
John	ate	the yam

In this simple sentence, John is the subject represented by ***S***, ate is the verb represented by ***V***, and the yam is the object of the sentence represented by ***O.*** In the sentence, there is no inversion or interchange of *the yam* and *John*. Thus, we say that the sentence "John ate the yam" is in the active voice.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Can you make at least five more sentences that are in the active voice?

Try to do this. Use the space provided below:
.....
.....
.....
.....

Have you done this exercise? Compare your sentences with the ones below:

SVO

1 He cleared his throat.
2 Everybody needs a girl.
3 She grabbed his hand.
4 She saw Steven on the road.
5 He noticed the girl.
6 Silas and others made secret exits.

All of the sentences written above are in the active voice. Active voice patterns of a sentence are useful if you want to present any point directly without going around in circles. Active voice is the most direct way of presenting any idea.

Note that there are some sentences that are not in the active voice despite the fact that they have a subject, a verb and an object. If the object is what we call a *complement object*, that is, an object that says something further about the verb. Such objects are not in the active voice because they cannot be reversed or inverted to form the passive voice. For example, all of these sentences are not in the active voice. They all carry complement objects and thus are better called sentences with complement objects. (CO)

S V Oo
The boy is in the garden.

S V Oo
Life is not all bed of roses.

S V Co
She is a beautiful girl.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2
Try to change all the sentences a – f above round by placing the objects in the subject position and the subject in the object position. That is, you should change the sentences around.

Let's do it after you have attempted it. Can you do it? Cross-check your answer with mine below.

(a) *He cleared his throat*

changed to

His throat was cleared by him.
(b) *Everybody needs a girl*

changed to

A girl is needed by everybody.

(c) *She grabbed his hand*

changed to

His hand was grabbed by her.

(d) *She saw Steven on the road*

changed to

Steven was seen on the road.

(e) *He noticed the girl*

changed to

The girl was noticed by him.

(f) *Silas and others made secret exists*

changed to

Secret exists were made by Silas and others.

Note: In changing these sentences, the following alterations were made:

she her
(she changed to her) he him
needs is needed (present) needed was needed (past) noticed was noticed (past) made was made (past)

There is also the addition of *by* as in *by her, by me, by Silas, by Steven,* etc.

All these illustrations bring us to what is called the passive voice. All the interchange of the subject to object and object to subject position done above make the new sentence *passive sentences: by* is used for the passive sentences. We have:

(a) His throat was cleared by him.
(b) A girl is needed by everybody.
(c) His hand was grabbed by her.
(d) Steven was seen on the road.
(e) The girl was noticed by him.

(f) Secret exists were made by Silas and others.

4.3.3 The Passive Voice

Having seen how the active voice presents the doer of an action directly, let us now consider what happens when the focus shifts from the doer to the action or to the person or thing affected by it.

Consider this:
If you read the sentence *"The report was prepared by the committee,"* which receives greater attention, the committee or the report?

