A1 Starter Teacher’s Pack
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With Rachel Thake, Cathy Brabben & Mark Lloyd
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The thinking behind English Unlimited

The aim of English Unlimited

The aim of English Unlimited is to enable adult learners to communicate effectively in English in real situations. To achieve this, English Unlimited is:

1. a practical course
2. an authentic course
3. an international course
4. a flexible course

1 A practical course

Each unit of English Unlimited is designed to help learners achieve specific communicative goals. These goals are listed at relevant points throughout the coursebook. For example, in Unit 3, learners focus on how to arrange to meet people: this is the unit goal. Arranging to meet people involves saying where places are in a town, talking about days and times and saying when you are free: these are the specific goals of each of the main lessons.

So for example, at the top of the first lesson in Unit 3 you and your learners will see these goals:

3.1 goals

● describe a street
● say where you are in a town

All the goals describe what learners will learn to do, rather than listing, for example, vocabulary sets or grammar points. Of course, learners will learn both vocabulary and grammar in each unit – but the goals come first. We’ve chosen goals which we think will be useful for Starter-level learners to work on and then selected vocabulary and grammar to help them do this.

Where exactly do the goals come from?

The goals for the course have been taken from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF), and adapted and supplemented according to our research into the needs of Starter-level learners.

So for example, the first unit in Unit 3 you and your learners will see these goals:

- Can describe himself/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives.
- Can understand questions and instructions addressed carefully and slowly to him/her and follow short, simple directions.
- Can discuss what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet.

The CEF originated in Europe but is used increasingly widely around the world as a guide for curriculum design and assessment. It can be used with learners of any nationality or first language.

What’s the level of the course?

The CEF is divided into six main levels, sometimes with ‘plus’ levels in between. This table shows the CEF levels and how they relate to the Cambridge ESOL exams:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CEF levels</th>
<th>Cambridge exams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2 ‘Mastery’</td>
<td>CPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 ‘Operational proficiency’</td>
<td>CAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2+</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B2 ‘Vantage’</td>
<td>FCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1+</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1 ‘Threshold’</td>
<td>PET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 ‘Waystage’</td>
<td>KET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1 ‘Breakthrough’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English Unlimited Starter completes A1, and moves into A2.

2 An authentic course

Because it is based on practical goals, English Unlimited teaches authentic language – that is, the kind of language which is really used by native speakers and proficient non-native speakers of English in everyday situations. An important tool for identifying useful language to include in the course has been the Cambridge International Corpus (CIC).

What is the CIC?

The CIC is an electronic collection of more than a billion words of real text, both spoken and written, which can be searched by computer to discover the most common words, expressions and structures of the language, and the kinds of situations in which they are used.

How has it been used in the course?

The CIC has been used throughout English Unlimited to ensure that, as far as possible given the level of the course, learners are taught the most frequent and useful words and expressions for meeting their communicative goals.

The CIC has also been used in the preparation of grammar sections to identify realistic contexts for presenting particular structures. For example, corpus research suggests that a common use of the past simple is ‘talking about a place you visited’ (Unit 8), while the present progressive is often used for the function of ‘saying you’re busy’ (Unit 9).

A further use of the CIC is in the Keyword sections which appear in every unit. Each Keyword section focuses on one or more of the most frequently used words in English,
and teaches its most common meanings, as well as useful expressions based around it.

How else is English Unlimited an authentic course?

In addition to being informed by the CIC, English Unlimited as a whole contains a large amount of unscripted audio material, recorded using non-actors, both native and non-native speakers. Even at Starter level, there are one or more authentic recordings in most units – ‘real’ people speaking about themselves (saying where they live, talking about their family, saying what they like and don’t like, etc.), using natural, spontaneous speech.

At Starter level, many other recordings are of simple conversations. Although these are scripted, they have been checked against the CIC to ensure that the language used is as natural and authentic as possible.

What are the benefits for learners of using ‘authentic’ listening material?

Listening to spontaneous, unscripted speech is the best way to prepare learners for the experience of understanding and communicating in English in the real world. Our observations have shown not only that Starter-level learners are capable of following spontaneous speech, but that authentic recordings are more motivating and engaging for learners in general.

3 An international course

In what ways is English Unlimited ‘international’?

