

Software Quick Guide Focus on Grammar Series from Exceller

by Deborah Healey



Focus on Grammar consists of four CD-ROMs: Basic, Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Advanced, each sold separately. Teachers should suggest the appropriate level for individual students if they are working on their own. In self-study mode, students can work through the exercises in order on the appropriate CD-ROM. The teacher should also decide whether students are inductive learners who prefer to start with examples, finding their own rules, or deductive learners who prefer to start with rules, moving to examples.

Step 1: Inductive learners should begin with Discover the Grammar section. Here they see a number of examples of a grammar concept. They should be encouraged to work in pairs to discover the underlying rule. Deductive learners should be encouraged to look at the Grammar Notes section first to see the grammar rules, then work through Discover the Grammar to see how the rules are applied. This section works best if learners have been introduced to the specific grammar concept in class.

Step 2: Practice. Both deductive and inductive learners can benefit from applying the grammar concept in this structured practice. Depending on the lesson, students may choose from fill in the blank, unscramble (scrambled sentences), multiple choice, edit the sentence, or edit the paragraph exercise types.

Step 3: Specific skill areas. Students can choose to begin with Read or with Listen areas, but should work through both for more rounded exposure. Each area has its own set of comprehension exercises. The Read area includes comprehension, cloze, and sentence scramble exercises. The Listen area includes focus, recall, guided dictation, and dictation. These are in order of increasing difficulty, increasingly requiring productive rather than receptive skills.

Step 4: Students can test their productive skill in the Write section. This works best if a teacher is prepared to review the writing that students do in this section.

Step 5: If students are interested in TOEFL-style practice, they can go on to the Review Test section. They should be encouraged to go through the other areas first in order to learn the grammar concept before checking their scores.

At any point, students can access the Notes to see the grammar concepts that they are focusing on. Teachers should encourage students to make active use of the Notes.

See more information about using Focus on Grammar at Leslie Opp-Beckman's IELP site at http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~ielp/software/focus_grammar.htm and at <http://www.exceller.com/fogdetails.html>.

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