# Distance TESOL
## Module Three Assignments

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This document includes answers to all the questions from the assignment.

## Question 1:

While this lesson plan is effective in a number of ways, it could use some really important improvements. Both the merits and the flaws have been discussed in the following list:

1) The aim is mentioned from a teacher's point of view. I believe a more effective way is to describe it from a learner's viewpoint i.e. "by the end of the lesson, the students will be able to …". Also, it simply states what is being taught and does not mention a communicative purpose for the language to be taught. I would change this to "at the end of this lesson, the students will be able to describe people's appearance by discussing what they are wearing and extra features such as facial hair or freckles using have/has got in the present form"

2) The theme could be more specific: Describing people's appearance. Nevertheless it is a great theme and potentially provides a great set of communicative tasks for the students considering the fact that in order to do this one would frequently need to say what people have got (e.g. freckles, facial hair, etc.) aside from what they are wearing.

3) The teaching aids section includes a table, while the plan actually uses a picture. A short description of the picture to be used is missing, too. Also, the gapped passage used after the listening is missing here.

4) The notions/functions section is really vague and underexploited. The functions of "have got" that are being dealt with (i.e. "have got" = "own" and not "have got" instead of "have" in the present perfect tense) should be clearly and more specifically explained in this section. The function here is to state what someone or something has or owns in spoken/informal language instead of the verb "have".

5) Target language has presented some practical marker sentences but does not provide negative and question forms, nor does it provide even a brief grammatical analysis of the statements. These are essentially helpful during the preparation stage and with the anticipation of the kind of problems that might arise among students in reaction to the language being taught. Also, the two statements "I've got red hair" and "We've all got large feet" would serve little purpose here because a) they involve self-description which is not part of this lesson, and b) the latter has "all" between the two parts of the verb "have got" which might lead to confusion for the elementary student.

6) The assumptions section points to the present continuous tense but is silent about the function the students are supposedly acquainted with, which should be "to

describe what people are wearing". This section should also include the assumption that the students have already learnt how to use the verb "have" to denote ownership. Without this, teaching "have got' can lead to serious confusion for the elementary learner.

7) The 1<sup>st</sup> step simply takes "has got" as an expression and not as a construct, which is helpful and efficient because the students have probably not studied the present perfect form yet and attempting to teach this as a new construct can confuse them. However, the plan does not explain how this is going to be done and one cannot understand what the teacher is actually going to do in the class. A good lesson plan needs to at least present a brief step-by-step approach to explaining how the expression is constructed and how it is used, whether a context is used or a brief explanation is given, and what examples and concept checking questions (CCQs) are employed. Also it is quiet about the problems the learners may have and how they should be dealt with (especially in this case where the construct is being taught before the present perfect tense).

8) The picture mentioned in step 2 has not been provided so it would be difficult to say how effective it might be for this level. Generally a clear picture depicting people with distinguishable features should be employed and the features targeted in the new vocabulary should be plainly visible (e.g. freckles).

The step does not mention what information is elicited from the student exactly. It would be more acceptable to give a list of features or even write the exact questions to be asked, (e.g. what colour is his hair? Has he got brown hair?).

Additionally, writing the vocabulary on the board and drilling them altogether is not an acceptable way of teaching new words. Before even attempting to write the words on the board, the teacher should teach them appropriately or try to elicit them from the students (as there may always be someone among the students who already know one of the new words). Also drilling the words altogether before individual drills are done greatly reduces the effectiveness of the drills and does not allow the teacher to distinguish individual pronunciation difficulties. Finally this step does not include proper CCQs to make sure the students have completely grasped the meaning and usage of the new vocabulary.

9) Step 3 involves the introduction of the target language and effectively builds on what is done in the first 2 steps, showing purposefulness and an effective use of the teaching aid (i.e. the picture).

However, simply writing examples on the board and getting the students to practice them repeatedly is not an efficient approach. Instead, the teacher could for instance write the sentences on the board and ask individual students to match them with the corresponding person from the picture and then say the sentence so that (after proper correction by the teacher -if required) the class can repeat after them. This is not only more learner-centred, but also helps students build up more confidence and linguistic independence by serving as drill models for their classmates. A few CCQs could also be added to strengthen the understanding of new language (e.g. Has he got a moustache? Has she got freckles?)