Firstly, the course aims to be inclusive, to cater to learners of different backgrounds from all around the world. Care has been taken to select topics, texts and tasks which will appeal to a broad range of learners rather than learners from one particular country or region. We don’t assume that learners have knowledge of British or American culture, but instead focus on universal topics and themes that are accessible to all learners. The course is therefore suited to both mixed and single-nationality groups.

English is most often used nowadays between non-native speakers from different places. How does the course take this into account?

A second strand to the ‘internationalism’ of the course is that it includes features which will help learners become more effective communicators in international contexts.

Every unit features a section called Across cultures, which focuses on a particular topic of cultural or international interest. The aim of these sections is to encourage interest in other cultures, and also to heighten learners’ awareness of how the values and background of the people they talk to in English might differ from their own. These sections also provide an opportunity to read more extended texts and include language which goes slightly beyond what has been introduced in the unit.

Listening sections use recordings of speakers using different varieties of English. These include both native speakers (British, US, Canadian) and also speakers whose own language is not English. The aim of this is to familiarise learners with the experience of hearing both native and non-native speakers from a wide variety of places, reflecting the fact that English is increasingly used as an international language.

Care has been taken to ensure that recordings are of appropriate speed and clarity for learners at this level, and that all the speakers are competent users of English who can provide a good, accurate model of the spoken language. Although the language taught in the book is standard British English, the language forms which are taught reflect the way English is used internationally. So, for example, in Unit 3 both the word flat (which is common in British English) and the US English word apartment (which is more common internationally) are taught. To talk about possessions and family, we teach the forms I have and Do you have ...? which are widely used internationally, rather than I’ve got and Have you got ...?, which are mainly used by people in Britain.

4 A flexible course

The next five pages show how a typical unit of English Unlimited is organised.

As you’ll see, the first six pages are connected to each other and make up the ‘core’ of the unit. After that, there is the Explore section, activities which have a topical or linguistic link to the unit, but which can be used separately. On the last page of each unit is the Look again section, comprising review and extension activities, which can either be done by learners in the classroom or for homework.

This means that English Unlimited can be adapted not only for lessons of different lengths, but also for shorter and longer courses. For example, just using the ‘core’ of each unit would be suitable for a course of about 40 hours, while using all the material, including the Explore and Look again sections, would give a course length of 50–60 hours.

The flexibility of English Unlimited is further enhanced by an extensive range of supplementary materials. These include extra conversation practice at the back of the coursebook, the Teacher’s DVD-ROM containing four printable worksheets for each unit of the Coursebook, Achievement and Progress tests, and the Self-study Pack, which offers more than 40 hours of additional language and skills practice material in the Workbook and on the Self-Study DVD-ROM.

In the rest of this introduction you’ll find:

- a plan showing how a typical unit is organised pages 6 to 10
- more detailed notes on the different sections of the units pages 11 to 14
- information about the other components of the course pages 15 to 18
- more detailed information about the CEF page 19

I hope that you and your learners will enjoy using English Unlimited!

Adrian Doff
6 Introduction

How a unit is organised

The course consists of 10 units. Each unit has 8 pages.

The first two pages are a single lesson with goals based on the CEF. You can of course spread the material over more than one lesson if you want. ◢ about 90 minutes

Lessons include vocabulary and/or grammar, as well as practice in reading, listening, speaking and writing. Lessons always finish with a communicative speaking (or occasionally writing) task. See pp11–12 for details of language and skills sections.

At the end of the first two pages, there is a Classroom language section. This focuses on important words and expressions which you and your learners will use in class. See p13 for details.
The next two pages are another lesson with goals based on the CEF. 

An illustrated Vocabulary reference is provided at the back of the Coursebook to provide extra support for key groups of words.

At the end of these two pages, there is a Sounds and spelling section. This focuses on basic pronunciation and sound-spelling relationships, based on words that have been taught in units so far. See pp12 for details.
The next two pages are another lesson with goals based on the CEF. About 90 minutes.

On the fifth page there is a third lesson, which leads into the Target activity.

The Target activity is the culmination of the unit, in which learners prepare for and do an extended task which reflects the main goal of the unit. This activity draws on a range of language from the earlier lessons in the unit, and new vocabulary is also taught in this section to help prepare for the task. See p13 for details.

This page also features a separate Keyword section. Each Keyword section focuses on a common English word (or group of words) which has appeared in the unit, and practises using the word in a range of contexts. See p13 for details.
The last two pages of the unit will take about 45 minutes each.

