

**Gretchen Bitterlin**  
**Dennis Johnson**  
**Donna Price**  
**Sylvia Ramirez**  
**K. Lynn Savage**, Series Editor



# **Ventures**

**FACILITATOR'S GUIDE**

with **Ann Jackman**  
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# Introduction

## **What is the Ventures Professional Development DVD?**

The *Ventures* Professional Development DVD promotes effective teaching by highlighting the pedagogy behind the *Ventures* series. The video consists of an overview of the *Ventures* series and six modules that present teaching techniques and strategies on these topics: enhancing instruction with visuals, developing listening skills, teaching grammar communicatively, developing reading skills, developing writing skills, and facilitating multilevel classes.

The video features extensive footage of Dennis Johnson, one of the five *Ventures* authors and an ESL instructor with over 30 years' experience. He uses *Ventures* Student's Book 1 with low-beginning students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

The six modules can be viewed separately or all at once. There is a natural progression from Modules 1 to 6, but the modules may be viewed in any order.

## **What are the Ventures Teacher-Training Worksheets?**

The *Ventures* Teacher-Training Worksheets support the *Ventures* Professional Development DVD by giving instructors an opportunity to reflect on their current teaching practices, analyze one instructor's approach, and think critically about the video demonstration, including how it might impact their own teaching.

There is one set of worksheets for each of the six DVD modules. Each set of worksheets is divided into four sections: *Before you watch*, *While you watch*, *After you watch*, and *Try it out*. *Before you watch* questions activate the knowledge instructors already have about teaching English as a second language to adults. *While you watch* consists of a chart that helps to organize viewers' notes. *After you watch* questions invite instructors to reflect on what they have watched. Finally, the *Try it out* activities encourage instructors to apply what they have learned.

## **What are the benefits?**

The *Ventures* Professional Development DVD and Teacher-Training Worksheets provide English language learning programs with a high-quality, cost-efficient solution for their professional development needs. The DVD and Teacher-Training Worksheets are ideal for part-time instructors and those who have limited time to attend longer professional development workshops but want to improve their instruction and learn from a master teacher. Although novice instructors may have the greatest need for this type of training, more experienced instructors open to new ideas and approaches will also find this training rewarding.

The DVD and Teacher-Training Worksheets can be easily adapted to the training needs of programs and instructors. Programs can offer one or more group training sessions or learning circles, allowing for communication and collaboration among colleagues. Individual instructors can also benefit from viewing the DVD and completing the Teacher-Training Worksheets independently.

For programs adopting the *Ventures* series, the DVD and Teacher-Training Worksheets will familiarize instructors with the series and generate enthusiasm for the upcoming semester.

## **How do I use the Ventures Teacher-Training Worksheets with my staff?**

Pacing will vary from program to program. If conducting a group training, before playing a module of the DVD, distribute the corresponding worksheets and give instructors time to respond to the *Before you watch* questions that pertain to the module. In general, allow ten minutes to view a module of the DVD and at least 30 minutes to complete and discuss the worksheets.

# Key points

## **Module 1: Enhancing instruction with visuals**

- Before using visuals, create interest in the topic
- Use visuals to activate prior knowledge
- Use visuals to build vocabulary and grammar
- Use visuals to prompt pair work

## **Module 2: Developing listening skills**

- Before students listen, preview the material
- Practice listening for gist
- Practice listening for detail
- Provide independent listening practice

## **Module 3: Teaching grammar communicatively**

- Present grammar points in meaningful context
- Check for student understanding
- Provide guided practice
- Provide communicative practice

## **Module 4: Developing reading skills**

### **(Part 1: Narrative reading)**

- Before students read, preview the material
- Have students read in more than one way
- Check for student understanding

### **(Part 2: Document literacy)**

- Before students read, preview the structure of the document
- Check for student understanding
- Have students scan for specific information

## **Module 5: Developing writing skills**

- Before students write, provide a warm up for the topic
- Provide a model of the writing
- Provide tasks that break the writing into small chunks
- Have students share their work
- Have students revise their work

## **Module 6: Facilitating multilevel classes**

- Use different materials for different students
- Organize students in like-ability groups
- Organize students in cross-ability groups
- Check student understanding as a whole class

# Suggested answers

Note: The purpose of the questions in the *Before you watch* section is to encourage participants to think about their current teaching practices. Answers will vary, and there are no right or wrong answers. The purpose of the suggested answers in the *Before you watch* section is to help elicit responses from participants.

