

# ENGLISH PRACTICE MATERIAL

## READING

# B1·B2



## Contents

<b>Foreword</b>			3
<b>Introduction</b>			4
<b>Unit 1</b>	<b>What's going on?</b>	Curiosity	6
<b>Unit 2</b>	<b>How are you?</b>	Friendliness	8
<b>Unit 3</b>	<b>I'm sorry!</b>	Regret	10
<b>Unit 4</b>	<b>I can't wait!</b>	Expectation	12
<b>Unit 5</b>	<b>I'm scared!</b>	Fear	14
<b>Unit 6</b>	<b>What a surprise!</b>	Surprise	16
<b>Unit 7</b>	<b>I'm not sure!</b>	Uncertainty	18
<b>Unit 8</b>	<b>That's interesting!</b>	Motivation	20
<b>Unit 9</b>	<b>That's disappointing!</b>	Disappointment	22
<b>Unit 10</b>	<b>Can I help you?</b>	Helpfulness	24
<b>Unit 11</b>	<b>Thank you!</b>	Gratitude	26
<b>Unit 12</b>	<b>Everything will be alright!</b>	Optimism	28
<b>Unit 13</b>	<b>Be prepared for the worst!</b>	Pessimism	30
<b>Unit 14</b>	<b>Well done!</b>	Satisfaction	32
<b>Unit 15</b>	<b>Welcome!</b>	Acceptance	34
<b>Unit 16</b>	<b>I'm so happy!</b>	Happiness	36
<b>Unit 17</b>	<b>Bye!</b>	Sadness	38
<b>Unit 18</b>	<b>That's funny!</b>	Amusement	40
<b>Unit 19</b>	<b>What an idiot!</b>	Anger	42
<b>Unit 20</b>	<b>The good old days ...</b>	Nostalgia	44
<b>Answer key</b>			46
<b>Appendix</b>			51

## Welcome to telc!

telc, the vhs test experts, are proud to provide English practice material especially for vhs courses. In this book, we provide a variety of emotion-based units helping participants to acquire more language competence. Being able to express oneself, stating a personal opinion, maybe even agreeing to disagree – that's central to communication.

The aim of this book is to give a fresh perspective to learners at CEFR levels B1 and B2, who are quite advanced already, but not yet fully confident. Taken together, this series was designed to improve English skills and, ultimately, to prepare for a telc English examination, as it provides excellent preparation for the communicative requirements found in our language tests.

Learning better English plays a key role as it is very often essential for success at work and for crossing language barriers in private life. The Volkshochschule or vhs stands for exactly that: providing everybody with a chance to get ahead, whatever their circumstances. It's a democratic institution, open to all kinds of learners, offering them accessible courses and a chance to reach their goals.

telc, as a proud member of the vhs family, provides state-of-the-art assessment. With telc certificates, success is made visible on the way from the classroom to the employer, to university or to wherever valid proof of language competence is required. telc, the VHS's own certificate system, started to certify competence in English in the 1960s – a truly innovative step at that time.

Innovation today means that we offer more: not just a test, but also a way to reach language goals. May this book provide an enjoyable learning experience, with perceivable and maybe even certified progress towards more confident use of the English language!



Jürgen Keicher

*Managing Director, telc gGmbH*

**English Practice Material – vhs** is a four-part series: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking. The four parts can either be used individually or together in any combination.

### **Who is *English Practice Material – vhs* intended for?**

It is intended for adult learners who would like to consolidate their B1 skills and to develop their language skills on a B2 level. It is also suitable for refreshers who have already reached level B2 but still lack confidence or practice.

### **How many units does each book include?**

Each book contains 20 short units (one double-page spread per unit).

### **What topics are covered in the units?**

Each unit is about an emotion. The order in which the emotions appear in each of the four books is always the same, so that there is a thematic connection. However, each book deals with different aspects of the emotion in order to avoid repetition.

### **Why is it about emotions? Does this really matter for communication in everyday life?**

Yes. Exchanging personal experiences plays a central role for learners at levels B1 and B2. Personal experiences are usually closely linked with emotional responses. For example, somebody gets a great job offer and expresses how happy they are about this (happiness) or someone talks about their disappointing experience with the tour operators during their last holiday (disappointment). For learners of a foreign language, it is also often a challenge to express their emotions – especially “negative” emotions such as anger or disappointment – in an appropriate manner. All four skills provide useful activities for this purpose, including easy-to-use phrases.

### **Do the units have an additional focus?**

Yes. In each unit there is a CEFR descriptor (“Can-Do Statement”) to which the activities are tailored. The descriptor can be found in a box at the end of each unit. Thus, learners do not only become familiar with the CEFR step by step, but are also encouraged to monitor and take charge of their own progression. The descriptors are usually in the original CEFR wording, but in abbreviated, learner-friendly form.