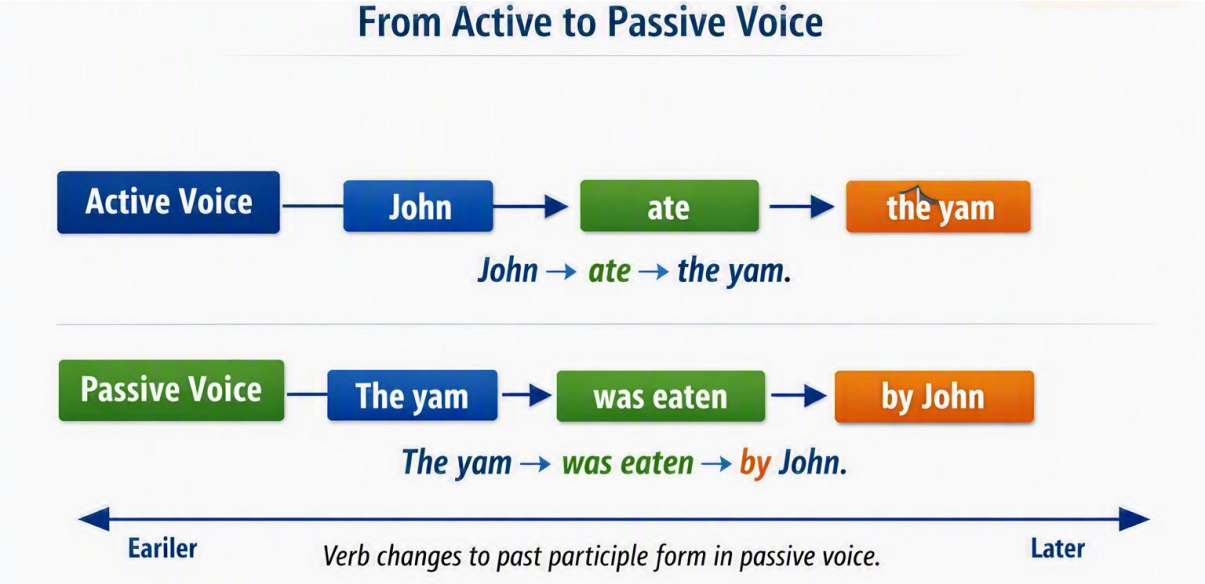

Figure 4.1: From Active Voice to Passive Voice

The figure shows the main difference between the two constructions. In the active sentence, **John** is the focus as the person performing the action. In the passive sentence, **the yam**, which receives the action, becomes the grammatical subject.

In addition to the examples of passive sentences given above, look at the following examples of the passive voice:

Now, let us examine some common passive constructions.

1. with the simple present and simple past tenses, (*am/is/are/were* + past participle)
   Energy accumulated as fast as it was used. If scientific skill is allowed free scope.
2. with the present continuous tense (*is/are* + *being* + past participle) changes that *are being wrought...*
3. with the present perfect tense (*has* + *been* + past participle)
   ...beyond what *has* so far *been realised.*

This subject *has been* much *discussed.*
The great conqueror *has been admired.*

4. with the future tense
(*will* + *be* + past participle) The answer *will be known some day.* The human race *will be exterminated.*
5. with modal verbs
(*can/must* + *be* + past participle)

Food production *can be increased*

You *must be restrained.*

Notice that in all passive constructions, we have the past participle form of the main verb preceded by the appropriate tense form of the verb to be.

The passive voice is used when we are more interested in the action than in the 'doer' of the action.

Example
He *was killed* in a fight.
(We have not said who killed him).
When the 'doer' is to be mentioned, we use a phrase beginning with by.

Example
The meeting *was addressed* by the Prime Minister.
The passive voice is used very often to describe scientific experiments because there the doer is not important. Similarly, we use the passive in the description of processes and the narration of historical events.

Examples
Glass *is made* from sand, which *is melted* under great heat. The First Battle of Panipat *was fought* in 1526.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3
Fill in the blanks with passive forms of the verbs given in brackets:

(a) Great quantities of animal oil come from whales. To protect the whale from the cold of the Arctic seas, nature has provided it with a thick covering of fat called blubber. When the whale ———————— (kill), the blubber ————————- (stripe) off and boiled down. It produces a great quantity of oil which ———— —(can make) into food. Vegetable oil ———————— (know) from very old times. No household can get on without it, for it ———————— (use) in cooking. Perfumes ————————- (may make) from the oils of certain flowers. Soaps ————————(make) from vegetable and animal oil. Scientists think that the oil under the surface of the earth originated from living things in the seas. For these creatures to become oil, it was necessary that they ————————

———— (should imprison) between layers of rock for an enormous length of time. The statement that oil originated in the sea ———————————— (confirm) by a glance at the map showing the chief oil fields of the world; very few of them are far distant from the oceans of today. The rocks in which oil ———————— (find) are of sea origin too. Almost always the remains of shells and other proofs of sea life – ———————————— (find) close to the oil.
(From G. C. Thornley: Easier Scientific English Practice, Longman)