## Module 1: Enhancing instruction with visuals

### 1 Before you watch

1. The picture introduces a unit on work and job skills.
2. All are important.
3. What do you see? Where are they? Is he a waiter / cook / construction worker / etc.? What is the cook doing? What is the waiter doing? What is the waitress doing? What is the man at the counter doing? What is the electrician doing?

### 2 While you watch

**Create interest in the topic:** Teacher talks to students about their occupations.

**Activate students' prior knowledge:** Teacher introduces big picture in textbook to class and asks many questions about it.

**Build vocabulary and grammar:** Teacher has students point to items in picture and reviews present continuous.

**Prompt pair work:** Teacher models activity and circulates during pair work with visual.

### 3 After you watch

1. Answers will vary.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Visuals can be used as a prompt for stories, role plays, or dialogs. They can also serve as the basis for games.

## Module 2: Developing listening skills

### 1 Before you watch

1. Listening skills are a key to successful communication outside the classroom. It is vital to teach students how to listen effectively so that they can increase their fluency.
2. Students are often convinced that they don't listen well and become anxious about listening. It is important to create a non-threatening environment in the classroom so that students will feel comfortable developing their listening skills.

3. Elicit answers such as activate students' prior knowledge, use a visual to contextualize information, or preview the vocabulary.

4. Teachers may ask students to listen for gist, listen for a particular detail, identify the correct word in a set, categorize a word based on vowel sounds, say how many times they heard a word, or write the word they heard.

5. Teachers may respond that they only have time to play a listening passage once, but teachers should be encouraged to play a listening passage more than once. In addition to increasing students' understanding of the passage, this ensures that teachers are not "testing" listening skills.

### 2 While you watch

**Preview the material:** Teacher asks students to brainstorm jobs and helps them generate language relevant to the listening.

**Practice listening for gist:** Students circle the words they hear.

**Practice listening for detail:** Students match pictures with conversations they hear.

**Provide independent listening practice:** Teacher encourages students to listen to CD in back of book at home.

### 3 After you watch

1. The basic steps for developing students' listening skills are: preview the material, practice listening for gist, practice listening for detail, and provide independent listening practice.
2. The possibilities are endless. Examples include listening for tone or intonation, for the number of characters in a conversation, or for the approximate age of the characters.
3. It is important for students to practice listening outside of class because it serves as an important review of the focus of the lesson and reminds students that they have the tools to practice on their own. It also gives students the opportunity to listen to different voices and different accents.
4. Answers will vary.

## Module 3: Teaching grammar communicatively

### 1 Before you watch

1. Although some students find learning the rules of grammar to be somewhat comforting because it makes them feel in control, the rules of English grammar can be very overwhelming for students. Some grammatical topics, such as using articles correctly, remain elusive to students even after they have mastered other aspects of the language.

2. Typically, all language learners will have some difficulties with English grammar, but native language plays an important role. What is difficult for a Japanese student, for example, may be much less difficult for a German student.

3. Some teachers may do more guided grammar practice whereas other teachers may offer more communicative grammar practice.

### 2 While you watch

#### **Present grammar points in meaningful context:**

Teacher talks about his job and students' jobs now and before. Introduces grammar chart.

**Check for student understanding:** Teacher circulates during sentence completion exercise and students check their answers with audio.

