



TEFLMonty.com

TEFLEngish – a FREE Language Awareness course.

Thinking about teaching English abroad or online? As a native or near-native speaker you already have a great asset: you know what "sounds right."

However, teaching isn't just about instinctively knowing your own language; you need to be able to understand how it works so you can help your students learn. This knowledge about language is what we call language awareness — and for a TEFL teacher, it's crucial.

For instance, what could you say to a student who asks you the difference between these two sentences:

[a] I saw Michael this morning, and [b] I've seen Michael this morning.

We will answer this and many other questions like it on TEFLEngish. This free course isn't a magic key to knowing it all: true language awareness is a lifelong journey. Instead, this is your essential starting point. I'll help you begin to see the English you speak every day through a new lens, transforming your innate understanding into knowledge you can access and share.

Together we'll explore the fundamental rules you use intuitively but may have never had to explain, or even think about. This foundation will make you a more reflective, confident, and prepared future teacher, ready to get the most out of your formal TEFL training.

Try the FREE Sample on the next page

Task 1. Read this short dialogue between Mike and Mandy.



Mandy: “Fancy a cigarette, Mike?”

Mike: “No thanks, Mary. I don’t smoke.”

Mandy: “What? I’m sure I saw you smoking at our office Christmas party.”

Mike: “Yes, that’s right. I used to smoke, but I don’t anymore.”

Mary: “Really? What happened?”

Mike: “Nothing, really. My doctor told me to stop, so I did.”

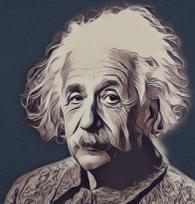
Mary: “Well done, good for you!”

Mike “Thanks”.

Task 2. Pay attention to the highlighted phrase in the above dialogue and apply Einstein’s rule:

**If you can't explain
it to a six year old,
you don't
understand it
yourself.**

~ Albert Einstein



Preparation.

Yes, that’s right: imagine that a 6-year-old child asks you to explain what this phrase means.

Think about everything that the highlighted phrase conveys, what it does not convey, and think about any other examples you could use to help clarify the phrase.

Task 3. Next, imagine that you have presented the dialogue to a group of pre-intermediate students (don't worry for now about the level, as this is something we will look at in more detail on the TEFL English Course). Suffice it to say that the students are familiar with all of the vocabulary in the dialogue but the highlighted phrase will be new to most of them. You wish to draw their attention to the highlighted phrase and check to see if they have understood its meaning (from the contextual clues). Consider the following list of questions, and decide which ones will help you check whether the students can understand or surmise the meaning of this phrase: categorise them into helpful (H), not helpful (N) and not sure (?).

	H / N / ?
1. What does "used to" mean?	
2. Did Mike smoke for a very short period of time or a longer period?	
3. Is smoking bad for you?	
4. Did Mike smoke in the past?	
5. Can you make a sentence with "used to"?	
6. Did Mike smoke as a teenager, probably?	
7. Does Mike smoke now?	
8. How many cigarettes did Mike use to smoke?	
9. From the context can we say that Mike was probably into smoking in the past but decided to give up for health reasons and now steers clear of cigarettes altogether?	
10. Did Mike stop smoking because his doctor told him to?	
11. Do we know when Mike smoked exactly?	
12. Did Mike smoke on one occasion only?	

If you were in a class with other training teachers, after completing this task on your own, you would probably be encouraged to compare and discuss your answers next.

The official answers to **Task 3** are:

Helpful: 2, 4, 7, 11 and 12. All the other questions are unhelpful.

Compare these to your original answers and think about any differences you have with the official answers. Does anything surprise you? If so, what and why?

Task 4. Now that you are aware of the helpful questions, can you try and provide a correct answer to each question, and then consider what part of the meaning of 'used to' each question checks. Make some notes.

Task 5. Next, think about a logical order in which you could ask these questions so as to not just check meaning but also guide students towards the full meaning of 'used to' as illustrated in this mini-dialogue.

Task 6. Go back to Tasks 3 and 4. Consider the unhelpful questions. Why are they unhelpful or inappropriate? Make some notes.

Task 7. Finally, review your answers to all the Tasks. Based on what you now know about the helpful and unhelpful questions, make a list of dos and don'ts for writing CCQs (Concept Checking Questions).

When you are satisfied that you have written accurate and full answers to tasks 4, 5, 6 and 7, watch the video on <https://thefilmonty.com/>.