

Teaching Verb Tenses

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With the implementation of CAPS, teachers have a framework to teach language, but few of the textbooks offered have adequate language practice exercises. The books tend to approach the study of language in a haphazard way, and learners seldom grasp concepts as part of a logical, coherent system.

Because of this, I have developed a series of PowerPoint presentations for use in a classroom with learners speaking up to 10 different home languages (none of them English) or for a largely English-speaking private school classroom or for the small group at tertiary level. They are specifically geared to teaching language in holistic sections. By this I mean, explaining all the rules systematically and applying them to the writing of English; not merely the answering of language questions which are found in the final section of Paper 1: USING LANGUAGE CORRECTLY. These presentations make use of visual stimuli, music, creative tasks and games.

The most useful resource I have found for language reinforcement in the classroom, is a textbook by Raymond Murphy called *English Grammar in Use*. Cambridge, 2012. I suggest you order it for your English department . The homework exercises for this module are found in Murphy's wonderful book, from pages 2 to 41, with answers supplied at the back.

In preparation for the Verb Tenses module, you will need to:

1. Source recordings of two songs: U2's *I still haven't found what I'm looking for* and Buddy Holly's *That'll be the day*. I have supplied a copy of the words for learners with gaps, and the full version for you as teacher. You are quite at liberty to choose other suitable songs if you prefer to do so.
2. Read over the games and activities to be sure that you understand how to play them. The learners enjoy these games, but you will often need to stop and repeat the teaching point of the game.
3. Print and laminate a poster of each verb tense for your classroom wall. I have typed these on one slide each, so you can print them easily. (Slides 6,7,10-12,14,16,18,20,22,24-25,27-29,31, 33, 35)

Verb Tenses should be taught in every grade at high school, but this intensive two-week series of lessons is pitched at Grade 10-12. I suggest that you cover them in Term 1 as a basis for writing skills throughout the year. The presentation begins with the basics: finite verbs and how to identify them. Then we proceed to a table of all 12 tenses, so that learners can see them in a single glance. After that, we discuss each tense and its function in language usage. This is consolidated with an oral and a written activity. Homework exercises are suggested for each tense. These should be marked in class each morning before proceeding with the next tense. I am sure that your learners will look forward to coming to your language classes each day. By the end of slide 36, learners should have a good idea of how to use all the tenses effectively in their oral and written language.

[See separate link for Power Point presentation.](#)