10) The fourth step gets the students to individually practice the target language which is effective (given the smallish size of the class) and helps them focus on the new language while providing the teacher with a means to check if any student has difficulty producing the language.

But the teacher could be more precise in defining what she expects the students to do (e.g. describe what the person looks like) and what she is going to point at in the picture (individual people or parts of their bodies or attire).

11) Step 5 is a good activity to allow for independent practice of the newly-taught language, but at this stage of the lesson, such activities need to be monitored by the teacher to provide correction or help with the process. This is an accuracy practice activity and needs to be closely monitored by the teacher, thus watching from the doorway would be least effective way to supervise.

12) Proving the script for the dialogue in step 6 would certainly reduce the efficiency of the activity because the students will then focus on the written script instead of focusing on understanding and following the audio programme and is against the communicative approach which maintains the importance of putting listening first. Also taking notes when first listening to the audio is not effective as the elementary students would definitely find it difficult to follow and comprehend the conversation while taking notes.

Instead the teacher can give a brief desecration of the situation (e.g. John and Peter are talking about their new girlfriends) and set a few overview questions (e.g. where are they? Is it crowded where they are?) before playing the audio for the first time and elicit answers after it is played. Next she can put some specific detail questions to the class (e.g. what colour is Peter's girlfriend's hair? Has she got freckles?) and ask them to listen a second time and answer.

13) Step 7 would be a good activity if the 6<sup>th</sup> step is enhanced -for instance according to the suggestion made above- and after listening to the program twice, the students can be expected to describe the girls more or less correctly. Also, although it does not necessarily involve the usage of the target language, does not mention how the teacher is going to get the students to use it. The teacher could instead direct the students by using targeted questions (e.g. how about freckles?).

14) The gapped passage mentioned in step 8 has not been provided so it is impossible to precisely predict its efficiency and effectiveness. However the practice is generally effective as a follow-up on a listening exercise and helps strengthen the language received through listening. Such a passage here should certainly involve both using have/has got and distinguishing where to use "have" or "has". Additionally, this is a good step to focus students on using the contracted forms, which is generally missing throughout the lesson (for example, it could offer a gap and provide "'ve/'s" or "'ve got/'s got" as alternatives.

15) The game described in step 9 is a very effective production activity, but it would require the supervision of the teacher so that the students –given their level- do not resort to using L1 to guide each other while having recourse to the teacher in case they run into difficulty describing their classmates clearly. The teacher also could join groups one by one as an observer or participant based on the skill level of each group.

16) The round up activity is rather bland and I believe this is not a creative way to check the students' understanding at the end of a lesson. A lesson needs to be ended on a higher note than this because otherwise, students would lose interest and focus. Instead, a communicative team production task could be given such as the one given in the next step.

17) The post-lesson assignment is a good provision but given the level of the class, one needs to be careful with the difficulty level. I suspect it is a little too early to ask students to write stories on their own (this could serve well as a group activity nonetheless). Also this assumes that the students already know simple past and past continuous (e.g. I went to a party. Mike was wearing a hat) and does not involve using the target language (one does not usually use "had got" for this function). Finally, the plan does not precisely state what the students are expected to write. One cannot simply tell one's students to go home and write a story which would involve describing people. An example of a better-described and more

appropriate task would be "the students will write 4 or 5 statements about what each of their family members looks like today when they get home after school."

**Overall evaluation:** This lesson plan, albeit appropriate and student-driven in parts, requires a serious overhaul.

Although it begins in a very teacher-oriented manner (step 1), there are several examples of proper learner-based activities (e.g. step 5) but the teacher's monitoring of delegated activities needs to be improved and become more purposeful and effective in nature.

Also a rather minor improvement that could be made is to minimise the number of new words being taught to 5 items only (from the 7 words being taught here -according to the module 3 book).

Moreover, an important missing section in my opinion is one that would focus on anticipated problems and possible solutions because it would certainly be a sign that the teacher knows what she is attempting to do and has an insight into what her students would be experiencing throughout the course of the lesson.

Another major missing feature is a proper estimation and break down of time for the various stages of the lesson to enable the implementing teacher to manage her class time.