Odd-numbered units have an Explore speaking section which focuses on simple speaking skills and strategies. See p14 for details.

Even-numbered units have an Explore writing section which focuses on elementary writing skills. See p14 for details.

In every unit there is an Across cultures section which gives learners a chance to read and discuss aspects of different cultures and countries around the world. See p13 for details.
The last page of each unit, **Look again**, is a series of short activities for reviewing and the language from the unit. See p14 for details.

**Review activities include vocabulary and grammar from the unit.**

There are tables summarising the main **grammar points** from the unit, followed by a short practice exercise. There is also a **Grammar reference** at the back of the book. See pp11–12 for details.

**At the end of each unit is a Self-assessment for learners to complete.**

**Can you remember?** activities review a language point from the previous unit.
A real beginner’s course

The Starter level of *English Unlimited* takes into account the needs of real beginner learners, and is based on the author’s own experience of teaching absolute beginners from a range of different countries. So the units:

- **assume no previous knowledge** of English.
- introduce language in **easily managed stages**, so that learners can develop confidence and absorb what they have learned.
- focus on **frequently used words and expressions**, so that learners can express themselves and communicate straight away.
- avoid complex and unnecessary grammar rules and distinctions.

Vocabulary

As well as a full grammar syllabus, *English Unlimited* provides learners with a **wide variety of vocabulary** chosen to meet each unit’s communicative goals. In most units, there are three or four vocabulary sections in the first two lessons and Target activity, and vocabulary is also presented and practised in Keyword sections, on Explore writing pages, and on Explore speaking pages.

Vocabulary includes:

- **words** like pen, doctor, vegetables.
- **collocations** like an interesting book, watch football, leave school.
- **phrases** like by car, on Tuesday, at the station.
- **fixed expressions** like I don’t know, I think.

The focus on longer items as well as single words will enable learners to express themselves more fluently, naturally and effectively.

The course provides a balance of:

- **very frequent vocabulary**, selected and checked using the Cambridge International Corpus (CIC).
- **topical and functional items** which learners need in order to achieve particular goals. For example, food and drink words are not especially frequent statistically, but are obviously necessary for the fulfilment of goals like ‘say what you eat and drink’ and ‘ask for a drink in a café’.

Vocabulary is always taught in **clear contexts** which help learners see what it means and how it is used. It is either presented through short reading texts or recordings, or through visual material.

Vocabulary reference

At the back of the Coursebook is an illustrated **Vocabulary reference** which lists key words and expressions from the units. There are clear references to this section in the lessons.

Grammar

Each unit of the course includes at least one major grammar point.

The points of the grammar syllabus have been selected and placed in particular units to help learners meet their **communicative goals**. For example, *I / we* forms of both the verb *be* and the Present simple are focused on in Unit 1 because they are useful in talking to someone for the first time (*I’m from China ..., I live ...*); *this / these* appears in Unit 5 because it is useful for choosing and buying things (*I like this bag*).

Grammar points have been checked in the Cambridge International Corpus to find the **most frequent and natural-sounding forms**. For example, the Starter level introduces the negative forms *He’s not ...*, *They’re not ...* rather than *He isn’t* and *They aren’t ...*, as they are not only simpler, but also more frequently used.

In grammar presentations, learners see or hear the grammar in context through short reading texts or conversations. Then learners are helped to notice the new form by means of a focusing exercise.

Thorough **controlled practice** is provided to check learners’ understanding of the language and provide initial practice, while maintaining and developing the topic of the lesson:

Lessons end with a speaking task (or a writing task) which gives learners the chance to use the language of the lesson, including the grammar, in freer practice.

The key grammar points are summarised on the Look Again page at the end of each unit. On this page, there is also a reference to the Grammar reference section at the back of the book.
The scripted recordings are mostly of everyday conversations, and are based on real-world recordings and corpus data to guarantee the inclusion of natural expressions and features of English. They are often used to contextualise functional language, such as asking the time or making arrangements on the phone.

Texts are exploited using a range of tasks designed to develop specific listening skills, build confidence and focus on the language the speakers use. For example, this sequence includes:

- a pre-listening prediction task (2a).
- listening for main points (sequencing task) (2b).
- language focus (3a).