**Provide guided practice:** Students use pictures to practice dialogs.

**Provide communicative practice:** Students interview each other about their jobs now and before.

### 3 After you watch

1. The basic steps for teaching grammar communicatively are: present grammar in meaningful context, check for student understanding, provide guided practice, and provide communicative practice.

2. The context gives meaning to the grammar. In addition to learning to make the correct form, students need to use the form in appropriate situations. For example, to the question, "How long have you been working there?" a student may answer: "I worked there for two years." The student has used the past tense correctly, but the question is about now, not the past; the questioner does not know if the student is still working there or not. The student may not understand the meaning of the verb form.

3. It is important for teachers to check grammar to confirm that students know the focus, can make the form, and understand the meaning before they begin pair or small group work. Without this check, students may practice with incorrect forms. If students are making mistakes, the teacher needs to provide more

whole group practice before putting students into partner or small group practice.

4. During guided grammar practice, the teacher should explicitly correct students' incorrect grammar to discourage them from making the same mistakes during communicative practice. During communicative practice, students should be focusing on meaning and fluency. Thus, in this phase of the lessons, teachers should opt for a more implicit and less intrusive method of error correction, such as recasting, in which the teacher repeats the correct form back to the student, keeping the meaning intact. Some teachers may prefer to ask questions to elicit or prompt the correct language.

5. In addition to dialogs and student interviews, games and puzzles offer interactive grammar practice. A memory game could work well with the lesson presented in the video. The teacher could give each student an index card, and students would write a job that they have had in the past or now. Students gather in one or more circles depending on class size and take turns describing their jobs: *I was a* (name of job). Then students say the jobs of as many classmates as they can remember: *She was a* (name of job). *He was a* (name of job). Each student in the circle should have a chance to speak.

## Module 4: Developing reading skills

### Part I: Narrative reading

#### 1 Before you watch

1. Answers will vary significantly by school and region.

2. Many factors will affect a student's ability to read in a second language. Examples include demographic factors such as differences in learning styles, age, and willingness to take risks, and experiential factors such as background knowledge and motivation.

3. Teachers may say that in order to develop students' reading skills, they raise students' awareness of reading strategies or demonstrate them explicitly, model expert reading behavior, or promote extensive reading in the classroom.

4. Teachers may cite activities that require students to brainstorm, make predictions, discuss the type and organization of the text, skim, scan, and determine the purpose of the reading.

#### 2 While you watch

**Preview the material:** Teacher asks students how they find jobs.

**Have students read in more than one way:** Students read silently first, listen to audio recording, and do a listen and repeat.

**Check for student understanding:** Students answer questions about the reading.

### 3 After you watch

1. The advantage of having students listen to an audio recording before they read silently is that it helps them to read in phrases and thought groups rather than word-for-word.
2. Echo reading helps students become more fluent readers because it gives them an opportunity to practice chunking sentences into meaningful parts.
3. In order to relate the reading featured in the video to students' lives, the teacher could ask questions such as: What is your job now? Are you certified? What are your work skills?
4. It is important to end reading lessons with communicative activities. When students can relate what they have read to their own lives, the reading has more meaning. It will help to increase their confidence and make them more motivated to read in the future.

## Part II: Document literacy

### 1 Before you watch

1. Students can be intimidated by unfamiliar vocabulary on forms and other real-life documents.
2. To orient students to the organization of the form, teachers might ask: What kind of information does a job application ask for? How many sections are on this form? What information does the first section of the form ask for? What information does the second section of the form ask for? How many lines are there?
3. Vocabulary that might be difficult for students includes "position desired," "most recent job," and "present this application."
4. The teacher could describe "position desired" as the "job you want." He or she could draw a timeline to illustrate "recent" and physically demonstrate "present."

### 2 While you watch

**Preview the structure of the document:** Teacher introduces application form and its organization.

**Check for student understanding:** Teacher checks that students understand the vocabulary on the form.

**Have students scan for specific information:** Teacher first explains how to scan, and then students work together.

### 3 After you watch

1. The teacher focused on the different sections of the form and the information that goes on each line.

2. Scanning is such an important reading skill because it is something that students will need to do for almost every document they encounter in their daily lives.