### **How are the units structured?**

All units have the same structure: A unit begins with an illustration on the left page. The illustration shows a communicative situation depicting the emotion of the unit. The first exercise is always a warm up, which enables the participants to ease into the topic in a light, playful manner. It is followed by several activities in which the subject is dealt with in more depth. Each unit always ends with the relevant CEFR descriptor. In addition, each unit has a “sticky note”, in which a simple, practical tip or an additional piece of information is offered. The “sticky note” has no fixed place; it appears where it fits the content.

### **Is there a clear distinction between B1 and B2 activities?**

There are texts and activities of varying difficulty in each unit. Activities that are not specifically identified are suitable for all participants. They are designed in a way that they can be implemented both at a lower

and at a higher level. More “difficult“ activities are marked by pictograms: one chilli pepper = challenging, two chilli peppers = very challenging.

## **Is an audio CD included?**

Speaking, Listening and Reading all include an audio CD. Only Writing has no audio CD.

## **Why do Reading and Speaking also have an audio CD?**

Speaking provides audio texts that are intended to be used as preparation for an oral activity. For example: A dialogue on the audio CD might serve as a model for a role-playing activity. The CD also provides a variety of examples of useful everyday expressions. Reading offers selected texts as audio texts. Having the possibility to take in information on multiple sensory channels makes it easier for learners to process (difficult) texts and also provides more variety in the classroom.

## **Speaking activities appear in all four skills. Is speaking of particular importance?**

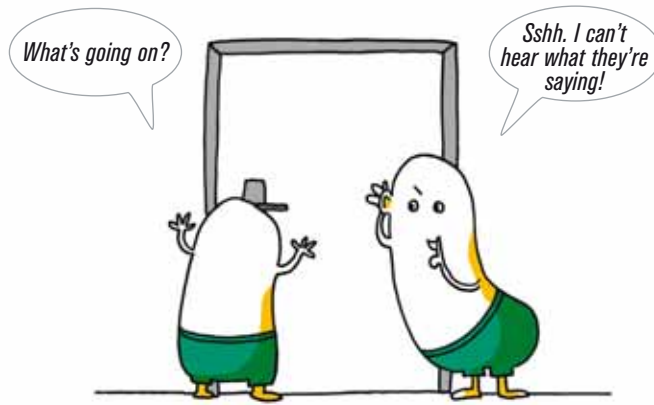
Yes. The primary goal is to get the participants to talk and to encourage them to overcome their fear of making mistakes. Therefore, there are numerous activities that promote oral communication, not only in Speaking. However, the oral exercises are always linked to the particular skill, i.e. Listening, Reading or Writing. For example: In Reading, texts are often followed by a discussion question. Exchanging their ideas with other students allows a further personal analysis of the text and thus leads to a deeper understanding. In addition, alternating silent work phases and conversation phases increases concentration in the classroom.

## **Can the material be used as additional material in the classroom?**

Yes, at the appropriate levels it can accompany any textbook that is being used in an English course. The units can be flexibly combined. This has the advantage that teachers can put together activities according to their needs, i.e. activities for a particular skill, a particular CEFR descriptor or a particular emotion. Of course, the material can also be used as primary learning material, e.g. Speaking is ideal for a conversation course.

## **Can the material be used to prepare for a telc examination?**

Yes – this material is excellent preparation for a telc English examination, helping learners deepen their language competence and thus prepare well for the communicative requirements of the test. We recommend using this material in conjunction with telc mock examinations, as these give students a complete overview of the examination format and of typical examination questions.



### Warm up

- Look at the illustration. What are the two people doing? Why are they curious? What do you think they can hear?
- With a partner write down what you think the people are saying on the other side of the door in the form of a dialogue.
- Read your dialogue to the class.

### Activity 1

- Whether you live in a block of flats or in a house in a quiet street, interaction with neighbours is usually part of our daily lives. Talk to a partner about the kind of neighbours you'd like to have, then read the text below and compare it with your ideas.

#### How to be a good neighbour

All of us have a responsibility for the quality of life in our neighbourhood. However, looking after the interests of your neighbours does not mean that you should interfere in their lives. Being a good neighbour is about respecting your neighbours and not doing anything that might upset them. When you start to get too curious about their lives, there is a risk you may be invading their privacy.

Conflicts between neighbours can start because of misunderstandings or inconsiderate behaviour, but they can also start if people are too inquisitive. Nobody likes a nosy neighbour! In fact, neighbours who poke their noses into other people's business are called "nosy parkers"!

