30 Choosing and using teaching resources

A Warm-up

Think about materials you have used as a language teacher (for example, the coursebook you are using during the CELTA course) or a language learner (for example, a self-study language learning app). Complete the table with your ideas. Here are some areas you might want to consider:

- engagement and motivation
- language explanations and practice
- skills testing and teaching
- design and ease of use
- sense of progress
- other

	What you liked about the materials	What you didn't like about the materials
As a teacher		
As a student		

Compare your table to a partner. Do you have similar opinions about what you liked and didn't like?

B Criteria for evaluating materials

1 Your trainer will divide you into four groups. Look at the criteria for choosing material below. Add to the possible list of questions.

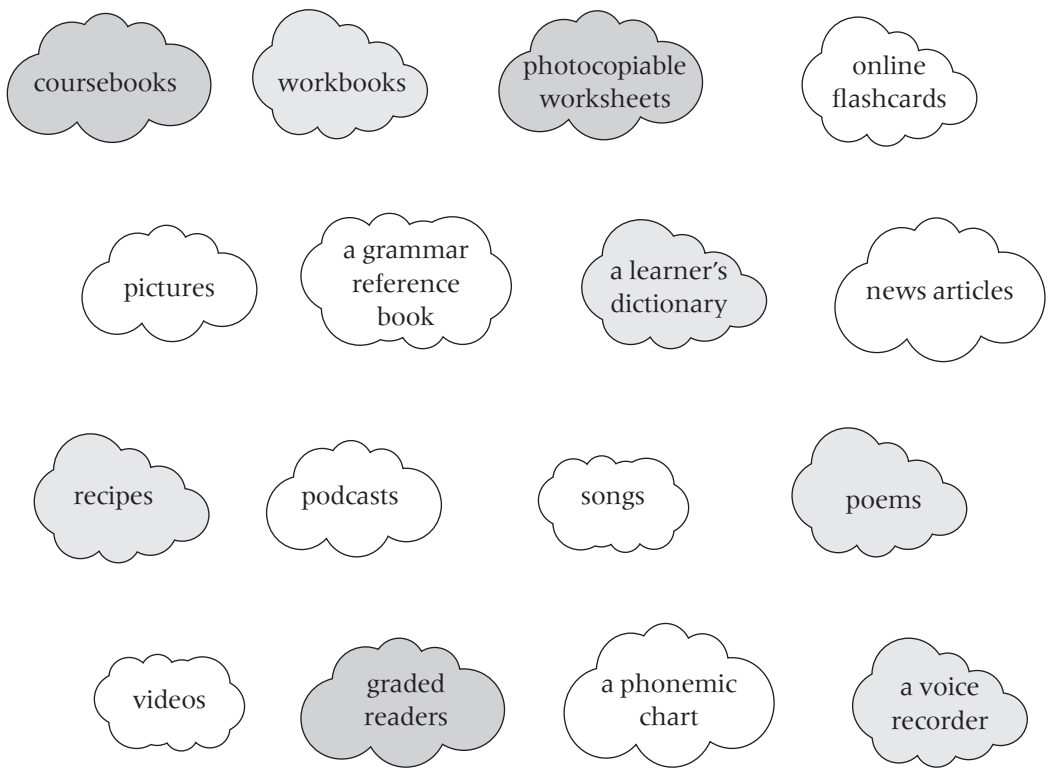
1 Suitability for learners Are the materials appropriate to the learners' age group? What do the learners need English for? To what extent do the materials meet these needs? …
2 Suitability for teachers Do the materials require more planning time than the teacher might normally have? Do the materials support teacher development, for example through teacher's notes? …
3 Suitability for the context Are the materials affordable? Is there sufficient preparation for any formal assessments learners have to take? …
4 Suitability of language and skills focus Do the materials reflect the version of English (e.g. British English) needed and used by the learners? Do the reading and listening texts reflect authentic language use? …

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091602.031 Published online by Cambridge University Press

2 Work in pairs. Select six to eight questions from B1 which are particularly relevant to your current TP group.

C Sources of materials and resources

1 Which of these materials and resources have been used during your CELTA course so far? Which of them would you like to use?



2 What other materials and resources can you add to the list?

3 Work in pairs. Your trainer will give you some materials. Use your shortlist of questions from B2. Decide how likely you are to use the materials with your current TP group.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091602.031 Published online by Cambridge University Press

A conscientious teacher whose teaching is by necessity or choice based on a coursebook will want to do something to compensate for the lack of match between such considerations as teaching context, course aims and learner needs on the one hand and what the coursebook assumes and provides on the other. In short, a coursebook should be seen as a resource for teaching and learning, rather than a body of material to be taught.

Ian McGrath, 2016

D Adapting materials

1 Once you have identified suitable materials for your learners, you need to decide how to use them in your lesson(s). The table shows some of the ways in which you could adapt materials during the lesson planning process or in the lesson itself.

Match the key words (1–4) to the explanations (a–d).

1 Keep	a Switch out one activity or method for another, e.g. a different controlled practice activity.
2 Supplement	b Take out whole stages of an activity or a lesson, e.g. not using a reading text. OR Take out questions from an existing activity.
3 Remove	c Use the materials or activities unchanged.
4 Replace	d Add new materials, e.g. an activity from the teacher's book. OR Add extra questions to an existing activity.

2 Look at as many different examples of materials and resources as you can within the time limit your trainer gives you. Decide:

- whether you would use them with your current TP group
- specific ways you could adapt materials or make use of resources to suit your TP group (including the level of challenge/support provided), your teaching style and your context

Aim to come up with ideas under as many different headings from D1 as possible.

3 Work with another pair. Summarize what you discussed in D2, and decide how useful the questions you selected in B2 were when evaluating the materials.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091602.031 Published online by Cambridge University Press

KEY WORDS FOR TEACHERS

Check you know the meanings of these terms.

- *authentic materials*
- *engagement*
- *materials evaluation*
- *materials adaptation*
- *differentiation*
- *coursebook, workbook, teacher's book*
- *flashcard*
- *graded reader*
- *learner's dictionary*
- *phonemic chart*
- *realia*

REFLECTION

Choose one of the following questions to answer.

1 How might your choice of questions in B2 have been different if you were considering the following types of learner?
   a young learners
   b university students
   c a company executive who you teach one-to-one
2 Have you enjoyed using a coursebook? How has it helped you? How have you adapted the book for your group? What problems have you found with it?
3 Have you used any materials that were not originally created for teaching (e.g. a song or a video clip)? If so, what were the challenges? What worked well?

Reference

McGrath, I (2016). *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching* (2nd edition). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091602.031 Published online by Cambridge University Press