(b) The sense of doom in us today is not a fear of science; it is a fear of war. And the causes of war ———————————— not ———————— (create) by science.
Science has obviously multiplied the warmakers' power. The weapons of today can kill more people more secretly and more unpleasantly than those of the past, and for some time it ———————— (say) of each new weapon that it is so destructive that it will force nations to give up war for lack of cannon fodder. This hope ———————— never ————————
(fulfil). The acts of men and women ———————————— not
———————— (dictate) by such simple compulsions.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Select suitable verbs from those given below and use their 'passive' forms in the following advertisement:
quote, print, invite, open, complete

Tender Notice
Printing of Annual Report
Sealed tenders ———————— from reputed printing houses for the printing of the Annual Report of the Corporation.
The Annual Report ———————— to be ———————— in about 100 pages. The rates of printing should ————————
The tender papers ———————— by a committee in the presence of the tenderers on 16.5.87.
The printing work ———————— to be ———————— within 15 days of our handing over the materials.
Managing Director.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

As you can see from all the examples you have produced in the various exercises above, the passive voice is very useful for focusing on a particular thing. The passive is used to explain the procedure for carrying out a particular task. The passive voice is very useful when we do not want to be personal but impersonal.

e.g. He saw John (personal). If you want to remove him, you will use the passive.

John was seen (impersonal)

Now that we have completed the active and passive forms, let's move on to another area that is very important in the use of English. That is the non-finite Verbals.

Non-finite Verbals
A finite verb changes its form according to tense and subject. For example, the verb be has the finite forms *am, is, are, was, were* and the non-finite forms *being* and *been.*

4.3.4 To + Infinitive

We have seen how the active and passive voices help us decide where to place emphasis in a sentence. Let us now turn to another important verb form, the **infinitive**.

Before you continue, think about this:
What is the difference between *"I went to the library"* and *"I went to the library to study"*? What does *to study* tell you about the action?

The forms of the verb that can be used after other verbs and with to before it (such *as go in I can go, I want to go, and it is important to go*) are called the infinitive.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Insert *to*, where necessary, before the verbs in brackets.

1 .Do you know how (repair) a watch?
2 .Yes, I do, but my mother wouldn't let me (touch) hers.
3 .Why did you make us (wait) for so long outside?
4 .I am sorry (inform) you that the company finds itself unable (let) you (file) your claim before the end of the year.
5 .If you are not attentive, I'll make you (do) it all over again.
6 .Would you like (join) the army?
7. He seems (know) the whole area.
8 .He tries very hard (make) me (believe) that he sincerely wanted me (learn) how (swim).
9. Please tell me where (keep) this vase in the drawing room.
10. Is it necessary for me (attend) the meeting? I'd much rather (stay) at home.
11. It is up to you (accept) or (reject) this offer, unless you want me (tell) you why you should keep it.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6
Combine each of the following pairs of sentences into one sentence using the pattern 'too to infinitive', as in the examples.

Examples: It is very cold. We can't go out.
It is *too cold to go* out.

He is very tired. He can't work. He is *too tired* to work.
Remember 'too tired to work' means 'so tired that he can't work'.

1. He is very young. He won't understand this study.
2. He was quite angry. He couldn't speak.
3. It was very dark. I didn't see the signpost clearly.
4. He is very timid. He can't get married.
5. He is very busy. He won't see you now.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7
Replace the *italicised* words by a phrase with *to*-infinitive.

Examples
It is necessary t*hat we should do* something. It is necessary for us to do something.
He was the first person *who congratulated me* on my birthday. He was ———————— to congratulate me ————————

1. There was no place where we could hide.
2. It is necessary that people should know the truth.
3. It is better that he should receive it from his father.
4. I was surprised when I heard that he had left the party.
5. I was the only one who recognised him in the dark.

The Infinitive of Purpose
Read the following sentences:
People dig up clay to make bricks, and another sort of clay to make earthenware and china.