The authentic recordings are unscripted recordings of both native and non-native speakers from a variety of backgrounds. These provide exposure to a range of accents and to features of real spoken English.
The **Across cultures** section in each unit provides a further opportunity for reading. Even in the early units, these reading texts go slightly beyond what learners know already, and so encourage them to guess unknown words from the start and to use a dictionary where necessary.

### Target activity

The Target activity is an extended speaking task, which recycles some or all of the goals, vocabulary and grammar of the previous two lessons. It is the conclusion of the first five, topically-linked pages of the unit. The Target activity has either two or three sections. These usually include:

**Task listening.** This provides a model for the task which learners will do themselves. It also provides further development in listening skills:

![Task listening example](image)

**Preparation.** Before doing the task, learners are given the chance to think about the ideas and the language they want to use before they begin, so that they will be able to focus on accuracy as well as fluency when doing the task itself:

![Preparation example](image)

**The task itself.** Learners do an activity, usually in pairs or groups, and then report back to the whole class:

![Task example](image)

### Classroom language

An extremely important source of English-language input for Starter learners is the language the teacher uses in giving instructions, using the book and asking questions. To help learners notice and understand this language, there is a Classroom language section at the end of the first lesson in each unit. These sections focus not on the classroom language the learners will need to use themselves (which at this level is very limited) but on the language they will need to understand as part of the lesson. This includes:

- vocabulary involved in using the coursebook (picture, box, conversation; cross, underline)
- simple classroom instructions (open, close, look, listen; again, together, everyone)
- words for talking about language (noun, verb, adjective; sentence, question, answer)
- expressions used to introduce stages of the lesson (Let’s … now)
- language used to talk about pictures (Where is she? What’s she doing?)
- questions about meaning (What does … mean? What’s … in English?)

Each Classroom language section introduces a set of words or expressions to focus on, often using recordings of classroom interactions.

### Keyword

English has a number of very common words (such as have, go, this, at) which are used again and again with a range of different meanings. Each unit of *English Unlimited Starter* has a separate **Keyword** section which focuses on one common word that has been taught in the unit, and shows how it can be used in different contexts.

For example, Unit 2 introduces expressions with *have*, such as *have two children, have a flat*. The Keyword section shows other common words that can be used after *have*.

This is followed by a practice stage.

### Across cultures

Increasingly, learners use English to communicate with people from other countries and cultures. This means that intercultural awareness is becoming an important aspect of learning the language. With this in mind, all levels of *English Unlimited* feature regular **Across cultures** sections as part of the units. These sections are intended to help learners to:

- communicate better with people from a range of cultural backgrounds.
- be more aware of the kinds of differences and similarities that can exist both between and within cultures.
- reflect on aspects of their own and other cultures in an objective, non-judgemental way.
- contribute to an exchange of ideas about cultures by drawing on their own observations and experiences.

At Starter level, there is an Across cultures section in each unit. These sections focus on a particular topic from an intercultural perspective, usually picking up on a main theme from the unit.

**Unit**

1. Students
2. Families and children
3. Shops
4. Tea
5. Office clothes

**6. Journeys**

**7. Housework**

**8. Hostels**

**9. Family weekend**

**10. Birthdays**

Across cultures sections usually include a brief lead-in, a reading text for further skills development, and some vocabulary input to support learners in a final speaking stage where they talk about their own and other cultures.
Explore speaking

Explore speaking sections occur in odd-numbered units (alternating with Explore writing).

Explore speaking is a free-standing section which aims to equip learners with skills and strategies for improving their spoken interaction in a range of situations. It covers the essential language that Starter learners will need when interacting with other people:
- saying hello and goodbye.
- responding to questions.
- expressing uncertainty.
- apologising and interrupting.
- making requests and replying to them.

As elsewhere in the course, the language included in these sections is based on the CEF.

Each Explore speaking page includes:
- a listening section, focusing on key expressions.
  Often the focus is on what language to use in particular situations.
- activities in which learners notice the target language, often by noting down the words or expressions they hear.
- controlled practice exercises which build familiarity with and confidence in the target language.
- (in later units) a freer practice activity, such as a role play, which gives learners the chance to use the target language in a real-life situation.

Explore writing

Explore writing sections occur in even-numbered units (alternating with Explore speaking).

These sections aim to develop basic writing skills which are essential at this level:
- dictating and writing names and numbers using the English alphabet.
- writing a simple description (using and, but, or).
- joining ideas and giving reasons (using so, because).
- describing a sequence of events (using and, then).
- describing when things happened (using when, after).

