

English Vision

Six level course for Starters to Intermediate
Introducing the latest addition to our ELT collection

English Vision takes an integrated approach to skills development with vocabulary (lexis) and grammar structures reinforced across all elements of the individual units and modules. The concept of English Vision is to provide a 'whole-of-course' approach, rather than discrete, unit-sized chunks delivering often rather narrow lessons. This whole-of-course approach allows for a more fluid, informative and entertaining education process for students.

The Student Book units which present lexis (vocabulary), grammar and skills are grouped by theme or topic. On a unit level, the learning path begins with the vocabulary presentation and proceeds through a series of exercises designed to activate the lexis and communicative functions, ending in writing and speaking exercises incorporating both personalised and collaborative features. On a module level the vocabulary and structures are consistently recycled and extended throughout all elements of each Student Book module (Opener, Unit, Wrap-up and Projects) before, on a course-wide level, being practised, reinforced and then assessed through all other components (Workbook, Flashcards, Posters and Assessments). This approach is based in English Vision's core values which focus on both the development of both **everyday, functional language skills and academic/content-based language input** from a variety of fiction and non-fiction reading genres.

As society continuously evolves, English Vision supports the belief that learners benefit more from developing critical thinking skills than simply memorising or mimicking what they are taught. Retention of lexis and language structures is important, and our rigorous syllabus reinforces this approach, but full understanding of the language and the ability to communicate accurately and effectively requires students to understand the language on a deeper level.

To that end, English Vision takes the following approach:

Vocabulary

Taking into account the needs of our 21st Century learners, development of vocabulary skills in English Vision is woven throughout the course. Understanding the meaning of words involves more than just learning the dictionary definition. Students need not only to understand the words but know how to actively use the vocabulary when they produce sentences in English (active lexis). In English Vision, the lexis is organised by lexical areas and has been extended to help learners develop three types of Vocabulary: Core, Additional and Passive.

Core Vocabulary

Presented in the Vocabulary section of the Student Book unit. These terms have been chosen primarily to support learners' ability to recognise and use new language across a wide array of everyday situations (talking about the weather, hobbies, abilities, giving opinions, agreeing/disagreeing with others, etc.). Learners have opportunities to use these terms across several sections of the unit, including Vocabulary, Reading, Grammar, Listening, Writing, and Speaking. English Vision follows the CEFR descriptors for young learners to ensure that they are provided with ample practice with communication using language that is relevant to their lives as well as demonstrate their proficiency at various CEFR levels.

Additional Vocabulary

These are key terms presented in other parts of the unit and allow for richer practice of grammar structures of functional language. An example of this might be in the Level 1 unit where the Core Vocabulary focuses on types of weather, and the Grammar section contains Additional Vocabulary to help student discuss the types of activities they do in various weather types. Where appropriate – for example, subject or object pronouns, adverbs of frequency and conjunctions – additional grammar-related vocabulary is introduced specifically in the Grammar section.

Passive Vocabulary

This is language that students need to know in order to understand the more academic-style content featured in the reading passages. Retaining these vocabulary terms in the reading texts will allow young learners, in most cases, to be able to understand these terms through the use of illustrations/photos, captions and labels or deduce meaning from the context of the reading text. This forward-thinking approach allows the learners to have access to richer readings across a variety of fiction and non-fiction genres. Comprehension activities help the learners work with this type of vocabulary, though the passive lexis is not tested in the Assessment component. Throughout the six levels of English Vision, some of the Passive Vocabulary may appear as Core Vocabulary or Additional Vocabulary. This approach provides for multiple exposure to the vocabulary terms, allowing for recycling, reinforcement and extension of the language terms.

Throughout the course, the Core Vocabulary introduced in the vocabulary exercise will be referred to either directly or by topic. The vocabulary is presented, then practised through fun, interactive tasks; connected to the Phonics (or in higher levels the Word Study) section; addressed in the 'Sing' (in higher levels the 'Sounds and Spelling') section; and then later in the Reading, Grammar, Values, Writing, Listening and Speaking sections. All three types of vocabulary are listed, per unit, in the Glossary at the end of each Student Book.

Finally, it's important to note that the Core Vocabulary is listed in both Flashcard format and also on the large classroom posters. This latter approach allows the teacher to use the poster as an interactive teaching aid by using it to target language revision and facilitate practice in larger groups (thereby including 21st Century Skills such as collaboration and communication).

Reading (Written Reception)

English Vision provides students with a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts, ranging from postcards, diaries and personal narratives to information texts and web articles related to school content areas.

Each reading text is related to the topic of the unit and written at a level that helps push learners slightly above their current level of receptive understanding. Photos, illustrations and captions help the learners deduce the meaning of passive vocabulary terms. It's important to note that the role of reading in English Vision is, as with vocabulary, to develop both everyday, functional language skills and academic/content-based language input from a variety of sources.