(a) We use 'to + infinitive' to talk about the purpose of doing something (that is, why someone does something):

(i) Badrinath went out to *buy* stamps (because he wanted to buy stamps).
(ii) My friend shouted 'Look out!' *to warn* me of the speeding bus.
(b) We also use '*to* + infinitive' to talk about the purpose of something, or why someone has/wants/needs something:
(i) This fence is *to keep* stray animals out of the garden.
(ii) The Prime Minister has a number of bodyguards *to protect* him.
(iii) We need a match to *light* this stove.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8
Answer these questions in complete sentences using the words given in brackets.

Example
Why did Kusum phone you? (invite me to her birthday party) She phoned to invite me to her birthday party.

1. Why did Azhar go to the bank? (cash a cheque)
2. Why are you going to Paris? (learn French)
3. Why does Srinivas need a bag? (Put these vegetables in)

4. Why has Jayant gone to the police station? (report that his bicycle has been stolen)
5. Why do the Reddys want a bank loan? (buy a house)
6. Why are you going to the post office? (send a money order)
7. Why did Susheela go to the chemist? (get some medicine)
8. Why does Mr. Sharma have a Secretary? (type his letters)
9. Why did the Minister want an aircraft? (take him to the site of the accident)
10. Why are you going to the hospital? (have an operation)

Do you know what? The common errors that Nigerian users of English make when using the infinitive are to use the infinitive with the past tense. Please note that the infinitive (to) does not take the past tense or past participle.

Do not say:
I did not see him to *told* him *Say*
I did not see him to tell him.

If you use the infinitive wrongly, people will laugh at you. Again, you will look intelligent and illiterate. Thus, always try to use the correct infinitive in spoken and written English.

4.4 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

1. how the active voice presents the subject as the performer of an action;
2. how the passive voice shifts attention to the action or the person or thing affected by it;
3. how passive constructions are formed using an appropriate form of **be** and the past participle;
4. how the infinitive is used after certain verbs and expressions;
5. how **to + infinitive** can be used to express purpose; and
6. some common errors associated with the use of the passive voice and infinitives.

The most important point is to practise these forms in meaningful sentences. This will help you use them accurately and appropriately in your everyday communication.

4.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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UNIT 5 MODAL AUXILIARIES

Unit Structure

5.1 Introduction
5.2 Learning Outcomes
5.3 Modal Auxiliaries in English Communication
5.3.1 Modal Auxiliaries and their Uses
5.3.2 Ought to, Should and Would
5.3.3 The Importance of Modal Auxiliaries to Users of English
5.4 Summary
5.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

5.1 Introduction

Have you ever said *"I can come tomorrow"*, *"You should see a doctor"*, or *"May I come in?"*? If you have, then you have already used modal auxiliaries, even if you did not know their grammatical name.

Modal auxiliaries are a special group of helping verbs that allow us to express ideas such as **ability, possibility, permission, obligation, advice, willingness, probability and politeness**. They are small words, but they can significantly change the meaning of a sentence.

For example, compare these sentences:

- You **can** come tomorrow.
- You **may** come tomorrow.
- You **must** come tomorrow.
- You **should** come tomorrow.
- You **would** come tomorrow.

Although the main verb *come* remains the same, each modal auxiliary gives the sentence a different meaning. *Can* may express ability or permission, *may* may express possibility or permission, *must* expresses strong obligation, *should* often expresses advice or expectation, while *would* can express willingness, preference, politeness or a hypothetical situation.

Modal auxiliaries are particularly important because their meanings do not always correspond directly with expressions in Nigerian languages. As a result, some Nigerian users of English may select a modal that does not accurately convey the intended meaning.

As you work through this final unit, pay attention not only to the forms of modal auxiliaries but also to the situations in which they are appropriate. Notice how a small change from *can* to *may*, or from *must* to *should*, can change the force of a statement.

The activities and examples in this unit will give you opportunities to practise these distinctions so that you can use modal auxiliaries more accurately in both spoken and written English.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- **identify** common modal auxiliaries and describe their major uses;
- **distinguish** between *ought to*, *should* and *would* in different communicative situations; and
- **apply** modal auxiliaries appropriately to express ability, possibility, permission, obligation, advice and politeness.

5.3 Modal Auxiliaries in English Communication

Modal auxiliaries help speakers and writers communicate more than the basic action expressed by a verb. They tell the reader or listener how the speaker views that action.

