

English Language

Discourse: Teaching and Learning:
ideas for teaching discourse across A level
English Language

1. Give learners a list of key features for a particular text type (e.g. newspaper headlines, letters, text messages, guidebooks) and a range of sample texts. Ask them to identify key features of the genre using associated terminology.
2. Introduce learners to a set of examples from a specific variety of English and ask them to write 'How to identify ...' guides for English Language students. The guides should be set out appropriately, and should include relevant examples and associated terminology.
3. Write a list of different text types on the board and divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to choose a specific text type that they will research. Each group will need to produce a 15 minute presentation and material which can be stored in a folder and accessed by the other groups e.g. in the library, learning resource room, departmental base etc. There should be information about key stylistic features (e.g. lexis, grammar, structure etc.) and pragmatics, with annotated examples to demonstrate the principles in practice.
4. Use [past papers](#) to practise writing overviews and making connections between texts of similar genres.
5. Use work on specific text types as a stimulus for writing for specific purposes. Learners should experiment with literary and non-literary forms, using their knowledge of discourse to create distinctive and original pieces.
6. Take a theme (e.g politics) and get learners to collect examples of political language used in different contexts (e.g. transcripts of political interviews; Party Political Broadcasts; election leaflets; transcripts from the Parliament Channel; extracts from Hansard; informal conversations about politics; party conference speeches; transcripts of television or radio news etc.). Then consider the suitability of the lexical and grammatical choices for the audience and purpose.

Hyperlinks:

[Studying Varieties of English](#)

Secondary texts:

The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the English Language, Crystal (CUP, 2nd edition 2003)
Varieties of English, Freeborn (MacMillan, 2nd edition 1993)
Working with Texts, Carter, Bowring, Goddard et al (Routledge, 3rd edition 2007)
Style – Text Analysis and Linguistic Criticism, Freeborn (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996)
Investigating English Style, Crystal and Davy (Routledge, 1973)