Thus, written reception in English Vision is not restricted to one based only on the concept of introducing a limited number of individual vocabulary terms, which typically formulates the approach of previous courses. Many courses focus primarily on either the narrow development of a specific type of language. For example, some focus heavily on academic/content-based language, and this is evident in the progression of tasks in a unit. In such courses, vocabulary is presented in a way geared specifically to prepare learners for reading passages. In this scenario, every unit is driven by content-area language which typically can feature, at times, obscure high-level words and phrases presented out of context along with the reading texts. There may be some tasks allocated to asking learners to practise functional, everyday language, but the presentation of vocabulary needed to do this is limited.

English Vision's approach to reading seeks to avoid this approach and instead help learners develop not just lexis command but also skills such as key reading strategies. These strategy skills include but are not limited to: Previewing a text; Reading for gist; Reading for main idea and details; Drawing conclusions; Understanding cause and effect; Comparing and contrasting.

In keeping with English Vision's goal of providing students with access to richer readings across a variety of fiction and non-fiction genres, the reading passages are not heavy or restricted texts aimed only preparing students for exams. They are also focused on preparing students to communicate with their peers on a global level. Therefore, the reading texts are an extension of the module topic and designed to encourage the concept of reading for pleasure. They help students expand on their learning; as the topic is explored across the various exercises, methods and components, the learners develop a more global understanding of the language.

To recap, our reading and vocabulary approach, taken together, boil down to the following points:

- Vocabulary is developed systematically in the series to include ample support for both everyday, functional language and academic/content language.
- The series presents both core vocabulary for everyday language and passive vocabulary for more academic-based contexts. Sometimes these run parallel to each other, and other times they may overlap, depending on the context of the unit.
- Taking this approach helps ensure that learners are able to encounter a wide variety of reading genres as well as have numerous opportunities to develop and demonstrate their ability to use language described in the CEFR.

Finally, it's important to note that the reading texts in English Vision are graded using the Lexile measure, part of the Lexile Framework of Reading. English Vision's texts begin at L100–200 range and progress through the subsequent levels until reaching L600–L800 in Level 6. The Lexile Framework of Reading system provides guidelines for assessing an individual learner's proficiency level in reading, as well as measuring the level of difficulty a text may pose for readers.

Grammar

English Vision's Grammar syllabus runs from the CEFR's Pre-A1 to B1+ and the Cambridge English YLE–Preliminary standards. The syllabus is rigorous and, importantly, systematic and carefully scaffolded to assist teachers. The grammar terms are presented contextually in each unit which, along with practise of the key grammar terms, allows the students to learn its form and meaning and its usage.

Key grammar points are embedded into texts and activities in each unit, allowing for ample exposure to the key structures in context. Practising new grammatical forms in natural, conversational contexts aids more natural understanding and acquisition of new structures.

Where appropriate, English Vision sometimes adds presentations of vocabulary related specifically to certain tasks. For example, in the Level 1 unit on weather, English Vision presents in the Grammar section vocabulary for activities that children may do in different types of weather in order to have richer practice of the grammar and topic of the unit. There are several instances where additional grammar-related vocabulary needs to be introduced in the Grammar section: for example, the list of subject pronouns, object pronouns, adverbs of frequency, conjunctions, and so on.

English Vision also offers learners the chance to tackle the grammar exercises orally, through collaboration and communication in pairs or small groups, and for the teacher to correct them together – especially important for weaker classes.

Listening (Oral reception)

Processing and understanding listening input are a crucial part of second language acquisition. Beyond the recognition of individual sounds and words, learners need to develop their skills in creating meaning from longer passages and conversations they hear in English.

The approach to listening in English Vision involves having the learners practise different listening strategies as they listen to passages multiple times. For example, the first time they may listen to a series of short conversations and be asked to number photos in the order that they hear them in the listening passage (listening for gist). The second time they listen to the conversations, the learners may be asked to listen for specific information in order to complete a form or a chart (listening for details).

It is important to train the learners in the use of these techniques so that they don't worry about trying to understand every single word in a passage from the beginning. Teachers play a key role in this, in reassuring the learners that through multiple exposures to the same passages and practising different listening strategies, they will eventually be able to understand more and more of the longer passages they hear.

Writing (Written production)

Writing is covered in two separate areas in English Vision. Each Student Book unit features a Writing Skills section where the learners find out about and practise various aspects of written English, such as mechanics, capitalisation, punctuation, in addition to other aspects of writing related to grammar or cohesion. Each writing section corresponds to the topic of unit and module and allows for practise and recycling of learned vocabulary and grammatical structures. Importantly it affords them the opportunity to reformulate the lexis they have learned in a personal way.

