

SECTION

7

ORAL LANGUAGE, READING AND GRAMMAR



ORAL LANGUAGE

READING

GRAMMAR

English Speech Sounds

Reading Comprehension

Grammar Usage

INTRODUCTION

This section which covers the areas of Oral language, Reading and Grammar will help you to learn how to describe the place and manner of articulation of plosive and fricative sounds and use them accurately in conversation. It will also teach you information retrieval and interpretation of texts and the use of formal and informal language in context. The use of 21st-century skills will make the lesson interactive, and this will, in turn, help build your confidence, critical thinking skills, collaboration, leadership and many others. Core values like honesty, tolerance, and respect will also be inculcated in you.

By the end of this section, you be able to:

- Use consonant sounds in connected speech (Plosives, fricatives).
- Retrieve specific information and interpret a variety of simple texts.
- Use appropriate vocabulary in specific contexts. (Formal and informal situations)

Key Ideas

1. **Voicing:** This refers to the heaviness of the sound: Voiced (+ v) or Voiceless (-v).
2. **Manner of Articulation:** This refers to how the sound is produced.
3. **Place of Articulation:** This refers to the points of the mouth at which a sound is made. It also refers to the speech organs involved in the production of the sound.
4. **Retrieving information** in the context of the English language is the act of finding or extracting a message or information from a given text.
5. **Interpreting a text** on the other hand is explaining or telling the meaning of the information extracted from the text.
6. **Formal Language:** They are expressions that are non-personal and used mainly for professional and academic purposes.
7. **Informal Language:** They are expressions used in everyday conversations.

ORAL LANGUAGE: CONSONANT SOUNDS

In our previous lesson, we learnt or read about conversation in formal and informal narratives. We learnt the types of communication. You also practised how to communicate among your peers in an informal way using the appropriate registers and how to communicate with your headmaster using the formal registers appropriately. In our lesson today, we are going to learn about consonant sounds, paying much attention to the place of articulation, manner of articulation and voicing. We will also look at what Fricatives and Plosives mean.

Consonant Sounds: These are speech sounds produced by blocking pulmonary air from the lungs. Consonant sounds are determined by the place of articulation, manner of articulation and voicing.

Place of articulation refers to the points of the mouth at which the sound was made. It refers to the speech organs involved in the production of the sound.

Manner of articulation refers to how a sound is made or produced.

Voicing refers to the presence or absence of vibration of the vocal cords when producing a speech sound. Voicing can also refer to the heaviness of the sound. A sound is voiced (+v) when there is the presence of vibration of the vocal cords when that sound is produced, and it is voiceless (-v) when there's no vibration of the vocal cord when that sound is produced.

Plosives

A consonant is produced by stopping the flow of air at some point and suddenly releasing it. Plosives are also known as Stops.

Plosives with some examples:

/p/ pet /pet/ paper /'peɪ.pə/ top /tɒp/

/b/ bet /bet/ trouble /'trʌ.bəl/ rub /rʌb/

/t/ team /ti:m better /'be.tə/ hot /hɒt/

/d/ dim /dɪm/ order /'ɔ:də/ bad /bæd/

/k/ came /keɪm/ talking /'tɔ:kɪŋ/ back /bæk/

/g/ game /geɪm/ bigger /bɪ.gə/ bag /bæg/

Fricatives

These are a type of speech sounds that are made by directing air through a narrow channel, causing friction and producing a hissing or buzzing sound. These are sounds, in the production of which the air passes through a narrow constriction that causes the air to flow turbulently and thus create a noisy sound.

Fricatives with some example

/f/ fine /faɪn/ offer /'ɒf.ə/ off /ɒf/

/v/ vine /vaɪn/ saving /'seɪ.vɪŋ/ of /ɒv/

/s/ seal /si:l/ missing /'mɪ.sɪŋ/ face /feɪs/

/z/ zeal /zi:l/ crazy /'kreɪ.zi/ phase /feɪz/

/ʃ/ show /ʃəʊ/ pushing /'pʊ.ʃɪŋ/ rush /rʌʃ/

/ʒ/ measure /'me.ʒə/ vision /'vɪ.ʒən/ asia /'eɪ.ʒə/

/tʃ/ choke /tʃəʊk/ watching /wɒ.tʃɪŋ/ catch /kætʃ/

/dʒ/ joke /dʒəʊk/ damage /'dæ.mɪdʒ/ large /lɑ:dʒ/

Activity 7.1

1. Click on the link below and in groups listen and watch the video on tongue twisters and identify the following plosives in spoken texts, <https://youtu.be/W1mwreT0Jq0?si=ydDo9F6duPMtGzxK>
2. Identify and produce three plosives from the video you watched above.

Activity 7.2

Identify four fricative sounds. Compare your answer with a friend.

