

# Four skills concept check

## Trainer's notes

|                            |                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Aims</b>                | To promote better understanding of the exact meanings of glossary terms relating to the four skills |
| <b>Syllabus area</b>       | Language skills                                                                                     |
| <b>Timetable fit</b>       | For use to review all four skills                                                                   |
| <b>Interaction pattern</b> | Group work                                                                                          |
| <b>Timing</b>              | 40 minutes                                                                                          |
| <b>Materials needed</b>    | One copy of the worksheet (1.4A) for each trainee                                                   |

This exercise checks that candidates have grasped important distinctions between skills terms early in the course. This should allow for sensible discussion later in the course when many of these ideas resurface when talking about practice activities, lesson planning, correction techniques etc.

### Instructions

1. Demonstrate the activity by asking for definitions and examples for a *receptive skill* / a *productive skill* and write them on the board. Encourage the trainees to discuss the similarities and differences between the two concepts.
2. Divide trainees into groups of four. Distribute the worksheets and have trainees work together to define and find examples for each pair of concepts. Monitor to make sure trainees are writing their definitions and examples down. Ask questions to encourage discussion about similarities and differences between each pair of concepts. Avoid feeding in answers yet – the aim is to promote discussion.
3. After about 20 minutes, allow trainees to refer to their TKT glossaries and/or other reference books to check their answers. They should edit their answers and add more detail where necessary.
4. Have trainees swap their worksheets with another group. Each group should mark the worksheet they receive with the correction code:
  - ✓ for each correct definition
  - ✓ for each appropriate example
  - ? for any items which don't seem to make sense
  - before any additional comments that they write
 Before they return the worksheets to the original owners, have the trainees add a brief overall comment.
5. Conduct feedback to clarify any concepts still causing confusion.

NB Listen carefully during the group discussion stage to see which concepts have been grasped well and which the trainees are still struggling with. Be well prepared with clear explanations and pertinent (if possible local) examples to clarify concepts in the final feedback stage.

### Answer key

Here are some suggested definitions:

- e.g. Receptive skills: reading & listening (making sense of a text)  
 Productive skills: writing & reading (involves producing language or communicating a message)
1. Skill: what we do with language, i.e. read, write, listen or speak in L2  
 Subskill: component part of main skills, such as skimming, scanning, reading for detail, extensive reading
  2. Accuracy: using the correct form of the language (grammar, lexis, phonology and functions)  
 Fluency: communicating the message effectively without strain on the listener/reader
  3. Authentic material: what a first language speaker would read/listen to  
 Graded material: reading and listening texts adapted for L2 learners at a specific level
  4. Coherence: logical, consistent and clear connection between ideas (sentences, paragraphs) in a text  
 Cohesion: grammatical links between sentences (ideas, paragraphs) which help us to see the connection between them (e.g. cohesive devices such as *because*, *although*)
  5. Extensive (reading or listening): for long pieces of text, with varying attention and interest, employing different reading/listening subskills depending on need  
 Intensive (reading or listening): not a subskill, but a technique for examining language (grammar, lexis)
  6. Lead-in activity: an introduction to the topic of the lesson and/or activities focusing on the new language  
 Post-task activity: activities in which the learners discuss the topic freely and/or have an opportunity to ask questions about the language used
  7. Scanning: reading for specific information, pulling out only one piece of information we're interested in  
 Skimming: reading for gist, getting a general idea of what the whole text is about
  8. Language work: grammar, lexis, phonology & functions  
 Skills work: reading, writing, listening & speaking

## Four skills concept check

Write definitions for each pair of concepts. If possible give examples which help to illustrate how they are different.

e.g. a receptive skill / a productive skill

1. a skill / a subskill

2. accuracy / fluency

3. authentic material / graded material

4. coherence / cohesion

5. extensive / intensive (reading or listening)

6. lead-in / post-task activity

7. scanning / skimming

8. language work / skills work