

## Unit B

# Teaching

## Exploring Theological English

The purpose of this section is to help you teach *ETE* more effectively. Part I presents some general teaching suggestions for all chapters and some guidelines and principles for making your assessment more effective. Part II offers suggestions for teaching the various sections of each chapter. For additional suggestions for adapting the text to meet student needs, see *TG* Unit A, pp. 12–18. See also the *ETE* companion Web site, <http://www.ExploringTheologicalEnglish.com>.

### **PART I Suggestions for Getting Started**

If this is your first time to teach *ETE*, we suggest that you not commit yourself to a set time frame for each chapter until you see how quickly your students can progress while continuing to have adequate comprehension. We have found that for most students the material is more challenging than either they or their teachers expect, and this results in taking longer for each chapter than originally anticipated.

#### **General Guidelines for All Chapters**

Listed below are some basic guidelines or suggestions that apply to the teaching of each chapter.

1. Make your lessons a positive learning experience so that students see reading as an enjoyable and important way to learn.
2. Model good reading and vocabulary learning strategies for your students. For example, talk about a word you looked up in a dictionary or the steps you used in guessing the meaning of a word in a book you are reading.
3. Have clear objectives for each part of your lesson. Remind your students frequently about why they are doing a particular activity or learning a new reading or vocabulary strategy.
4. Whenever possible, begin each lesson with a quick review of what your students learned in the previous lesson.
5. When introducing new topics, draw upon your students' background knowledge. Make connections to what they already know.

6. Use visuals (pictures, drawings, diagrams, charts) to help students understand new information.
7. Use a few key reading and/or vocabulary strategies repeatedly until students master them. Then continue to remind students of these strategies throughout the course.
8. Supplement each lesson with materials and activities that will challenge your more advanced students and additional materials and activities that are appropriate for learners who are having difficulty. Give individualized assignments as needed.
9. Review grammar and vocabulary by providing additional activities from English language textbooks. (See *TG* Appendix 4, pp. 126–133 for suggested teaching materials.)
10. When using small groups for discussions, vary the composition of the groups from time to time. For example, break students into equal-ability groups of three and then assign different discussion questions to each group according to their level of language ability. More difficult questions will go to those with a higher level of English ability and easier questions to those with a lower level of ability. At another time divide students into mixed-ability groups (or pairs) so that those with stronger language proficiency in English can help those who have weaker proficiency.
11. Make a range of Bible translations, dictionaries, and concordances available for use in your classroom.
12. Check the ETE companion Web site for additional resources and teaching suggestions (<http://www.ExploringTheologicalEnglish.com>).

### **Assessment**

Appropriate learner assessment can make a very great difference in the overall effectiveness of learning—what your students learn, what activities and procedures they use, how quickly and how well they learn, and ultimately how effective they are in using their new language skills in their academic studies. However, to use this tool effectively requires following some basic principles of good assessment.

1. Planning for assessment should begin at the same time you plan your teaching of *ETE*, rather than after you begin teaching. When assessment is an afterthought tacked onto the end of the learning experiences, it is seldom as effective for the students.
2. Students need to understand the value of assessment for their overall learning. They need to “buy into” the idea that assessment is a helpful tool that will contribute to better learning and eventually to more productive academic study and future ministry.
3. Appropriate assessment affects students’ rate of progress and keeps them progressing. If there is no assessment or if it occurs too infrequently, this lets the learners know that they can relax and

not work as hard, at least for a few days or weeks. This not only means that less learning occurs, but to achieve the level of language competence they need, these same students may need to spend additional weeks or months studying English.

4. Learning is nearly always more effective when learners are held accountable, but the accountability needs to be the right type—the kind that will motivate, encourage, point out directions to proceed, etc.
5. Before they begin the learning process, your students need to know what the assessment system will be like—what types of assessment will be used (show them samples) and the importance placed on formal assessment (e.g., a quiz or test) vs. informal assessment (e.g., a self-report or a checklist).
6. Assessment should reflect the goals and objectives of the learning program, the learning content, and the learning process. For example, if one of your goals is for learners to read more quickly without referring to a dictionary, you should have some means to assess their progress. If you teach basic theological terms related to salvation, you need to evaluate their knowledge of these terms.
7. Assessment strongly influences where students put their efforts and what they learn. The content and skills you choose to assess send a strong signal to your learners about what is important for them to learn. For example, if your students know they are going to be evaluated on their knowledge of theological vocabulary, they will make the learning of these terms a priority. On the other hand, if they know that you will never evaluate their learning of words from the Academic Word List, most of them will not make the effort to learn these words.
8. Study guides and review sheets are useful tools for helping students prepare for tests. They can include important terms and concepts, sample questions, and suggestions about how to prepare more effectively for a test.
9. Major decisions (e.g., whether a learner is ready for full-time study in English) should involve gathering various types of information (usually formal and informal) over a period of time. Major decisions should never be based on a single assessment of any kind.
10. Your assessment results provide valuable information you can use to adjust the content, learning procedures, and pace of your instruction.