LESSON FRAMEWORKS · LANGUAGE SYSTEMS

Presentation - Practice - Production

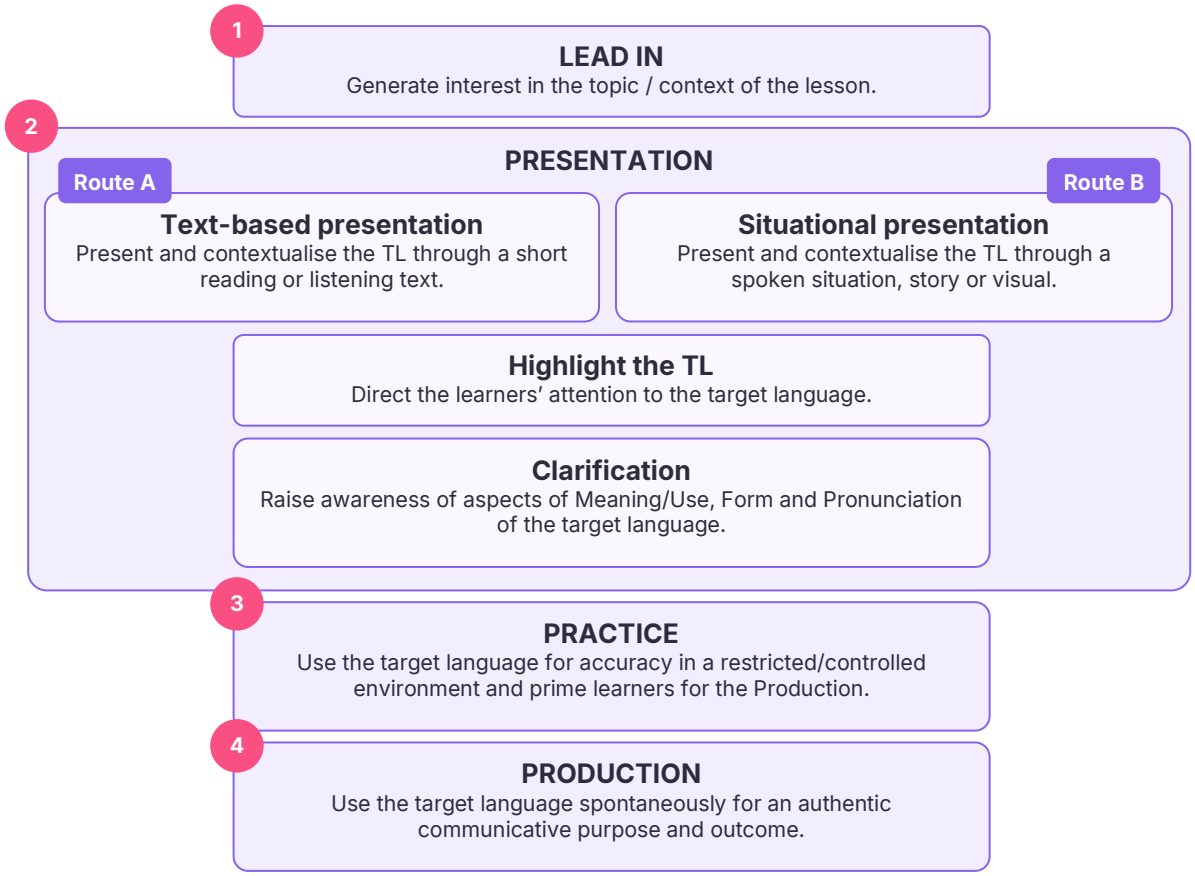
A framework for planning and teaching grammar, vocabulary and functions

PPP overview

Presentation–Practice–Production (PPP) is used to teach language systems: grammar, vocabulary or functions. It suits lessons where learners have little prior knowledge of the target language (TL) and need to see it in context before using it.

You need a short spoken or written text in which learners can find and notice the TL. It doesn't have to be long: a short anecdote or a brief text-message exchange is enough to set the context and show examples of the TL.

The delivery sequence – the stages of your lesson



TEACHING TIP

Presentation follows one of two routes. In a text-based presentation, learners find the TL in a short reading or listening text. In a situational presentation, the teacher tells a story or sets up a situation, elicits the TL and writes it on the board. Either way, Highlight the TL and Clarification follow as part of Presentation.

The planning process – build it in reverse

Plan backwards from the outcome you want, then teach forwards. Start with your aims and the Production activity, so that every earlier stage is built to serve them, not the other way round.

PLAN IN THIS ORDER	STEP 1 Aims	STEP 2 Production	STEP 3 Practice	STEP 4 Presentation	STEP 5 Lead-in

RUNNING EXAMPLE Throughout the steps below, we plan one lesson: talking about a past holiday using the past simple.

1 Aims

GUIDES EVERY STAGE

Main aim

Think of a communicative objective and the linguistic objective that supports it, both set in a relevant context. The communicative objective is what learners will achieve in the Production activity (speaking or writing). The linguistic objective is the target language: the grammar, vocabulary or functional language of the lesson. Together, they help learners achieve the communicative outcome.

EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY

Communicative objective: have an informal conversation

Context: a past holiday

Target language: past simple questions and statements (regular and irregular verbs)

Secondary aim

Think of an aim in a different skill or language area that supports the lesson. It should complement the main aim, not repeat it. It often targets the receptive skill learners need in Presentation (reading or listening) or the productive skills and strategies they need in Production (speaking or writing).

EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY

Learners have an informal conversation in the Production stage. The secondary aim is to help them choose topics and keep the conversation going.

Statement of aims

Combine both into a clear statement of what learners will be able to do by the end of the lesson.

EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY

Main aim: By the end of the lesson, learners will be better able to have an informal conversation about a past holiday, using past simple questions and statements with regular and irregular verbs.

Secondary aim: By the end of the lesson, learners will be better able to choose topics and keep a conversation going.

2 Production

TAUGHT AT STAGE 4

Think about the communicative objective, context and target language from your aims.

Design or choose a speaking or writing activity that:

- ☐ has a clear communicative outcome
- ☐ creates a real need to use the TL spontaneously
- ☐ is authentic and relates to real-life situations
- ☐ focuses on fluency and communicative effectiveness, not on repeating the TL

> **EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY**
> In pairs, learners ask and answer five questions about their last holiday, adding at least one follow-up question each time. Then they decide whose holiday sounded more fun, and why.

Typical speaking tasks: discussions, debates, information, knowledge or opinion gaps, problem solving, ordering, ranking, comparing, role-plays, interviews

Typical writing tasks: emails, messages, letters, reviews, descriptions, stories, summaries, short reports

3 Practice

TAUGHT AT STAGE 3

Think about the Production activity you have just designed or chosen, including its context and target language.

Design or choose a controlled or restricted practice activity that:

- ☐ consolidates learners' understanding and use of the TL
- ☐ encourages accurate but meaningful use of the TL
- ☐ prepares learners for the Production activity

> **EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY**
> Learners write six questions about past holidays (three with regular verbs and three with irregular verbs) and note their own answers. This personalises the practice and gives them ready-made questions for Production.

Typical tasks: gap-fills in context, sentence completion, writing sentences or questions, error correction, matching, mingling, miming, games

4 Presentation

TAUGHT AT STAGE 2

Think about the Practice and Production activities you have just designed. Keep the same context.

Presentation has two parts: presenting the TL in context, then clarifying it. Choose one route for the first part and one approach for the second.

PART 1 · PRESENT AND HIGHLIGHT THE TL

Route A · Text-based presentation

Design or choose a short reading or listening text that sets the context. First, give learners a task on the overall meaning of the text. Then ask them to find examples of the TL in it.

> **EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY**
>
> Learners read or listen to a short text about someone's past holiday and decide whether it was a good or bad holiday. Then they underline or note down at least four verbs that describe past actions.

Typical tasks: gist questions, choosing a title, ordering events, then underlining or noting the TL

Route B · Situational presentation

Design or choose a story, anecdote, situation or picture that sets the context and naturally generates the TL. Elicit examples of the TL from learners and write them on the board.

> **EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY**
>
> The teacher tells an anecdote about her last holiday. While they listen, learners note down at least four verbs that describe past actions. The teacher elicits the verbs and writes them on the board.

Typical tasks: stories, anecdotes, pictures, short videos

PART 2 · CLARIFICATION

Approach A · Teacher-led clarification

Use concept-checking questions (CCQs), timelines and other techniques to guide learners to an understanding of the meaning, use, form and pronunciation of the TL.

> **EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY**
>
> Questions to ask learners:
>
> **Meaning and use:** Are we talking about the present, past or future? Are the actions finished? Do we know when they happened?
>
> **Form:** How does the verb change? Is it the same for all verbs? How do we make negatives and questions?
>
> **Pronunciation:** How do we pronounce the -ed ending? /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/?

Typical tasks: teacher-led elicitation with CCQs, timelines, visuals, board work

Approach B · Learner-led clarification

Design or choose a task that helps learners work out the meaning, use, form and pronunciation of the TL for themselves, working together.

> **EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY**
>
> In pairs, learners answer questions about the examples in the text or story:
>
> **Meaning and use:** Is the story about finished or unfinished actions?
>
> **Form:** Look at the regular verbs. How do we form them? Infinitive + ____. Is the rule the same for irregular verbs?
>
> **Pronunciation:** Sort the regular verbs into three groups by the sound of the ending: /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/.

Typical tasks: guided questions, matching meaning to form, timelines, sorting or categorising, true/false statements, comparing examples

5 Lead-in

TAUGHT AT STAGE 1

Think about the communicative objective and context from your aims.

Design or choose a lead-in activity that:

- ☐ stimulates interest in the topic
- ☐ activates relevant knowledge
- ☐ gets learners talking about the topic

> **EXAMPLE · A PAST HOLIDAY**
>
> In pairs, learners discuss: When was the last time you had a holiday? Was it good or bad? Why?

Typical tasks: brainstorming, predictions, questionnaires, discussions, mingling activities, visuals, games

> **TEACHING TIP**
>
> As long as you start planning with your main aim and the Production activity, you can plan the other stages in any order. What matters is keeping the context, target language and communicative outcome in sight, so that every activity purposefully supports the others.