Activity 7.3

Use 3 plosives and fricatives 3 accurately in words and connected speech in simple conversation.

NB: Try this activity with two friends or peers.

Activity 7.4

Practise this conversation which has made use of plosives and fricatives on your own. You can also try it with a friend.

Kofi: “Akua, have you finished your physics homework? I’m struggling to fix the formula for friction.”

Akua: “Not yet, Kofi! But I’ve been thinking about our trip to the Cape Coast Castle. What a fantastic experience!”

Kofi: “Totally! I loved learning about the history of the slave trade. And the tour guide’s stories were so gripping!”

Akua: “Yes! And the castle’s architecture was amazing. I took some fantastic photos for our project.”

Kofi: “Great! I’m planning to write a poem about the experience. Maybe we can perform it at the school’s cultural festival.”

Akua: “Sounds like a plan! Let’s share some ideas over a cold glass of Fanta at the food court.”

Kofi: “Perfect! And afterwards, we can play some football and practice our kicking skills.”

Akua: “I’m in! But don’t forget to bring your Mathematics book so we can work on those tricky probability questions.”

Activity 7.5

Now, create one short dialogue and one short monologue using your own words.

EXTENDED READING

- New Gateway English for Senior High School Book 1
- Black Star Series Book 1
- Sample texts from social media

READING: RETRIEVING AND INTERPRETING INFORMATION

In one of our earlier lessons, we looked at the processes one has to go through when reading a text or a passage for a piece or pieces of information from the text. This exposed us to the use of techniques such as skimming, scanning, and close reading. In this lesson therefore, we are going to go further to look at how to extract or find information that a text contains and also to tell the meaning of the information we have been able to find from the text. This cannot be done with a total devoid of the reading techniques. These are going to help us to extract the necessary information to be able to interpret the message or the information retrieved.

Retrieving Information

This is the act of finding or extracting a message or information from a given text. This simply means one's ability to find the information that a text or passage communicates to its audience. This message could be what one wants to know about the entire text or a particular piece of information in the text. Retrieving information cannot be done without employing the services of the techniques used in reading. For instance, if you need to know what the entire text is all about, you have to skim the text. This helps you glance through the text as quickly as possible to get the general information that the text gives out. For retrieving or extracting a particular or specific message from the text, you would use scanning to do that. This technique allows one to read the text a little slowly, paying attention to some key or leading words, and also illustrations that may lead you to that particular piece of information you are looking for.

Interpreting a Text

This is the act of explaining or telling the meaning of the information found or extracted from a given text. A piece of information may not be considered delivered when the audience do not understand the message that is given out. For this reason, it is important that we are able to interpret or tell the meaning of the information that is contained in the given passage for understanding. For you to be able to do the interpretation, you need the services of close-reading technique. This technique requires that you focus on specific details in the passage or text to be able to get the meaning of the text. Your aim here is to understand and tell the meaning of the text to someone. So, you do not take anything for granted. You have to think critically about the diction, language, style etc., of the passage before you will be in a better position to tell or interpret the meaning of the text.

Activity 7.6

Read the passage below and carry out the activities below

The Akosombo Dam is one of the most important landmarks in Ghana. Located in the Eastern Region, it is a hydroelectric dam that generates electricity for the entire country. The dam was built in the 1960s and has had a significant impact on the development of Ghana. It has also created Lake Volta, which is the largest man-made lake in the world by surface area.

The Akosombo Dam has brought many benefits to Ghana, but it has also had some negative effects. For example, the construction of the dam led to the displacement of many people who lived in the surrounding areas. Additionally, the dam has affected the natural flow of the Volta River, which has impacted the environment and the people who depend on the river for fishing and farming. Despite these challenges, the Akosombo Dam remains a vital part of Ghana's energy sector.

In recent years, there have been efforts to improve the management of the Akosombo Dam and minimize its negative impacts. For example, the government has implemented

measures to reduce the amount of water released from the dam during the rainy season, which has helped to reduce flooding downstream. Additionally, there are initiatives to promote sustainable fishing and farming practices in the surrounding areas. By working together, we can ensure that the Akosombo Dam continues to benefit Ghana while also protecting the environment and supporting local communities.

1. Sit with a colleague and talk about the general information of the passage.
2. Tell your colleague who sat by you the specific pieces of information you can find in the passage.
3. Now, find a suitable title for the passage.
4. Based on your understanding of the passage, interpret it to one of your colleagues.

EXTENDED READING

- Sample texts and pictures from social media
- Simple story books
- Old newspapers
- A 1 English Language textbook
- English for Senior Secondary School Book 1

GRAMMAR: LANGUAGE USE IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

In the previous section, you were exposed to the use of formal language. In that lesson, you realised that the same words and expressions are not used in all contexts or situations. When the context is professional or official, formal language is used to suit the level of formality of the context. Today, you will be introduced to the informal use of language and the contexts within which they can be used.