Before examining the individual modal auxiliaries, consider this question:

How would the meaning of a sentence change if you replaced *can* with *must, may* or *should*?

Keep this question in mind as you continue reading.

5.3.1 Modal Auxiliaries and Their Uses

Modal auxiliaries are special helping verbs used with main verbs to express meanings such as ability, possibility, permission, obligation and necessity.

There are some special verbs in English which are called modal auxiliaries. Some of these are:

can, may, must, ought to, should, would.

They can be used in the present and past tenses i.e. *car/could, will/would, may/might.*

(a) can

Can has a number of uses.

(i) It means ‘know how to’, ‘be able to’.

Examples:

I can swim well.
I couldn't do that new job; it was too difficult. (meaning 'I wasn't able to do it')
I can see you easily from here.

Let's go where we can have some freedom. Money cannot buy everything.

(ii) It can also mean 'be allowed to' (by rules).
e.g., You can't pick the ball up in a football game. (The rules do not allow this).
(iii) It is also used in the sense of 'have permission to'; e.g., Can we go to the shops for sweets?

It is wrong to say *can be able* e.g. I *can be able to go.*
This is because *"can" means "be able to"*.

(b) May

May is used in the following senses:

(i) It can mean 'be likely to' (possibility).

Example
He may come or he may not. He may have been hurt.
(ii) It can also mean 'have permission to, be allowed to'.

May I come in?
In fact, this is the kind of polite way of coming into somebody's office or house.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1
Fill in the blanks with *may* or *can* in the following sentences:
1. You _ not think so, but dirty streets __ cause epidemics.
2. With a little effort you and your wife ___ keep the house clean.
3. Rubbish should be put in the dustbin so that it ____ be removed by cleaners every day.
4. Look at the dark clouds; it _rain tonight.
5. " ____you stand on your head?" "How _____I? I haven't learnt yoga."

(c) Must; have to

Study the use of *must* and *have to* in the following sentences: You *must* clean your own boots. (Those are my orders.)

You *have* to clean your own boots when you join the army. (The rules oblige you to do that.)

Both *must* and *have to* are used to express an obligation. The main difference between the two is that *must* expresses an obligation imposed by the speaker, while *have to* expresses an obligation imposed by external circumstances. The other important point to bear in mind is that *have to* is preferred for habits, and must is preferred for urgent obligations.

I *have to* water the plants myself.
I *must* inform him at once; he has got the job.
Note: *must* has no past or future form. Therefore, *had to* is used for the past, and *will have to* for the future. Look at the following:
I *had to* stop the car; there was a bus in the middle of the road.
John is retiring in 1990; he *will have to* look for a new job if he wants to continue his son's education.

The figure below provides a quick visual reminder that modal auxiliaries do not simply indicate tense. They also communicate the speaker's attitude towards an action. For example, *can* may indicate ability, while *must* indicates strong necessity

