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# The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists

Review by Jennifer Wright,  
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THE ESL TEACHER'S BOOK OF LISTS. Jacqueline E. Kress. The Center for Applied Research in Education, West Nyack, New York. 1993, 226 pp. \$29.95.

The *ESL Teacher's Book of Lists* provides, as the title suggests, 80 tested lists in seven categories.

1. General Vocabulary
2. Academic Vocabulary
3. Grammar
4. Grammar Patterns and Practice
5. Pronunciation
6. Assessment
7. Curriculum and Instruction

The first three sections are designed to be used in the ESL classroom. The last four sections give practical information, advice, and suggestions primarily for the teacher. The book's format, ringbound on A4 size paper with black and white Victorian style illustrations, make it very photocopier-friendly. The author recommends the book for use with elementary and secondary school students, either in an ESL classroom or in the mainstream classroom, and is not bound to speakers of any particular first language.

Section 1 provides 21 lists of words that can be used in everyday situations, from talking about the weather to filling in application forms. There is also an extensive list of American idioms, a list of idioms across five languages(English, French, German, Spanish and Chinese) and a list of cognates that English shares with Spanish, French, and German.

Section 2 has seven lists of academic vocabulary from basic classroom language to math and social science vocabulary. The lists are graded, providing language first of all at a basic level and then at an intermediate/advanced level.

In section 3, there are 13 lists of grammar rules ranging from parts of speech to article usage and verb tenses. Section 4 contains 9 lists of sentence structures showing, for example, the different tenses, the active and passive voices, common grammar mistakes, and register.

Section 5 presents 13 lists and charts to help distinguish and produce sounds and practice stress and intonation patterns at both the word and sentence level. There are

lists of problem sounds for speakers of other languages, ranging from West European to Asian Languages.

Section 6 offers seven lists of techniques for assessing student performance in all the skill areas and provides a list of 30 available commercial language tests.

Section 7 includes ten lists of practical techniques and activities across all the skill and language areas, from cadence drills to timelines, charades, and outlining. There is also a list of recommended books in all of these areas, a list of publishers of ESL curriculum materials and a list of resource centers.

At the end of the book there is a glossary of ESL terms, providing an explanation and, where relevant, an example, ranging from *Aptitude Test* through *Modal Auxiliary Verb* to *Segmental Phonemes* and *Validity*.

The book provides a wealth of information, both for the ESL student and for the teacher. The book would best be used in conjunction with an ESL textbook, as the material is not presented in a contextual setting and there are no exercises for practicing the language contained in the lists. As with any list, these are not exhaustive and may need to be adapted and/or supplemented by the individual teacher.

I have two main reservations about the book. Firstly, the apparent imbalance in the lists; at times the lists are almost too exhaustive with language items I feel to be beyond the target audience of the book and at other times I feel that the explanations given, for example, in the lists of grammar rules, are somewhat superficial. Secondly, I feel that a number of the language items presented, particularly in the idiom lists, and some of the suggestions for assessing and practicing across the various skill areas, are not as up-to-date as they could be but tend to be rather traditional.

Overall, however, I believe that *The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists* is a valuable resource for ESL teachers.

### About the Reviewer

*Jennifer Wright graduated from Durham University, U.K., in 1982 with a B.A. in Modern Languages. She then took the R.S.A. Preparatory Certificate in TEFL and later the R.S.A. TEFLA Diploma. She taught in Italy for five years and then in Japan for five years. She is currently living in the CNMI where she hopes to be working soon.*