

Proficiency Level: Elementary (Level 2), from Common European Framework (CEF) level

Pre-requisite: Completion of Foundation (Level 1) or equivalent (Students without a formal qualification will be given a placement test to determine the level of proficiency.)

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed the Foundation English Course or who have Elementary level understanding of English.

Elementary students are at the level where their knowledge, skills and abilities are considered at the lower level of the 5-tier spectrum - Foundation to Elementary (low level), Pre-intermediate (average), Intermediate to Upper-Intermediate (higher level). These students have a limited to slightly acceptable range of vocabulary that may be adequate for short and familiar conversations. They would probably distinguish the different types of verbs – be, do and have and may be capable of constructing basic and familiar sentences with occasional slip-ups on sentence structure and word order. Listening poses a challenge to these students especially when the aural text gets longer (beyond 5 minutes). In terms of reading, these students can handle short text from 100-200 word count. They may handle reading sub-skills of identifying main facts and details, recognizing cause and effect relationships, recognising sequence of events at the literal comprehension and reorganisation levels on the Barrett's Taxonomy. Implicit questioning at the level of inferential comprehension, evaluation and appreciation should be done at the minimum. These students need to be taught on the sub-skill inferring meaning from contextual clues with reading strategies such as skimming, scanning and previewing. Learners need to be exposed to a lot of materials, whether authentic or not for them to be exposed to the language on the four macro skills.

Materials should be engaging and enlivening. Communicative teaching can be employed but errors on form should not be ignored to avoid fossilization. Employment of pair work, group discussions, role plays, language games, songs and the use of realia would help in awakening the interest of these students.

The provision of peer feedback and teacher feedback would be a valuable tool (assessment for learning) so students would know their current competencies and what they need to do to progress to the next level.

Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation

At any level, the basic tools students need to speak English with confidence are Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation (G,V,P). All three elements are given equal importance. Each lesson has clearly stated grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation aims. This keeps lessons focused and gives students concrete learning objectives and a sense of progress.

Grammar

Elementary students need

- Revision on grammar items covered in Foundation
- Grammar items in multimodality (use of pictures, icons, sounds, drawings, etc) and in appropriate context to aid students' grasp of their usage
- Challenging but not demoralizing grammar exercises
- Holistic approach to grammar teaching by incorporating grammar items to be taught in the reading passage together with the useful vocabulary

The main course book begins with Grammar presentations **Check what you know**, this provides short exercises which revise Elementary Grammar points, and are cross referenced to the Workbook, where students who are having problems can find rules and further practice. New grammar signals the presentation of a grammar point not previously covered in *New English File*. The Grammar banks give students a single, easy-to-access grammar reference section, with clear rules and example sentences.

Vocabulary

Elementary students need

- Systematic expansion of their vocabulary in topic-based lexical areas.
- Opportunities to put new vocabulary into practice.
- To further develop their ability to "build" new words by adding affixes.
- Explicit teaching of inferring meaning from contextual clues so students wouldn't feel paralysed of not having their dictionaries around
- Practice in pronouncing new lexis correctly and confidently.
- Reference material which aids memorization

At this level, expanding students' vocabulary is the most visible and motivating measure of their progress. Every lesson has a clear lexical aim. Many lessons are linked to the Vocabulary Banks which help present and practice high-frequency, topic-based vocabulary in class and provide a clear reference bank designed to aid memorization. The stress in multi-syllable words is clearly marked and phonemic script is provided where necessary.

Pronunciation

Elementary students need

- a solid foundation in the sounds of English
- exposure to a rich variety of authentic materials (interviews, news report, dialogue, etc)
- to be able to use appropriate rhythm and intonation
- targeted pronunciation development.
- to see where there are rules and patterns

Elementary learners want to speak clearly but are often frustrated by English pronunciation, particularly the sound-spelling relationships, silent letters and weak forms. There is an emphasis on improving pronunciation, by focusing on the sounds most useful for communication, on word stress, and on sentence rhythm, English File Elementary has a pronunciation focus in every lesson, which integrates clear pronunciation into grammar and vocabulary practice.

