

Primary English: Teaching Theory and Practice (6th ed.)

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This book contains 14 chapters covering language learning, ranging from general theory to practice that occur organically in children's language development, and the extent of teaching specific skills, features of classroom settings, and language assessment. The book aims to identify essential elements in teaching primary English in relation to the teachers' standards based on the primary National Curriculum of England and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Key Stages 1 and 2 are used to classify students of grades 1-2 and 3-6, respectively. Trainee teachers as well as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) working in primary levels are the target readers of the book. In the end, they should have clear understanding of the knowledge, skills and attributes of this teaching profession to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In each chapter, teachers' standards are presented at the beginning to provide a clear relationship with further content consisting of subject knowledge and skills for primary English, examples of classroom practices, and research studies related to the topics covered. The authors make the book remarkably comprehensive with such expansion features as Reflective Task, Research Summary, Embedding ICT, and the Bigger Picture. At the end of each chapter, there are three features including a summary of key points listing the core ideas, an "M-level" extension for those at the Master's degree level, and suggested references for further reading.

The first three chapters provide an overview of effective learning and teaching of primary English. Chapter 1 introduces the main aims, purposes, and targets of the book. Some important terms are defined and current reforms in the range of Key Stages are discussed. In Chapter 2, the authors stress the importance of understanding how children learn both spoken and written language with particular emphasis on the naturalness of language and its development. Chapter 3 presents effective teaching strategies for all four skills, focusing in particular on Standard English (as used in the United Kingdom). Halliday's three aspects of language learning are referred to in association with the natural context suitable for different levels of learners.

Chapters 4-10 move on to discussing learning and teaching particular language skills. Chapter 4, in particular, probes into oral language skills. The authors discuss authentic tools that encourage speaking in various learning contexts for children at different Key Stages. Readers can discover the benefits of teaching key features of spoken language that can be transferred to the teaching of written language. Chapters 5 and 6 address features of reading development, various useful ideas for teaching reading, instructional tools, text types, plausible activities, and in-depth details of phonics and phonological awareness. Chapters 7-8 start with basics of writing skills and move toward the key features to highlight progress in literacy development. Overall, Chapters 5-8 supply the readers with practical teaching strategies that not only benefit students by developing their explicit language awareness but also by enhancing their implicit performance to help them eventually develop complete automaticity. Chapters 9 and 10

cover the teaching of reading and writing at Key Stage 2 by engaging with more formal and complicated processes and texts.

In addition to language skills, the last four chapters also examine additional noteworthy elements. Chapter 11 highlights some of the current issues with electronic texts, which contain different structures and require different teaching strategies. Chapter 12 looks at children's rights and presents the view that every child must be treated equally in education. Chapter 13 reinforces the idea that readers should be aware of providing a supportive environment for young learners, while the final chapter focuses on language assessment and performance reports. The idea is that trainee teachers will master the steps of assessment in particular skills that correspond with learning objectives. Teachers also need to be concerned with statutory assessment and reporting to parents.

Overall, this book is highly valuable for practitioners who teach primary English. The authors clearly organize the content from theory to practice and move from general to particular skills. Apart from actual subject knowledge, the authors also raise several issues of concern in learning and teaching.

Not only will the book suit trainee teachers, there are several interesting issues that will benefit experienced teachers instructing at other levels of education. Initially, learners' characteristics must be considered for effective learning and assessment to take place. Integrating all four skills in various situations is the recommendation for better teaching and assessment of young language learners, which will enable them to build their performance to aid overall child developmental areas. An important aspect of this is to embed assessment into the instructions (i.e. as assessment *for* learning, rather than assessment *of* learning). Therefore, primary teachers' tasks are not simple since the aim is as high as an adult's language performance, yet the lessons must be simplified and appropriate for their age. The authors have provided a large number of practical and interesting activities that display meaningful practices for children. In my opinion, even though activities should be easy and enjoyable, they must also include complex learning objectives arranged for children to learn language implicitly, automatically, and effortlessly. Furthermore, the issue of interaction appears to be a fascinating element that is applied to both oracy and literacy. It acts as the main support in language use and development. For example, the parts of the book that describe Key Stages 1 and 2 are used to shed light on how the authors illustrate the language interaction and development moving from basic to more critical and formal linguistic features and contexts of communication. Finally, it is clear from the book that issues relating to technology are becoming increasingly essential and applicable to all learning and teaching approaches for all skills. I believe it is wise to make use of technology as it can serve as a way to identify and create authentic materials that also interest children.

In conclusion, it is worthwhile to understand teaching English in primary levels, which reflects my thoughts about teachers at all levels who need to be concerned with learners' characteristics and also learning conditions. Language activities and materials should be developed to entertain and function simply yet contain rich and purposeful learning elements. Even though this book deals mainly with primary English in the L1, most elements will be useful and applicable to young and adult EFL learners across a variety of contexts.