



TEACHING REMOTELY WITH LIMITED TECHNOLOGY: GETTING STARTED

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Introduction

In contexts where most students have limited to no access to the internet, it may be quite challenging to prepare yourself to teach English remotely. In such a scenario, you will benefit from some preparation and research into different options before starting to teach. You will need to think about the situation for the majority of your students and design your approach and activities accordingly. Below are some tips to help you get started.

Considering your context

Think about your own and your students' access to and use of technology to decide what platform(s) can be best to support remote teaching and learning.

Access to the internet

- You will need to find out how many of your learners have access to the internet. If they do, find out how they access it (on a laptop/tablet/phone?) and how much data volume and bandwidth they have available.
- Do they use any social media platforms, such as Facebook? Do they use any messenger apps, such as WhatsApp?
- If your learners can get online, what type of content do you think they will be able to access? Videoconferencing? Online courses? Or will this be limited to using messenger apps (e.g. WhatsApp) and/or social media?

No access to the internet

- Find out whether your learners use their own phone or a phone belonging to their parents. For younger learners, communicating by telephone with their parent's or caregiver's phone is strongly recommended. You will need to ask their permission to use their phone number to add them to a class group.
- If they have access to a mobile phone, can you send SMS and MMS for communication and study materials?
- If the majority of them do not have reliable phone access, how else can you communicate? Think about their access to TV/radio or print media. However, remember that using TV/radio or print media for teaching is likely to require more support from your department.
- Can some of your school administrative staff help you send printed study materials to students each week?

Ways of teaching remotely with limited technology

Phone or SMS

- You can set simple tasks on a daily or weekly basis as suitable for you and your learners, using either SMS or phone calls. Check if you can make conference calls, if needed.
- Agree days to send out different kinds of information. Students need to note the SMS text you send in their notebook. You could have a week focused on vocabulary, then the following week focus on grammar revision, the next week pronunciation, etc.
- Find some more ideas for teaching via SMS (<https://tinyurl.com/y98bwm86>) and by telephone (<https://tinyurl.com/yam9l8yp>) on the TeachingEnglish website.

Social media

- You can create a closed group on Facebook or WhatsApp and use it to set tasks, share learning materials and collect homework and assignments.
- Using Facebook live and/or video call on WhatsApp can be an effective way to have real-time interaction with learners to introduce new concepts and clarify doubts.
- Find some more ideas for teaching via Facebook (<https://tinyurl.com/yckhyand>) and by WhatsApp (<https://tinyurl.com/ycj6g9t5>) on the TeachingEnglish website.

TV, radio or print media

- If you've received approval and can broadcast lessons via TV or radio, you could set tasks for your learners for the day/week as per the schedule.
- Radio and TV might be useful to help your students with pronunciation and listening skills. Even reading a storybook aloud and teaching new vocabulary can work well.
- Print media is more suitable to promote reading skills and set practice tasks for grammar and vocabulary. You can generate interest in reading using comic strips and stories, for example, and set writing tasks based on those.

Things to consider

- **Permission and privacy:** For kids and teenagers you'll need to make sure parents know about the groups you're setting up. Some kids will need to use their parents' phones. One-to-one contact between teachers and students is not recommended.
- **Data usage:** Some learners won't have a lot of data available for their lesson content. Think about how you can share content using only text or small files.
- **Health and safety:** If you are using any print media or materials, make sure you're meeting safety precautions (for example, during the Covid-19 crisis to eliminate any fear of virus spread).