Considering the need to take the four communicative skills into account when designing a lesson, I also believe that this lesson focuses too much on speaking activities and could be improved by adding a proper reading exercise, preferably before the writing exercise at the end to support it (the tape script could also be used but the teacher has not proposed any specific usage for it).

The most important problem however is that this plan overlooks half of its objectives, i.e. using contracted forms of have/has got, which could of course be discussed in steps 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9. It also has the potential to help students learn to describe themselves because it has introduced two marker sentences that could be used to implement the idea (Re: number 5 above), albeit this potential has not been exploited in the activities designed. I would personally add 2 appropriate activities to cover this, one as a speaking activity after stages 5 or 9 to encourage students to turn to themselves and describe their own features (possibly by providing a mirror as well!) and one as a part of the proposed writing exercise for homework (students could be asked to include a description of themselves, too).
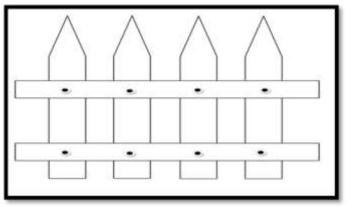
All in all, the lesson plan does not fully accomplish its goals and there is a lot of room for improvement.

## Question 2:

**a) The house was surrounded by a low, wooden fence.**

A mix of explanation and drawing would be a good method to give the students a clear picture of the word because pictures of such fences abound in cartoons:

Tell the students that it is sometimes too expensive to build a wall around a house. Then draw a typical wooden fence with pointed tips and spaced panels on the board:



*(I drew this image myself using the shapes tool in Microsoft Word 2010)*

Tell the students that instead, sometimes people build this around their houses or gardens. Try to elicit what it is called but if none can guess, you will have to tell them. Get two or three students and then the whole class to drill the pronunciation. Write the written form underneath the drawing.

Ask the students the following CCQs:

- Did the house have a wall around it?          No
- Was this used instead of a wall?              Yes
- Is it made of plastic?                         No [, it's made of wood]
- Was it tall?                                    No
- Where do you usually see such a thing?        countryside, gardens, houses in cartoons

**b) She welcomed him very warmly and offered him some food.**

I prefer a mixture of acting and antonym usage to introduce this because 1) the word can easily and efficiently be explained through acting and 2) the antonym is as useful as the word itself.

At the beginning of the class greet one of the students very warmly by saying this in a very affectionate tone: "Hi Amanda! It's really good to see you again! How are you?" Then turn to the students and say "It's nice to greet people like this, but some people greet other very coldly, like this." Then turn to another student and say –in a very cold and monotonous tone while looking in various directions thus avoiding eye contact- "Hey Chris. How are you?"

Now write the two words on the board like this:

<div align="center">

Warmly                   Coldly
/ˈwɔːmli/           /ˈkəʊldli/

</div>

Ask the students the following CCQs:

- Which student was greeted in a friendlier way?       Amanda
- Who did I greet not very friendly?       Chris
- Which one would you prefer for greeting your friends?       The first one/Amanda's
- Which one would you prefer for your enemies?       The second one/Chris's

*Optional additional pair work:* Have pairs of students act out warm and cold greetings, with one student greeting another warmly and the other greeting the first student coldly. Have the class choose the most interesting/funniest ones.

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**c) He wiped her face with a moist cloth.**

This is a good opportunity to use a picture because the act of cleaning an object with a cloth can easily be discerned by students and the, the notion of moisture can be added conveniently, thus creating an association which is highly likely to help by scaffolding the word and its meaning.

Show the students the following 2 pictures:



*(Source: http://www.crizalusa.com/SiteCollectionImages/miscellaneous/CleaningCloth.jpg)*

*(Source: http://www.maxupgrades.com/istore/images/products/cleancloth500.jpg)*

Point to the first picture and ask the students what the person is doing (Answer: cleaning the glasses). Point to the second picture and ask the same question (Answer: cleaning the monitor). Tell the students that these cloths have no water in them and so are dry. Ask them if a dry cloth is enough to clean things like these (Target answer: no, you should breathe over the glass/put some water on the cloth/ boys might even suggest spitting over the cloth or the surface!). Ask them if they know what a cloth with water in it is called. If no correct answers are given, tell them that by putting water on the cloth, they will have a wet or moist cloth.