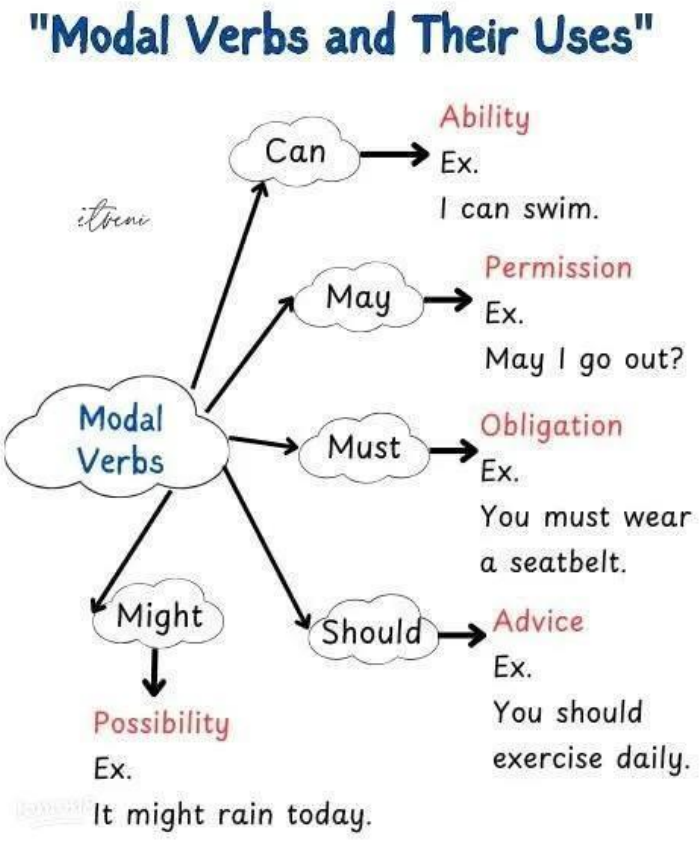

Figure 5.1: Common Modal Auxiliaries and Their Communicative Functions

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Fill in the blanks with *must* or *have to* in the following sentences:

1. I ____leave now; it is getting late.
2. I can never remember people's phone numbers; I always _____look them up.
3. You__try to be a little more tactful.
4. It isn't fair; I always _____do the dirty work.
5. If there is a problem, you _report it to me at once.
6. I ____do all the drafting at my office; my colleagues are too lazy.
7. Tell him he _be here by five; I insist on it.
8. My cook is old and blind. Whenever he wants to eat, I _ get up and cook for him.
9. Notice in a department store: bags and umbrellas __ be left at the desk.
10. You _visit us again sometime.

So far, you have seen how modal auxiliaries such as *can*, *may*, *must* and *have to* help speakers express ability, permission, possibility and obligation. But not every situation requires a strong command or a statement of possibility. Sometimes we need to **give advice, express duty, make a polite request or indicate preference**. This brings us to *ought to, should* and *would*.

5.3.2 Ought to, Should, and Would

Before continuing, consider this question:

How can you advise someone without making your advice sound like an order?
The answer often involves choosing a modal auxiliary.

Study the use of *ought to, should* and *would* in the following sentences: You *ought to* send more money to your old parents.
(It's your duty).

You *ought to* have worked harder; I advised you to. (But you didn't, and now it is too late.)

I think you *should* wear your glasses regularly. (It's my suggestion/advice.)
Should I go there by taxi? (asking for advice)
Would you please tell me the way to the India Gate? (a request)
I *would* like to see the manager. (more polite than 'I want to…')
Ought to is very often used when we wish to refer to the duty of the person referred to by the subject. The speaker is reminding this person of the duty or giving him advice. *Ought to* does not carry a speaker's authority as *(must,* does) nor does it indicate an outside authority as *(have to,* does). *Ought to* is usually said without much emphasis. *Should* can also be used in the same way as *ought to.*

Compare the following:

You *have to* take this injection. (The doctor insists on it.) You *musn't* drink this; it is poison.
You ought not to smoke so much; you are wasting your money. You *have to* obey Mr. Gill. (Mr. Gill insists on it.)
You *must* obey Mr. Gill. (The speaker insists on, or approves of Mr. Gill's authority.)
You *ought to* obey Mr. Gill. (Neither the speaker's authority nor Mr. Gill's is involved here, but the speaker thinks that obeying Mr. Gill is advisable or part of the duty of the person addressed.)

Note: *ought to* with the perfect infinitive (e.g., *ought to have done, ought to have gone)* expresses a duty or a course of action that was neglected.

Example
You *ought to have applied* for the job last month; now it is too late.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3
Fill in the blanks with *ought to, have to* or *must* in the following paragraph:

I ____have gone to see Mr. Sharma last week. He passed away this morning in the hospital; they ____ bring the body home. I _____go to the funeral; that will be making some amends. His three sons _____ be present before they removed the body to the cremation ground. His wife ___(negative) stay in the house all by herself.

Should can be used in the same way as *ought to,* but it is less forceful than *must* or *have to* because no authority is involved.

