



CELTA ASSIGNMENT: Focus on the learner

Preparation

1. Choose a student from one of the TP classes (NB the student's mother tongue must be different from yours unless you are doing this course outside the UK) and make notes on his / her learning style, background, previous experience of and reasons for learning English.
2. Read the chapter in Swan's "Learner English", or other work, relating to the issues of learning English for someone of your chosen student's mother tongue.
3. Prepare a questionnaire / interview schedule to find out the information in (1) plus any other relevant points which result from your observation of the student.
4. Interview the student and record the interview (most classroom machines are suitable and do not need a separate microphone)
5. Collect some written language from your learner, for example, some recent written homework or something written in class. If nothing is readily available, write a short letter to the learner and ask them to write back to you. (A sample letter is attached)

Assignment brief

- i. Briefly describe your student's background, previous language learning experience and reasons for learning English and comment on his/her learning style. Say how beneficial or otherwise you feel these factors are. Make general recommendations as to how you could help the student become a more successful learner of English.

For example:

"Juan Carlos is a very visual learner and has a problem with listening comprehension. I recommend he watches more TV, initially with subtitles and as he becomes more confident, without. I also recommend listening to the radio, particularly BBC Radio 4."

- ii. Briefly describe your learner's needs. You can usefully do this from two points of view – the learner's and your own. A simple way of achieving this is to ask the learner, during the interview, to complete a simple self-assessment (a sample grid is attached). You can include this in your assignment and comment from your point of view about the accuracy of the learner's assessments.
- iii. From the data you have collected, identify 4 specific linguistic (i.e. grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) problems, including at least 1 of each type. For each problem, quote your student's mistake(s) by way of exemplification and make specific suggestions to help him/her overcome the problem. Include relevant references from resource books, giving title, author (s), publisher & page reference in the body of the assignment and attach attributed photocopies of activities (no more than 2 sheets) to the assignment. In each case, briefly explain how you believe the selected activity will help the student.

For example:

Problem: the student often omits the -s ending from the third person singular form of the present simple, e.g. *"he live in London"

Suggestion: lots of drilling of the correct form and refer to "English Grammar in Use" by Raymond Murphy, OUP, pp 4-5, Ex. 2.1 A & B (see attached).

Rationale When talking to Juan Carlos it became clear that he "knows" very well how to form the 3rd person singular, simple present – he simply forgets to add the 's'. Extensive practice should help him form the habit.

The assignment should be written in report form, with an overall title & subheadings. It should be word-processed and error free.

750 – 1,000 words approx.



Sample letter

Dear,

How are you?

My name's and as you know, one of the things I have to do on my course is to prepare a study of you.

I thought it would be a good idea if I introduced myself to you first.

I'm 42 and I was a chemical engineer but now I am training to become a teacher. I'm married and I have two lovely children - both girls aged 8 and 11.

I love to travel and visit other countries and cultures. My hobbies include reading and bungee jumping.

What about you? Tell me a bit about yourself; where you're from, why you're here, how old you are, what your ambitions are for the future, what you think about Brighton etc. etc.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

With best wishes,



Sample self-assessment grid

	Not good	Nearly good enough	Good	Important	Not important
Reading					
Writing					
Speaking					
Listening					
Grammar					
Vocabulary					
Pronunciation					

Pre-submission check-list

Component	✓
I have described and commented on my learner's learning style(s)	
I have described and commented on his/her English language learning background	
I have described and commented on his/her motivation/reasons for learning English	
I have described and commented on his/her perceived needs	
I have included a copy of the questionnaire/interview schedule I used	
I have included a copy of the recording I made	
I have included a copy of the learner's written work	
I have described 4 specific language problems the learner has	
I have given examples of these problems from the data I collected	
I have made some general recommendations for future improvement	
I have made specific recommendations for each of the 4 issues identified	
I have included 2 (only) photocopied and attributed remedial activities	
I have properly attributed all references to published materials in the assignment	
I have proof-read the assignment or had it proof-read for me	
I have read through the marking grid and submitted it with my assignment	



Focus on the learner – Making grid

Candidate to complete this section

Name _____

Submission
deadline _____

Submission
date _____

If this is a late submission, was an extension formally agreed and recorded? Yes/No

Note to candidates: Please submit this grid with your assignment. Other than the box above, please do not write on it. To pass this assignment you need to meet all the criteria. If you do not, you may be asked to resubmit or the assignment may be failed.

Criterion	Below Standard	To Standard
Shows awareness of how the learner's background, previous learning experience and learning style affect learning	Missing or inadequate	Described and commented on.
Identifies the learner's language systems and skills needs	Missing or inadequate	Described and commented on.
Correctly uses terminology relating to the description of language systems and language skills	Missing or inadequate	Mostly or fully accurate and relevant
Selects appropriate materials and or resources to aid the learner's language development	No or yes but inappropriate	Yes and appropriate
Provides rationales for using specific activities with the learner	No	Yes
Finds, selects and references information from one or more sources.	No	Yes
Uses written language that is clear, accurate and appropriate to the task	No	Yes (Or Yes but with some minor flaws)

Overall assessment:

Fail: _____

Pass: _____

Resubmit: _____

Please see assignment for detailed comments. Resubmission requirements:

Resubmission
deadline: _____

Tutor's name _____

2nd marker's comments

