

Teacher Tips

Rule number one:

You must provide an atmosphere of safety where anyone can make a mistake or ask an awkward question without fear of ridicule or unkind laughter. If you fail to do this, your students will not attempt to speak the difficult words that will improve their spoken English, nor will they ask the questions of life and faith that they need to have answered.

Level of student:

These lessons are designed to be used in an ESL/Bible class for high intermediate and advanced students. They are lessons that I personally have used in my advanced ESL/Bible class on Sunday mornings at my church. The classes are held during the Sunday School hour but we use the name *ESL/Bible* rather than *Sunday School* because it is more appropriate and better understood by our international students. It also makes it clear that, unlike our Wednesday evening classes (which use secular content), the Bible is the content material for these classes.

Making copies of lessons:

Use and copying of these lessons is covered by copyright law. You are encouraged to make copies for your students; however, you must read

and follow the instructions in the copyright statement that is repeated on the first page of each lesson.

Content of each lesson:

Each lesson begins with a *passage of scripture* from the *NIV Bible* (2011 edition). Sound unit marks / have been added for better comprehension and pronunciation.

Next is a *vocabulary section* containing words or idioms from the passage. Your students may add more of these during the class.

The vocabulary is followed by a set of *questions for discussion*.

The final section is called *Notes* and provides some general background along with information such as the location and other significant points about the passage.

Teaching the lesson:

Use the *checklist* at the end of the document as a quick reference for teaching the class. If you are finish the material and have lots of time left over, then your students are not doing enough of the talking. The lessons may even take more than one session to complete if everyone is participating.

These are designed to be *oral lessons* where the students do most of the talking. ESL classes should *not* be a lecture, and the students should be

reading and speaking almost all of the class time. That builds confidence and stamina in speaking the language.

Most internationals need help in pronunciation. Choral reading of the Bible passage is very important because it allows the participants to hear the correct sounds of English and follow along. Be sure to use the sound unit breaks to help build the rhythm of the language. You may want to read the passage more than once to correct pronunciation or rhythm.

Discuss the passage, but be careful to lead in a way that causes the students to do the talking. You can ask questions to prompt the discussion, but do *not* ask questions that can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no.”

In the Vocabulary section, have the students chorally read the definitions. This may lead to students adding additional words that they did not understand. Discuss the words, and pronounce them yourself, and then with the students. Repetition is important in vocabulary so repeat this process multiple times until the students can say it the way you do.

Often you can add a “Place” section to the lesson. In that section you could add the names of towns like Jerusalem, Bethany, Capernaum, etc. These are difficult, but good for working on the sounds of English. If you have historical and modern maps of the geographic area covered in the lesson, this is a good place to use them.

Listen and keep track of words someone has stumbled over; then go back and chorally pronounce the words. If one student has stumbled, all the rest probably need practice as well.

The Notes section relies on *The Daily Study Bible Series* by William Barclay and lots of other commentaries, Bible dictionaries and on-line explanations. Ask individuals to read aloud as you go around the class. Sometimes have everyone chorally read, then go back and ask the individual to read again. Work on sound units, stamina, linking and voice quality.

Return to the Bible passage that was chorally read. and read it chorally again. Go around the room and have individuals read one verse each. Help with pronunciation, or chorally read with that one person.

Have everyone read the passage again. Five times is the objective. It helps with comprehension, stamina in long passages, and voice quality. This often leads to discussion about some deep parts of faith, the existence of God, and other valid questions. Here you must insure that the class is safe for the students to question concepts without ridicule or laughter.

If you have time, do the Question section. By this time, the answers can be obvious.

A Checklist (or “Did I really teach the lesson?”)

1. Pass around the class attendance sheet, introduce new members, be sure everyone has a copy of the lesson.

2. Begin class with a language sample:

- Tell me something good that happened this week.
- Did you travel over this holiday?
- Any questions you have for me?
- I heard this idiom on the radio. Do you know it?
- Ask each person in turn to tell you something you are sure they know (for example, the month of their birthday).

3. Introduce lesson. Chorally read the *Bible passage* together. Your voice should be the model for pronunciation and voice quality.

Answer any questions, and pronounce hard words again. Always say the word, then have the class repeat it several times.

Have one student read aloud one sentence or verse and briefly correct or help them. Continue until all students have read a sentence or verse (even if the passage is read more than once).

4. Go over the *vocabulary* words chorally. Ask if they know all the words in the passage. Add other words if you need to.

5. Skip over the *questions* for the moment, and have each member read aloud one of the *Notes*. If a lesson has only a few notes, they can be repeated until everyone has a chance to read aloud.
6. Go over the *questions* if you have time.
7. Chorally read the lesson again. Repeat this at least 3 to 5 times.
8. Check yourself. You should be using terms like *voice quality*, *sound units*, *single sound pronunciation*, *vowel*, etc. If you as a teacher, do not know these terms, consider purchasing the *Pronunciation DVD* that is listed in the “Books, etc.” section of the www.eslts.com website. This DVD is for training teachers, not students.