Informal Use of Language

They are expressions used in everyday conversations. It is the language most commonly used by people including the educated. Also, it is the language most commonly used in schools, shopping malls or on a bus; for writing contemporary novels, short stories and plays. This is because the conventions of informal language are not as rigid as those of formal – Sentences may be long or short and may mimic everyday discourse.

Features of Informal Language

1. It is used in casual, social or personal settings.
2. It is characterised by subjective tone, simple vocabulary and relaxed grammar and syntax.
3. Slangs, colloquialisms, jokes and contractions (e.g. isn't, wasn't etc.) are used.
4. The language is friendly and conversational.

Informal situations include a visit to the zoo, castle, church, an excursion, social media posts, text messages, conversations with friends, blog posts, etc.

Examples of informal language:

1. In greeting a friend or a younger brother, a simple **hello** or **hi** will suffice.
2. **A social media post:** *So excited about this new joint venture with Other Business! Can't wait for you to see what we've been cooking up!*
3. **A text message:** *Hey Adam! Hope you doing well. Let's meet at our usual venue – discuss tonight.*

Other informal expressions:

1. I need to take a leak
2. I am going to the washroom
3. Break a leg
4. Reach a decision

Activity 7.6

1. You are in your classroom and there's no teacher, but you would want to visit the 'restroom'. What would you say to a friend before you leave so that should there be a roll call, he/she will be able to explain your absence? Dramatise this scenario.
 - a. Given the same setting as a teacher in class, what would you say to the teacher?
2. On your own, write down two general sentences each you will use when speaking to your teacher and when speaking to your friends.
3. Now, join a peer or two. Compare your answers. Find out which of your expressions you consider informal.

EXTENDED READING

- Senior Secondary School English Book 1, Naa Afarley S. et al, Pages 193 – 194
- Warriner's English Grammar and Composition, *Fifth Course, Franklin Edition*, John E. Warriner, Pages 77 -78

Review Questions

ORAL LANGUAGE

1. Define the term voicing in consonant sounds.
2. Explain the term Manner of articulation.
3. Use at least three words with each of these fricative sounds (f,s,z) in sentences.

READING

Read the passage below carefully and answer the questions that follow.

I live in a house near the mountains. I have two brothers and one sister, and I was born last. My father teaches mathematics, and my mother is a nurse at a big hospital. My brothers are very smart and work hard in school. My sister is a nervous girl, but she is very kind. My grandmother also lives with us. She came from Tamale when I was two years old. She has grown old, but she is still very strong. She cooks the best food!

My family is very important to me. We do lots of things together. My brothers and I like to go on long walks in the mountains. My sister likes to cook with my grandmother. On the weekends, we all play board games together. We laugh and always have a good time. I love my family very much.

1. My mother is a...
 - a. Doctor
 - b. Nurse
 - c. Writer
 - d. Waitress
2. How old was I when my grandmother came?
 - a. Three years old
 - b. Just born
 - c. Ten years old
 - d. Two years old
3. My house is near the...
 - a. City
 - b. River
 - c. Mountains
 - d. Tamale

4. My sister is kind, but also...
- Mean
 - Quiet
 - Nervous
 - Strong

GRAMMAR

1. Give two examples of words used when seeking permission in class to visit the washroom.
2. Construct four sentences each for formal and informal language and highlight their differences.

Answers to Review Questions

ORAL LANGUAGE

1. Voicing refers to the heaviness of the sound; voiced (+v) or voiceless (-v).
2. Manner of articulation refers to how the sound is made
 - The friendly fox (f) fetched a fascinating fish from the forest.
 - The snake slithered silently through the sandy savannah.
 - The zebra zealously zipped up its zesty zipper.

READING

1. B
2. D
3. C
4. C

GRAMMAR

1. May I go to the washroom? / I am going to the washroom.
2. **Formal language**
 - The newly implemented policy has yielded significant improvements in student performance.
 - The company's strategic plan aims to expand its global presence and diversify its product offerings.
 - The management has announced a significant restructuring of the organisation to enhance efficiency.
 - The research findings indicate a strong correlation between regular exercise and improved mental health.
 - The company's annual report highlights a substantial increase in revenue and profitability.
 - The academic committee has established a new curriculum to better prepare students for the workforce.

Informal language

- The new policy is really working out; students are happier as they are getting good grades.
- The company's trying to go global and sell more stuff.
- The bosses are shaking things up to make the company run smoother.
- Exercise is really good for your mental health, you know?
- They're changing the rules to help us get better jobs later on.

GLOSSARY

- Diction** this is the choice and use of words, especially with regards to effective communication.
- Style** The way and manner a writer presents a text.

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