Explore writing sections usually follow these stages:
- learners see examples of sentences or short texts, focusing on ways of joining ideas and linking sentences together.
- they do exercises which help them to notice specific language features.
- they practise using the new language in writing.
- they write simple sentences and short paragraphs, usually about themselves or people they know.
- they read out their sentences and compare them with other students.

Look again

The Look again page is divided into sections: Vocabulary, Spelling, Can you remember? and Grammar. Although some sections can be set as homework, the page is intended as a series of simple review activities for learners to do in class. The Look again page also includes a final Self-assessment for the unit.

Vocabulary

These exercises provide further practice of words, expressions and functional phrases from the unit.

Spelling

This section consists of one exercise, focusing on the spelling of words from the unit and from previous units.

Can you remember?

This is a review of key language from the preceding unit to help learners reactivate and better retain what they have learned.

Grammar

This section contains:
- summary tables of the key grammar points taught in the unit.
- simple exercises giving controlled grammar practice.

Self-assessment

Each unit concludes with a Self-assessment box for learners to complete either in class or at home. Many learners find it useful and motivating to reflect on their progress at regular intervals during a course of study.

For teachers, the Self-assessment will be a valuable means of gauging learners’ perceptions of how much progress they’ve made, and of areas they need to work on further. Self-assessments can also be useful preparation for one-to-one tutorials in which the learners’ and teacher’s perceptions of progress are compared and discussed.
The Self-study Pack

About the Self-study Pack

*English Unlimited Starter Self-study Pack* has been designed to offer flexibility and depth to your English teaching, whatever the specific needs of your learners. The Workbook and Self-study DVD-ROM provide a wide range of language and skills practice activities to accompany each unit of the Coursebook, so you can:

- set homework tasks based on the Coursebook lessons
- supplement your lessons with further language and skills practice
- use video activities in class, or get learners to watch at home.

Your learners can:

- consolidate their knowledge of language and skills taught in class
- practise and check their pronunciation
- learn and practise essential speaking skills
- create tests on specific language areas quickly and easily
- check their progress and get feedback on their level of English and any specific areas of difficulty
- record and listen to themselves speaking in everyday dialogues.

In the Workbook

The *English Unlimited Starter Workbook* contains:

- activities which practise and extend the vocabulary and grammar taught in the Coursebook units; further reading, writing and listening skills practice; and numerous opportunities in each unit for learners to personalise what they are learning to their own interests and situations.

The first two pages of each unit consist of further vocabulary and grammar practice activities which can either be used in class or set for homework. **Over to you** activities suggest ways for learners to personalise the language and skills they have learnt.

**Time out**, in odd-numbered units, offers a fun way for learners to practise and remember vocabulary sets.

**Explore writing**, in odd-numbered units, gives learners key pointers on spelling and joining ideas in sentences.

**Explore reading**, in even-numbered units, offers practice in reading and understanding a range of everyday texts, such as forms, adverts, and web pages.

The last page of each unit, **DVD-ROM Extra**, links up with the video on the **Self-study DVD-ROM**. Each video recycles the language taught in that unit and shows everyday situations involving characters who learners can follow through the course. These can be used in class or by learners on their own at home or in the school multi-media room.

A **Writing reference and practice** section is at the back of the Workbook. This gives more support and practice in key areas of basic literacy, such as punctuation, capital letters and joining ideas in sentences.

On the Self-study DVD-ROM

The *English Unlimited Starter Self-study DVD-ROM* offers your learners over 200 **interactive activities** which they can use to practise and consolidate what they’ve learned in class, while providing a number of **easy ways to check their progress** at every step of the course.

Just click on the icon for each unit and the learners will find fun and easy-to-use activities, from picture matching and drag-and-drop category exercises to **opportunities for learners to record themselves** and play back the result to check against an audio recording.

Each unit’s activities practise and extend the **vocabulary, grammar, Classroom language, Sounds and spelling** and **Keyword** areas focused on in the Coursebook. Learners can also generate tests quickly and easily, using the **Quick Check** question bank. They can choose which units they want to test and how many questions you want the test to consist of, and Quick Check will randomly select from the 300 questions in the bank.

Learners can also keep track of their progress as they work through the course. The Progress page shows them which scored exercises they have attempted and how they’ve done. Learners can see which language areas they need to do more work on and can go back and try again.

