

SECTION

9

**ANALYSING FICTION  
AND NON-FICTION  
TEXTS, TENSE,  
FRICATIVES AND  
AFFRICATES**



# ENGLISH SPEECH SOUNDS, READING COMPREHENSION AND GRAMMAR USAGE

## INTRODUCTION

In our last lesson in Oral Language, we learned about Plosives and how to use them effectively both in informal and formal ways in conversation. We defined Plosives as a consonantal sound produced by stopping the flow of air at some point and suddenly releasing it. We also looked at how to apply reading techniques in our daily reading to enable us to understand any given text read. You have also been introduced to the concept of tense and aspect and how they synthesise/ come together to form the various forms of verbs.

This section, we will explore two important tenses that will help you to talk about your routines and to describe what is happening in your life right now. These two tenses are the simple present and the present continuous. You will also going to learn more on other consonant sounds Fricatives and Affricates.

In addition, we are going to be looking at using some other text comprehension strategies to analyse fiction and non-fiction texts. This tells us that apart from employing reading techniques for text comprehension, there are also other text comprehension strategies one can use to analyse given texts, whether fiction or non-fiction. These features or strategies would help us to be able to predict what happens in a text under discussion. These features include text titles, illustrations, bold print, italics, heading, sub-headings and others.

### By the end of this section, you should be able to use

- consonant sounds in connected speech (fricatives)
- a variety of text comprehension strategies to predict and analyse fiction/non-fiction texts
- forms of verbs in everyday activities

### Key Ideas

- *Fricatives* are a type of consonantal sound in speech that are produced by directing air through a narrow channel causing friction and turbulence. They thus create a distinctive, 'noisy' sound.
- *Fiction* is a literary work that is created for the aim of involving the reader's imagination. It is not necessarily based on facts or on what really happened.



- *Non-fiction* is a narrative that is based on facts or what actually transpired. This aims to give true accounts of real things or events.
- *Simple Present Tense*: It is used to describe habits, unchanging situations, general truths and fixed arrangements.
- *Present Continuous Tense*: It is used to express an action that is still on-going.
- Stative verbs are verbs used to refer to states rather than actions. They are not used in the continuous form.

## FRICATIVES

Fricatives are consonantal sounds which are produced by narrowing the vocal tract, typically between the tongue, teeth or lips. The air that is supposed to come out of the mouth is directed through a narrow channel, creating friction and turbulence, producing a high frequency and amplitude. They are classified according to the place and manner of articulation.

1. Place of articulation:
  - i. Labiodental (upper teeth and lower lip): /f/, /v/
  - ii. Dental (tongue and upper teeth): /θ/, /ð/
  - iii. Alveolar (tongue and alveolar ridge): /s/, /z/
  - iv. Palatal (tongue and hard palate): /ʃ/, /ʒ/
2. Manner of Articulation
  - i. Voiceless: /f/, /s/, /θ/, /ʃ/.
  - ii. Voiced: /v/, /z/, /ð/, /ʒ/.

## Fricatives with some examples

- a. /f/- fine /faɪn/ offer /'ɒf.ə/ off /ɒf/ of /ɒv/
- b. /s/- seal /si:l/ missing /'mɪ.sɪŋ/ face /feɪs/
- c. /z/- zeal /zi:l/ crazy /'kreɪ.zi/ phase /feɪz/
- d. /ʃ/- show /ʃəʊ/ pushing /'pʊ.ʃɪŋ/ rush /rʌʃ/
- e. /ʒ/ measure /'me.zə/ vision /'vɪ.ʒən/ pleasure /pleʒə/
- f. /θ/ thigh /θaɪ/ thin /θɪn/ through /θru/ things /θɪŋs/
- g. /ð/ they /ðeɪ/ them /ðem/ then /ðen/ these /ði:z/

## Some Key Features of Fricatives

1. Obstruent: Fricatives are a type of obstruent (a speech sound restricting the airway) which indicates that they obstruct the airflow, producing a turbulent noise.
2. Continuous: When Fricatives are said to be continuous sounds, it means that they can be sustained for a long period.