Should is generally used to express duty and to indicate a correct or sensible action. It is a usual way of giving advice. Look at the following: You *should* pay your debts. (duty)

You *shouldn't* tell lies. (correct action) You *should* eat better to keep fit. (advice)
You have written it wrongly. There *should* be one more line at the end. (correct again)
They *shouldn't* allow parking on this street; it is too narrow. (advice)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4
Rewrite the italicised parts of the following sentences, using *should* as in the example.

Example: *He insisted on* my selling the house. He insisted that I *should* sell the house.

1. He suggested *our postponing the trip.*
2. He was anxious *for everyone to have a chance to work.*
3. He recommended *my buying a new car.*
4. He agreed *to the two winners sharing the prize money.*

5. He arranged *for me to receive higher education.*

Study the use of *would* in the following sentences. Compare *would* with *want.*

(i) I *want* some bananas.
(ii) I *would like* some bananas.
(iii) I *want* to see the manager.
(iv) I *would like to* see the manager, please.
(v) *Would like* is more polite than *want.*
(vi) *Rather/sooner* is used after *would* to express preference.
(vii) He *would rather/sooner* talk himself than listen to others.

Would is also used for habits and insistence, and can be replaced by *used to.*

They *would* wait for us in the market every day. (used to wait) She *would* visit her aunt, though we warned her that she wasn't expected to. (insisted on visiting)

"Why don't you get your visa extended?"
"I've requested the officer several times to do it, but he wouldn't" (insisted on not doing).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5
Fill in the blanks with *would* in the following sentences:
1. _____you mind opening the window? It is too hot in here.
2. This jacket doesn't suit you; you _buy another.
3. "The manager isn't in". Then, I __like to see the assistant manager.
4. perhaps you be good enough to inform me of any change of programme before hand.
5. Why _women be paid less than men for doing the same work?
6. I ____sooner die than compromise with a rogue like you.
7. He said he _ be sorry to see the end of such lovely weather.
8. "Raj has failed the examination".
   "He __have worked harder."

You have now seen that modal auxiliaries do much more than help to construct sentences. They allow speakers and writers to communicate **attitude, intention and degree of certainty**. The final part of this unit, therefore, considers why modal auxiliaries matter in everyday, academic and professional communication.

5.3.3 The Importance of Modal Auxiliaries to Users of English

Consider the following question:

What would happen if every instruction, request and possibility were expressed in exactly the same way?

Communication would become less precise. Modal auxiliaries help us communicate the degree of certainty, force, politeness or possibility attached to an action.

The following are the uses of modal auxiliaries to users of English:

1. Modal auxiliaries enable you to express probability. When you are not sure of anything you use *may/might.*
2. Modal auxiliaries enable you to express ability. When you want to express ability, you use *can/could.*
3. Modal auxiliaries enable you to express *obligation, compulsion* and give orders. You use *must, ought to shall/should* for all these.
4. Modal auxiliaries are useful for signalling politeness, e.g. would like, may I, could I, etc.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate modal auxiliaries.

1. We __strive to make you much more comfortable.
2. You _want to consult a doctor, if need be.
3. _____I ask you a question please?
4. You _have seen the man without recognising him.
5. If you wish you ____submit your work.
6. _____please adhere strictly to the time?
7. I _____like you to see the man yourself.
8. Please consult the secretariat _____require to see a doctor.
9. No writer ___be given his scripts to take home.
10. If you make it try and check me up.

5.4 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt that:

- **Modal auxiliaries** are helping verbs that express meanings such as ability, possibility, permission, obligation and advice.
- **Can** can express ability, permission and general possibility.
- **May** can express possibility and permission.

- **Must** and **have to** can express obligation, although the source of the obligation may differ.
- **Ought to** and **should** commonly express duty, advice or appropriate action.
- **Would** can be used for polite requests, polite expressions of desire, preference and past habits.
- Modal auxiliaries are important in academic and professional communication because they help speakers and writers express their intentions accurately.
- A modal auxiliary is normally followed by the **base form** of the main verb.

5.5 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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Adapted materials: Selected materials in this unit are adapted from Indira Gandhi Open University course materials and are retained for instructional redevelopment in accordance with the source acknowledgement provided in the original course material.