In addition to language practice, each unit of the Self-study DVD-ROM also contains **Explore speaking** or **Explore writing** activities, which offer practice and extension of the speaking and writing skills taught in the Coursebook.

In most language courses, it is rare for learners to get the chance to **listen to themselves in conversation**, but if there is a microphone available, this can be done easily using the record and playback activities on the DVD-ROM. Learners listen to the clips, take a closer look at the language used, and then have the opportunity to record themselves in the conversations and play it back to hear how they sound.

On the Self-study DVD-ROM, you will also find the **DVD-ROM Extra** video, described above, which can be used in or outside class, using the last page of each unit of the Workbook, or just watching them to get extra exposure to real language.

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We understand that no two teachers or classes are alike, and that the role of a Teacher’s Pack accompanying a language course is to cater for as diverse a range of pedagogical needs as possible. The materials in this Teacher’s Pack serve to enhance the flexibility of *English Unlimited* to meet the needs of teachers who:

- are teaching courses of different lengths
- want to supplement the Coursebook materials
- have different class sizes and types
- are teaching in different parts of the world
- are addressing different assessment needs
- want to use DVD materials in the classroom.

*English Unlimited* Starter Teacher’s Pack offers a step-by-step guide to teaching from the Coursebook, 38 photocopiable activity worksheets to extend and enrich your lessons and a complete testing suite. The Teacher’s Pack consists of the Teacher’s book and the Teacher’s DVD-ROM.

### In the Teacher’s book

#### Teacher’s notes

In the Teacher’s book, there are more than 70 pages of teacher’s notes (pp20–92) to accompany the Coursebook material. These notes are a comprehensive and easy-to-follow guide to using the *English Unlimited Starter Coursebook*, and have been written with a broad range of class-types and teaching styles in mind.

Each unit’s notes take you smoothly through the different stages of the Coursebook lessons. Answers are clearly highlighted, and the Individual, Pair and Group work symbols show at a glance what interaction is suggested for each stage.

On every page, there are instructions for alternative activities, clearly boxed, to offer greater variety and interest. There are also suggestions throughout for adapting activities to stronger and weaker classes, multi-lingual and mono-lingual classes, and to large and small class sizes.

### On the Teacher’s DVD-ROM

#### Photocopiable activities

There are 20 photocopiable activity worksheets on the Teacher’s DVD-ROM (two for each unit) ready to print out and use straight away. These offer extra vocabulary and grammar practice, extra reading and writing work, role plays and games which further activate the language that learners have been introduced to in the Coursebook, and build their fluency, confidence and communication skills.

Each activity is accompanied by a page of clear, step-by-step instructions, with answer keys and extra teaching ideas. At the end of each unit of the Teacher’s notes, there is a page to help you find the activities you need.

#### Writing Essentials

The Writing Essentials activities (described in more detail on pp93–96) consist of 18 sets of photocopiable activity worksheets specially designed for non-Roman alphabet learners of English. Each activity teaches a vital writing or reading skill, such as letter formation or recognition of common words, and supports learners in the process of reading and writing in a new script. These activities can be used alongside the Coursebook and other material, or as part of a separate course for non-Roman alphabet learners.

#### Progress and Achievement Tests

The *English Unlimited* testing suite consists of 10 unit-by-unit Progress Tests and 3 skills-based Achievement Tests to motivate your learners and give you and them a clear idea of the progress that they are making. These and other methods of assessment are discussed in detail on pp17–18.

#### DVDs

Two DVDs per level from the Self-study Pack are also included on the Teacher’s DVD-ROM, as they are easily adaptable for use in class.
Assessing your learners with English Unlimited

There are many ways of assessing learner progress through a language course. For this reason English Unlimited offers a range of testing and assessment options, including progress tests, skill-based achievement tests, assessment using the e-Portfolio, self-assessment and continuous assessment.

Tests on the Teacher’s DVD-ROM
There are two types of test available as PDFs on the Teacher’s DVD-ROM: progress and achievement tests.

Progress tests
There is one progress test for each of the 10 units of the course. These assess the learners’ acquisition of language items taught in the main Coursebook material. Each test carries 40 marks and includes questions assessing grammar and vocabulary items taught in the unit. These are not intended to be ‘high stakes’ tests but rather quick checks that will help the teacher and learner judge which language points have been successfully acquired and understood, and which areas individual learners or the whole class may need to study again.