Lessons in this section include:

- Word order in sentences
- Subject-verb agreement
- Using conjunctions
- Using time words and phrases
- Pronoun agreement
- Transitions between sentences

In the English Vision Workbooks, the learners have the opportunity to use the language they've learned in the unit to write a range of texts in the Writing Practice section. The learners examine models of writing and use graphic organisers in the Workbook to structure and produce their own texts. They begin with writing short emails, letters, and paragraphs in the lower levels of English Vision, progressing to texts such as reports, job adverts, blog posts, restaurant reviews, and instructions in higher levels.

Speaking (Oral production and interaction)

In keeping with the 'whole-of-course' or 'integrated skills development' approach of English Vision, each unit in the course culminates in a speaking task that allows the learners to revise and practise the lexis and language structures they have learned in a more open-ended, engaging way.

In English Vision, students are actively encouraged to use the language orally, in pairs or in small groups. Speaking tasks are related to the main functional aspects of language presented throughout preceding sections of the unit, and feature pair- and group-work tasks that are both fun and challenging.

Modelling the types of language which the learners are expected to produce can be beneficial, and it can be useful to demonstrate many of the tasks with one or more learners step-by-step before asking groups to try the exercises on their own.

Assessment

English Vision provides a comprehensive set of tools for assessing the learners throughout each level of the series. The Assessment Book contains the following types of tests:

Entry Test: This test serves as a diagnostic tool at the beginning of each new level of English Vision. Teachers can administer this test to help identify areas of proficiency of individual learners as they begin the course. The Entry Test can also help teachers identify areas where remediation or differentiated instruction may provide useful support to the learners.

Unit Tests: There is one test for every unit in English Vision. The Unit Tests help teachers assess how well the learners have mastered the target language of the unit, including exam tasks related to Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening, and Phonics/Sounds and Spelling/Word Study.

Skills Tests: Each module in the Student Book is followed by a Skills Test. These tests help assess the learners' mastery of the language from an entire module (three units), in a variety of formats that mimic the style of the tasks found in different Cambridge English exams. By taking module tests in this way, learners are able to become more familiar with the format of these exams, which may help reduce test anxiety and improve outcomes.

The six levels of English Vision correlate with the following Cambridge English exams:

- Level 1: Cambridge Pre A1 Starters
- Level 2: Cambridge A1 Movers
- Level 3: Cambridge A1/A2 Movers/Flyers
- Level 4: Cambridge A2 Flyers
- Level 5: Cambridge Key for Schools
- Level 6: Cambridge Preliminary for Schools

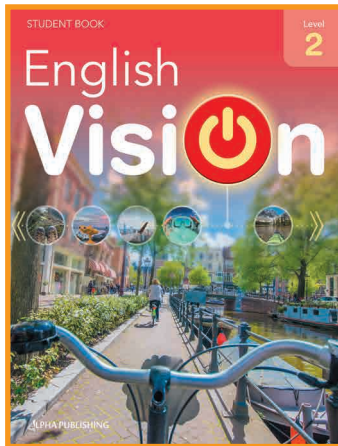
Each Skills Test includes both Listening tasks and Reading/Writing tasks. These tasks are also included in the end-of-module Exam Practice sections of the English Vision Workbooks for additional exposure to the exam types. The Assessment Book also contains Speaking tests for each module. These tests are also formatted to mimic the types of speaking tasks found in the Cambridge English exams while allowing the teacher to assess a learner's ability to speak about topics and use language covered in the module.

Final Test: At the end of each level of English Vision, a Final Test helps assess the learners' mastery of the language from the entire level.

In addition to formal, summative assessment in the Assessment Book, teachers may wish to use a number of different techniques and tools in the English Vision series to perform ongoing, formative assessment. This allows teachers to quickly assess the learners' grasp of a new concept in order to decide whether more instruction is needed before moving on in the unit.

Here are a few examples:

Student Book Module Opener/Poster: A distinguishing feature of English Vision is the inclusion of a large piece of art at the head of each module in the Student Book. This image has been designed to represent all of the core vocabulary contained in the module, inside one large scene that is related to context of the module. The Poster contains the same image as the Student Book module opener and the two pieces can be used interchangeably, depending on the setup or size of the class. At different points in the study of a module, teachers may wish to ask the learners to look at the image and identify certain people or objects, or ask questions about items in the art that practise target grammar structures. Doing this may help the learners consolidate or revise key language from a previous unit or provide an interesting break from their normal routine. The artwork for each module also contains humorous items tucked away in various places to add to the fun.



Flashcards: In each unit of the Teaching Guide a vocabulary game is provided for use of the flashcards, which represent all of the core vocabulary in each unit. Teachers may also wish to use the flashcards at different points in the units to add interest to the class, help the learners revise language from previous units for an upcoming test, or to tap into the learners' creativity by asking them to use the cards to create stories or dialogues.