Write the phonemes on the board (/mɔɪst/) then drill the pronunciation -first individually and then as a class. Ask the students if they can guess how the actual word is written based on the phonemes on the board, and then write the correct spelling using the elicited answer. Also ask them if they like to dry themselves after a bath with a moist towel!

Ask the following CCQs:

- When something is moist, does water drip from it?      No
- Would you be able to see the water in the cloth?      No
- Will the cloth clean better this way?      Yes

*Note: Alternatively (especially in an elementary class where direct visual presentation of words is favoured by the students or when there isn't much time to pre-teach the vocabulary), you could simply bring a towel and a bucket of water to the class and dampen the towel to show the word in a similar manner (e.g. cleaning the table with the dry cloth and then dampening it to improve the cleaning action). You could even moist it to different levels to distinguish such words as moist and soaked.*

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## d) She **reluctantly** agreed to clean her bedroom.

This is a hard-to-present word and visual presentation would certainly be a difficult option. Therefore, I opt to explain the word for the students by presenting a situation:

Tell the students to imagine their family is invited to a party where only old people are present. There will be no children, no games and special form of entertainment apart from people talking about heavy professional topics. Ask them what will they do to avoid the party (possible answers: pretend to be sick, tell parents about school assignments, …). Now tell them that they nonetheless have to go because their parents say so. In this case they will have to go, but they won't like it. Tell them this is called doing something reluctantly, i.e. doing it without really wanting or liking it. In this case, the girl didn't really want to clean her bedroom.

Ask the following CCQs:

- Did she like cleaning her bedroom?                          No
- Did she really want to clean her room?                      No
- Did she probably like to do something else instead?         Yes
- Do you think her parents had to talk her into doing it?      Yes
- Would she have done it if it were up to her?                No

***Optional group discussion activity:*** Have the class discuss a few cases when they had to do something reluctantly. Alternatively, especially at higher levels, you could ask the students to think of positive situations where people reluctantly agree to do something, for instance to tell others that they carry a donor card for the purpose of encouraging them to do so.

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**e) Her father agreed to come to the school to try to sort out the situation.**

This is a word with a rather indistinct meaning. The word here means both to "clarify" and "solve" the situation, which was most probably a problem at school resulting from a misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Defining the word in a simple way would do the students more good than confusing them by going through more complicated methods:

Tell the students that sorting out a problem or situations means to make the situation clear for everyone involved, for example by showing them what the real cause of the problem is or what is making them confused, and then try to solve the problem or get everyone to agree with a solution.

- Do older people usually do this for younger people?
    Yes
- Is it an easy thing to do?
    No
- Which organisation does this when countries have problems with each other?
    The UN

***Optional additional class work:*** Ask the students how they would "sort out" the following situations: 1) One of their friends was late for class and the teacher is angry with her. 2) A classmate has forgotten to bring her assignments for the umpteenth time and the school is going to call her parents. 3) Two neighbours in their apartment building are fighting over who should be allowed to use an extra parking space in the yard.

**f) The crowds were very thick and he held tightly onto his wallet because his wife had told him to look out for pickpockets.**

This is a great chance for mime because the looking out for something -especially in a nervous manner- is quite easy to act out and understand.

Tell the students that you are going to the market to buy some vegetable. Take your wallet out and check the money inside, then replace it in your back pocket. Walk around the class as if you are checking out different vegetable stands, picking up invisible tomatoes and parsley and smelling them occasionally. Every few seconds check your wallet is still there and look around yourself in a very suspicious way as if the people next to you are trying to pick your pocket.

Ask the students why you were doing this (Answer: because you were afraid of thieves). Ask them what you were doing (possible answers: you were being careful/ guarding/ yourself/ watching out/ looking out…). If the correct answer is given, drill it with the class. Otherwise tell them that it is also called "looking out for something on somebody". Tell them "watching out" is sometimes used instead. Ask them if they have ever heard any of these two expressions in a film.

Ask the following CCQs:
- Does it mean being careless?                          No
- Is it used for trouble and danger?                     Yes
- Which people have to do this all the time?              Police, fire-fighters, …
- Will you still get into trouble if you do this?          [Probably] no

## Question 3:

1. B & C
2. B & C
3. B & E
4. B
5. A, D & E
6. C