We suggest that each test should take no more than 30 minutes in the classroom. Tests can be copied and distributed to each learner and taken in class time. The tests are designed for quick marking with the provided Answer key. Teachers may choose to mark tests, or, alternatively, learners can mark each other’s work. A mark can be given out of 40. If particular problem areas are identified, learners can be directed to do extra work from the Self-study Pack.

Achievement tests
There are three Achievement tests, designed to form the basis of formal learner assessment.
- Achievement test 1 can be taken after unit 4.
- Achievement test 2 can be taken after unit 7.
- The End of Course Achievement test can be taken after unit 10.

These tests are based on the four skills: Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking.

Reading tests
Each test is based on a short text and we advise allowing no more than 15 minutes for each test. As with the Coursebook texts and Listening tests, there may be a few unfamiliar items in the text but the tasks are graded so unknown items should not hinder the learners’ ability to answer the five questions. The teacher may mark the tests or it may be acceptable for learners to mark each other’s work.

Listening tests
The audio tracks for these are found at the end of the two Class Audio CDs. Achievement Test 1 is track 92 on CD1; Achievement Test 2 is track 68 on CD2; the End of Course Achievement Test 3 is track 69 on CD2.

We suggest carrying out tests under controlled conditions with the recording played twice. Each test should take no longer than ten minutes. As with the Coursebook audio, there may be a few unfamiliar language items in the listening text but tasks are graded to the level of the learner, so unknown items should not hinder the learners’ ability to answer the questions. The tests are simple and quick to mark. They can be marked by the teacher or it may be acceptable for learners to mark each other’s work.

Writing tests
Learners are set a writing task based on themes from the Coursebook, and the teacher assesses work using the analytical marking scales provided. Tasks are designed to simulate purposeful, real-life, communicative pieces of writing. The teacher should endeavour to identify the band the work falls in for each category. This marking scheme can give learners a profile of the strong and weak points of their written work, helping them improve their writing skills over the length of the course.

If the tests are to be used under timed conditions in class, 30 minutes should be allowed for the learners to produce their texts – planning and redrafting may be encouraged by the teacher at the outset.

Another way is to set the tasks as assessed writing assignments to be done as homework. In these cases, the teacher should interpret the band scales according to the time available and the availability of dictionaries and other reference materials.

The option chosen will depend on your learning environment. A timed test may help you assess learners under equal conditions, but can be a rather artificial, pressured environment. Written homework assignments are less controlled, but could be a better way of encouraging learners to work at their writing and feel satisfied with a polished piece of written work. The Explore Writing tasks in the Coursebook and Self-study Pack may also be used as assessed assignments and marked using the analytical scales.

Speaking tests
These are designed to be carried out by an assessor, who may be the learners’ regular teacher, or another teacher in the institution. Learners do the tests in pairs. The ideal environment is for the test to take place in a separate room from the rest of the class, who can be engaged in self-study work while the testing is taking place. It is best if seating is set up as a ‘round table’ if possible, rather than the teacher facing both learners across a desk, so as not to suggest an interrogation! Each test takes eight minutes.

The assessor should be familiar with the Analytical Scales for the speaking tests before the test and have a copy of the Mark Sheet for each learner with their names already filled in. Screen the mark sheets from the learners.
The assessor will need the Teacher’s Notes, which provide a script of prompts for the test. Each test is in two parts. In the first Task (four minutes), the assessor puts the learners at ease with warm-up questions, before asking the learners to turn a selection of questions from the Notes, based on themes from the Coursebook. The assessor may depart from the script to elicit further responses, maintaining a friendly, encouraging manner. The assessor may begin to note down some marks based on the scales for each learner. In Task 2 (four minutes) learners are provided with prompts for a communicative task, which they carry out between themselves. Learners may need some encouragement, or to have the instructions explained more than once. During this section the teacher should withdraw eye contact, making it clear that the learners should talk to each other, listen closely and revise the marks from Task 1, gradually completing the grid.

The assessor should not correct learners at any point during the test.

**Filling in the Mark Sheets**

Once all four papers of the Achievement Tests have been carried out, the teacher can provide marks for each learner. This includes analytical marks for the Speaking and Writing tests, and an average mark out of five for each one; and marks out of five for the Reading and Listening tests. This gives the learners a snapshot of their performance in the four skills. The learners should be encouraged to reflect on what they found easy or difficult, and given strategies to improve performance in different skills. The marks can be used as the basis for course reports or formal assessment.

