Teaching made simple

- Transparent structure
- Pragmatic methodology
- Varied content

The Straightforward series is well loved for its pick-up-and-use practicality and intuitive, easy-to-follow format. It is thoroughly flexible and adaptable, with a strong focus on clear student progression and self checking (through the CEFR ‘can do’ statements).

In this second edition, new and updated topics, articles and exercises appear within a fresh new design and in a range of new print and digital formats for students and teachers.

Straightforward Second edition is supported by one of the most comprehensive Teacher’s Books around – with practical advice and videos from Jim Scrivener’s Learning Teaching 3rd Edition, tests, photocopiables and additional videos for the classroom – not to mention the accompanying resource-rich website.

Straightforward is, as the title suggests, very easy to use both as a teacher and as a student.

Ian Denny, British Study Centres School of English, Bournemouth, UK

DIGITAL

Available for the second edition – every student has access to a huge range of online interactive practice and personalisable wordlists as well as videos from the BBC and ITV. Teachers can monitor students’ progress and create and set new materials within the online area.

Developing reading

Each Workbook includes an extract from a Macmillan Reader for the relevant level at the back of the book, allowing students to naturally expand their language outside of everyday classes and to engage with English fiction. This sits alongside Straightforward’s strong reading syllabus.

For samples, resources and more information, visit: www.macmillanenglish.com/straightforward
The Vocabulary and Speaking section in *Straightforward Second edition* Advanced level, 9B is a favourite of mine, not least because it includes two features of language learning which advanced students are most concerned about and which are given high priority in *Straightforward* Advanced. I also really enjoyed writing it; I love working with vocabulary (run-down houses, rickety chairs, threadbare carpets) and the speaking was fun to try out on students when I was writing the manuscript.

**Teaching takeaway**
Collocations are crucial to those students who want to lift themselves off the intermediate plateau and become true C1 users of English. As with all vocabulary exercises in the book, this one was thoroughly researched to ensure that the collocations are high frequency in the context of describing homes and therefore of interest to learners. To do this, I used a computer programme called The Sketch Engine, which enables writers – and teachers – to analyse the language in a number of corpora and draw accurate conclusions about how it is used.

The idea behind the two role-plays is by no means new, but they do provide relevant contexts in which to use the language in a light-hearted way. They represent just one example of a wide variety of different speaking task-types in the book, which also include debates, presentations, ranking and task-based activities. The speaking task in 9A, where students are asked to submit a plan for a new town, was written with the help of my brother, who’s a chartered surveyor, so that it would be as realistic as possible. Indeed, a great deal of research and fact checking went into every unit of *Straightforward* Advanced, so it was as much a learning experience for me as I hope it is for the students who use it.

Roy Norris, *Straightforward* co-author

**Philip Kerr - Pre-intermediate, Unit 8**
My own favourite lesson from *Straightforward Second edition* is the personalised grammar practice on page 77 of the Pre-intermediate level. This approach is fairly common throughout *Straightforward*, although the format varies slightly.

**Teaching takeaway**
These tasks ask students to look at problems with grammar (and often vocabulary) – they correct mistakes, fill in gaps and so on – but the exercise is designed in such a way that it leads directly on to personalised practice, in which the student uses the language in a meaningful, contextualised and memorable way. It’s one of the key features of *Straightforward*, and also of all the other materials that I’ve written.

Since this kind of exercise first appeared in coursebooks, it has become increasingly common, but I’m still surprised by the amount of material which doesn’t include at least some element of personalisation. Students, even at low levels, can always find something to say, and it’s often a moment when the personalities of individual students come to the fore, when unexpected moments of humour occur. It allows for the unpredictable … and that’s what makes teaching fun!

Philip Kerr, *Straightforward* co-author