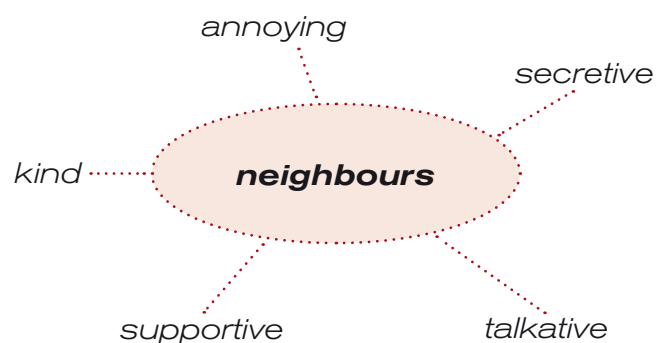
So, get to know your neighbours and keep them informed. Exchange telephone numbers so that you can contact them in an emergency. If your neighbour is going away, offer to put out their bins for them and keep an eye on their house. However, remember that both you and your neighbours also have a right to privacy.



- List the words and phrases used in the text to describe curious neighbours.
- What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of people in a neighbourhood knowing a lot about each other's lives?

### Activity 2

- In small groups, make a mind map with all the adjectives that can be used to describe neighbours. Think of positive and negative words to add to the example on the right.
- Using these adjectives, tell each other about the best neighbour and the worst neighbour you have ever had.





**Activity 3**

**a** Read the text and choose the correct word for each option. The first one has been done for you.

**Too much freedom?**

- A Paparazzi are photographers who follow famous/curious people, take photographs of them and then sell these to newsagents/newspapers and celebrity magazines. Occasionally, their photos cause a real scandal/story and there may even be a public uproar about their insensitivity.
- B People who choose to live in the public eye need/expect to receive a certain amount of attention from the press, but some paparazzi take things too far, even taking photos of celebrities' children. Some victims/patients have fought back, and the laws in some countries are beginning to offer them protection. However, this is not the case/matter everywhere.
- C The laws regarding public photography have seldom/always been something of a grey area. In some parts/sections of the world, paparazzi are not allowed to trespass on private property, or to use telephoto lenses pointed at private property. In fact, since the death of Princess Diana, they are forbidden from following their goals/targets in motor vehicles.
- D Anti-paparazzi legislation is controversial: it is not always clear/possible where and how to draw the line between legitimate news and the invasion of privacy. Celebrities have some right to privacy - and certainly their children do - and they may feel threatened/loved by over-enthusiastic photographers. On the other hand, if the law is too strict, the freedom of the press may be endangered. It is not easy to find a solution/balance between the two.
- E The public doesn't care much about the riches/rights of celebrities: after all, it's the huge famine/appetite for these photographs that has created the paparazzi. It's doubtful whether the general public even thinks about anti-paparazzi legislation. But one thing is certain; as long as controversial documents/images arouse public interest, the paparazzi mobs will continue to harass the rich and famous.

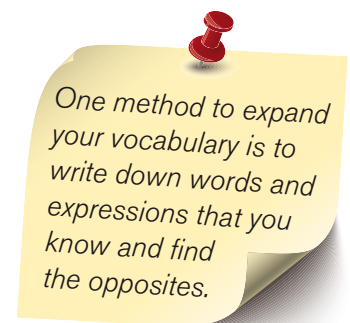


**b** Which paragraph ...

- 1 is critical of restricting the rights of paparazzi?
- 2 mentions that celebrities sometimes take legal steps against the paparazzi?
- 3 lists rules for the paparazzi?

**c** Underline the words and expressions in each paragraph that have the opposite meaning to the following:

- |                                   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A lead, buy, are the result of    | B play safe, accepted, withdraw       |
| C clearly defined, birth, allowed | D unquestionable, publicity, tolerant |
| E tiny, certain, comfort          |                                       |



**Activity 4**

Discuss these questions referring to the text above. What restrictions should paparazzi have, if any? How much right do celebrities have to privacy? Why do people want to know more about the lives of the rich and famous?



**Vocabulary control**

- B2** Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some confusion and incorrect word choice does occur without hindering communication.
- B1** Shows good control of elementary vocabulary but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts or handling unfamiliar topics and situations.



Creatively written by an international team of English language professionals and brought to life by telc, *English Practice Material – vhs* is a four-part series, using a fresh, flexible and practical approach. The parts are: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

Targeted at adult learners with upper B1 / lower B2 competence, each unit is based on a human emotion. A variety of aspects of each emotion are covered in a number of communicative situations. Learners are encouraged to compare and discuss their own experiences and emotional responses, thus covering all typical competencies of the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) levels B1 and B2. This material is designed in a way that provides immediate access for both teachers and learners. All the activities are clear and self-explanatory and there are plenty of opportunities for individual or group work, role-plays, interviews, debates and discussions.

Like building blocks, the material can be used together either comprehensively or individually in a workshop or short course. The units can also be used flexibly to supplement other teaching material. Most importantly, a variety of tasks typically found in telc examinations are featured, making this series excellent preparation for a telc language test.