**Self-Assessment**

Assessment is not just about tests. Self-assessment encourages more reflective and focused learning. *English Unlimited* offers a number of tools for learner self-assessment:

- each unit of the Coursebook ends with a self-assessment grid in which learners are encouraged to measure their own progress against the unit goals, which in turn are based on the can-do statements of the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning.
- progress with the activities on the Self-study DVD-ROM can be analysed in detail on the Progress screen.
- the Self-study DVD-ROM also contains Quick Check tests, using a bank of 300 multiple choice questions. Learners select which units they want to be tested on and how long they want the test to be – new tests will be randomly generated each time.

**Using the e-Portfolio**

Portfolio-based assessment is a useful tool both for self-assessment and formal assessment, particularly for teachers seeking an alternative to traditional timed writing tests. The e-Portfolio allows learners to do the following.

- Assess their progress against can-do statements and revise their assessments later in the course depending on progress made.
- Build up a personal e-Portfolio of written work associated with the course. The learner may then select their best work, as an alternative to tests, or at the end of the course to be provided as a Portfolio. This may include word-processed documents, project work and even audio files. Some of the Explore writing tasks may lend themselves well to portfolio work, and in some classrooms, learners may be asked to record personal audio files based around speaking tasks in the book. The satisfaction of producing a polished spoken text is a rare one in a language course, but if the learner or the centre has access to a microphone, it is relatively easy to do. Written texts and audio in a learner’s e-Portfolio may be assessed using the same analytical scales as the Writing and Speaking Achievement tests.

**Continuous Assessment**

Finally, some teachers and institutions may prefer to dispense with tests and adopt a form of continuous assessment. This can be demanding of a teacher’s time but perhaps no more so than the marking load created by frequent formal tests. The important thing is to explain the system to learners early in the course, and regularly show them their marksheets to indicate how they are getting on. How actual assessment is carried out may differ between institutions, but here are some guidelines and ideas.

- It is possible to assess learners using the Speaking analytical scales regularly though the course. The Target activity sections, where learners are involved in more extended discourse, offer an opportunity for this.
- Tell learners when their speaking is being assessed, and the teacher can monitor particular groups.
- Learners should be assessed several times during the course or they may rightly feel they were let down by a single bad performance, even if the assessment was not ‘high stakes’.
- An atmosphere of gentle encouragement and striving for improvement should always accompany this kind of assessment. Some learners can get competitive about this, which can have a negative effect on class atmosphere and demotivate less confident learners.
- The Explore writing tasks can be used for continuous written assessment, using the Analytical scales for writing.

**A Final Word**

Testing and assessment can be a vital tool for teachers and learners in assessing strengths and weaknesses, building awareness and encouraging improvement. But it can be frustrating for a learner to feel that they are being assessed too often, at the expense of actually learning; and whilst there are certainly learners who like being tested, there are many others who certainly don’t! *English Unlimited* aims to help learners communicate in real-life situations, and the testing and assessment tools provided should be used with that purpose in mind. Testing and assessment should never take precedence over learning, but serve as useful checks on the way to increasing confidence, competence and fluency.
**The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF)**

### A goals-based course

*English Unlimited* is a practical, goals-based course for adult learners of English. The course goals are taken and adapted from the language-learning goals stated in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF).

The goals of the CEF are divided into a number of scales which describe abilities in different kinds of communication. We’ve chosen the scales which we felt to be the most useful for adult general English learners at Starter level. These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describing experience</td>
<td>Creative writing</td>
<td>Overall listening comprehension</td>
<td>Overall reading comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>Listening to announcements and instructions</td>
<td>Reading correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal-oriented co-operation</td>
<td>Notes, messages and forms</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading for orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactions to obtain goods and services</td>
<td>Information exchange</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading for information and argument</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Where the goals are met

As you can see in the example unit on pp6–10, goals are given for the three main lessons of each unit (culminating in each unit’s Target activity) and on the Explore speaking and Explore writing pages. These are closely linked to the Self-assessment, which learners do at the end of the Look again page.

Listening and reading goals are not usually given on the page as they are addressed repeatedly throughout the course. The CEF tables on the Teacher’s Pack DVD-ROM show which parts of the course deal with the listening and reading goals.

### Find out more about the CEF