Speaking

Elementary students need

- topics that will inspire their interest
- achievable tasks to motivate them
- regular opportunities to use new language
- to improve accuracy as well as developing their fluency

English File motivates the students to speak by providing them with varied and motivating tasks, and the language (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) that they need in order to communicate with confidence.

Listening

Elementary students need

- to build confidence
- to understand the gist of what is being said
- to make sense of connected speech
- a reason to listen

The listening in English File are based on a variety of entertaining and realistic situations. There is a wide range of voices and accents from the UK and the rest of the English-speaking world, but all the speakers are clear and comprehensible to students at this level. The performances and the sound effects bring the listening alive, and make the recording easier for students to follow and more fun to listen to.

Reading

Elementary students need

- engaging topics and stimulating texts.
- manageable tasks that help students to read

Many students need to read in English for their work or studies, and reading is also important in helping to build vocabulary and consolidate grammar. The key to encouraging students to read is to give them more motivating but accessible material and tasks they can do. In English File Elementary reading texts have been adapted from a variety of real sources (the British press, magazines, news websites) and have been chosen for their intrinsic interests.

Writing

Elementary students need

- clear models
- the 'nuts and bolts' of writing on a word and sentence level

The growth of the Internet and email means that people worldwide are writing in English more than ever before both for business and personal communication. English File Elementary provides guided writing tasks covering a range of writing types from a formal email to a social networking post.

Practical English

Elementary students need

- to understand high-frequency phrases that they will hear
- to know what to say in typical situations

The six Practical English lessons give students practice in key language for situations such as checking into a hotel or ordering a meal in a restaurant. To make these everyday situations come alive there is a story involving two main characters, Jenny (from New York) and Rob (from London). The ***You hear/You say*** feature makes a clear distinction between what students will hear and need to understand, for example Are you ready to order?, and what they need to say, for example I'd like a salad please. The practical English video is on the ***English File Elementary DVD***, and ***iTools***.

Revision

Elementary students need

- regular review
- motivating reference and practice material
- a sense of progress

However clearly structures or vocabulary are presented, students will usually only assimilate and remember new language if they have the chance to see it and use it several times. Grammar, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation are recycled throughout the course. After every two Files there is a two-page Revise and Check section. The left hand revises the grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation of each file. The right hand provides a series of skills-based challenges, including video interviews, and helps students to measure their progress in terms of competence.

Assessment Structure

A comprehensive competency-based assessment focussing on Grammar, Reading, Writing, and Listening will be conducted twice each term on the 6th and the 12th week of the term. Speaking will be assessed in class as continuous assessment throughout the term to encourage more class participation.

Week 6	Mid-Term Assessment
Week 12	End of Term Assessment

Marks & Grade	
Grade	Description / Competency
A	Competent
B	Partially Achieved (Not Yet Competent)
C	Not Achieved (Not Yet Competent)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>To secure a passing grade to move up to the next level, students are required to be competent in all performance criteria in each component (Writing, Speaking, Grammar, Reading and Listening).</i>• <i>In addition, students are required to have a minimum of 80% attendance and/or have at least 80% attendance (accumulative) of 1 term (i.e. attended 45 days of classes) over his/her entire study duration for the level.</i>	

- If the student fails to achieve a passing grade, he/she may be eligible for recovery or re-assessment depending on the number of competent performance criteria achieved. Students who are not eligible for either have to repeat the whole term and retake all the assessments again.
- Recovery eligibility criteria
 - Only 1-2 components and less than 25% of the component were not achieved.
 - At least 80% attendance (45 days of classes)
 - Recommended by teacher
 - Recommendation will be based on the professional judgement of the teacher
- Re-assessment eligibility criteria
 - Achieved at least 75% of the competency in all the individual components.
 - At least 80% attendance (45 days of classes)