3. The multiple-choice format is ideal for document-literacy tasks because it encourages the use of scanning skills and develops the kinds of skills that students need to do well on many standardized tests.

## Module 5: Developing writing skills

### 1 Before you watch

1. Writing is especially challenging for ESL students, especially those who lack a strong grasp of English grammar or whose general language proficiency is weak. Problem areas may include generating and organizing ideas, spelling, punctuation, and word choice.

2. Students are likely to encounter forms, notes (e.g., to a child's teacher), and messages (e.g., at work) on a daily basis.

3. Generally, writing lessons should include pre-writing, writing, and post-writing activities.

4. Pre-writing activities should activate the language students will need for the writing, provide a model for students when writing, and allow students to do something with the model that will be useful to them when writing.

5. Pre-writing activities are important because they generate the language for the writing task. They prepare students for the writing task and make it seem less daunting.

### 2 While you watch

**Provide a warm up for the topic:** Students talk about their life skills and work skills.

**Provide a model of the writing:** Students read an e-mail.

**Provide tasks that break the writing into small chunks:** Students first complete sentences and then write sentences about their jobs and skills.

**Have students share their work:** Students read their paragraphs to their partners and then exchange papers.

**Have students revise their work:** Students make corrections, and teacher describes follow up to peer-review activity.

### 3 After you watch

1. The basic steps for teaching writing are: before students write, provide a warm up for the topic; provide a model of the writing; provide tasks that break the writing into small chunks; have students share their work; have students revise their work.

2. When students complete writing tasks outside of class, teachers maximize class time and use class time more efficiently. On the other hand, when students write in class, the teacher can circulate and answer students' questions. In some cases, students may even ask their classmates for help and use dictionaries and other classroom resources.

3. When students read aloud, it helps to build fluency and students become more aware of their own errors. It can also be more engaging than reading silently.

4. Teachers can "publish" students' work by posting it around the room or on a class Web site or by making a binder of students' work.

## **Module 6: Facilitating multilevel classes**

### **1 Before you watch**

1. It can be challenging for language teachers to meet the needs of their students because students move at different rates and have different abilities in different skill areas. One student might excel in grammar but have trouble speaking, for example.

2. Teachers may use different materials for different students, or they may organize students in like-ability or cross-ability groups.

3. Answers will vary.

### **2 While you watch**

#### **Use different materials for different students:**

Teacher explains differences between worksheets and lets students choose.

**Organize students in like-ability groups:** Students of similar ability work together.

**Organize students in cross-ability groups:** Higher-level and lower-level students work together.

#### **Check student understanding as a whole class:**

Teacher reviews worksheet answers with class.

### **3 After you watch**

1. Before allowing students to self-select their materials, the teacher should consider how accurately students will assess their abilities. For example, some students may prefer to be in their comfort zone at the lower level when it would really be best for them to take on the challenge of higher-level materials. If time is limited, teachers may prefer to assign materials to move class along a bit faster.

2. The advantage of like-ability groups is that students are moving relatively at the same pace and can all help each other. Cross-ability groups promote more peer teaching and correction because higher-level students can help lower-level students, and lower-level students can provide support to higher-level students if they are using tiered materials.

3. Teachers might be inclined to use like-ability groups if their lower-level students feel more comfortable with peers of similar ability and their higher-level students lose interest and motivation when grouped with lower-level students. For classes in which higher-level students are open to helping lower-level students and lower-level students want to challenge themselves, cross-ability groups are ideal.

4. It is important to review answers with the whole class after pair or small group work because it allows for questioning and clarification and helps build community within the classroom.

# Ventures

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DVD and TEACHER-TRAINING WORKSHEETS

*This is to certify that*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant name

viewed the Ventures Professional Development DVD and  
satisfactorily completed the Ventures Teacher-Training Worksheets

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