3. High –frequency noise: Fricatives produce high- frequency noise, which can be perceived as hissing or buzzing.

### ACTIVITY 9.1

Watch the tongue twisters in the video in the link below and identify the fricative sounds.

**Click here:** <https://youtu.be/-E400637oKk?si=qukOYosR3a9mWUEU>

### ACTIVITY 9.2

Listen to and identify some examples of words with fricative sounds from the video in the link below.

**Click here:** [https://youtu.be/eNfGINhN-LE?si=RNL7daFP\\_6izW9aQ](https://youtu.be/eNfGINhN-LE?si=RNL7daFP_6izW9aQ)

### ACTIVITY 9.3

Do this activity with a friend or a classmate!

Form words with these fricative sounds (/f/ /v/ /s/ /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/ /θ/, /ð/) and use the words accurately in connected speech with a friend.

## EXTENDED READING AND MEDIA

- [https://youtu.be/j\\_72SIHIqDE?si=dG7K0xQbHGuhJiln](https://youtu.be/j_72SIHIqDE?si=dG7K0xQbHGuhJiln)
- <https://youtu.be/-E400637oKk?si=qukOYosR3a9mWUEU>
- [https://youtu.be/eNfGINhN-LE?si=RNL7daFP\\_6izW9aQ](https://youtu.be/eNfGINhN-LE?si=RNL7daFP_6izW9aQ)
- [https://youtu.be/j\\_72SIHIqDE?si=dG7K0xQbHGuhJiln](https://youtu.be/j_72SIHIqDE?si=dG7K0xQbHGuhJiln)

## FICTION and NON-FICTION

**Fiction:** This is an imaginary work of art that is created by an author. It is imaginary because the event or story that is talked about may not have happened anywhere in the world. The writer of the work uses his or her creative ideas to create a story for us to learn from. This involves the creation of characters, settings, events, and narratives that do not necessarily exist in the real world. This means that in fiction, the authors (writers) use their creativity to write stories that are often for the purposes of entertainment or artistic expression; fiction can, however, be a profound critique of society or of a particular aspect of it. Fictional works include but are not limited to short stories, novels, and plays.

**Non-fiction:** Non-fiction essentially means “not fiction” or “not invented.” By contrast, non-fiction refers to factual stories about real people, places, and events. In the works of non-fiction, authors aim to give accurate and verifiable information. This implies that non-fictional works contain a certain level of truth or authenticity. These experiences, information, and explanations are grounded on reality and may be used to educate, persuade or document true events and occurrences. For instance, if you report a fight that happened in class between two of your classmates, it will be non-fiction, because the event has actually occurred. Examples of non-fiction are autobiography, biography, academic texts, journalism, and others.

The key difference between fictional and non-fictional literary works is that while fiction is creating or imagining events, places, characters, and settings, non-fiction talks of reality or facts relating to events, places, characters, and setting which can be checked for their authenticity.

**Prediction:** This simply means a statement of what will happen in the future. That is, looking into the future and imagining what is likely to happen or occur about an event or a situation at hand. In this context, however, we are looking at what is likely to happen either at the beginning of a text based on its title, what would happen in the middle, or at the end of a text. One is able to give this prediction by carefully observing text features (comprehension strategies) such as title of text, illustrations, bold prints, italics, headings, choice of words, and others.

## A Short Guide to analysing fiction or non-fiction

### Fiction

**Plot:** Examine the storyline, identifying the main events and how they connect. Look for the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

**Characters:** Analyse the main and supporting characters. Consider their motivations, development, relationships, and roles in the story.

**Setting:** Describe the time and place where the story occurs. Consider how the setting influences the plot and characters.

**Themes:** Identify the central themes and messages. Reflect on what the author is trying to convey about life, society, or human nature.

**Literary Devices:** Look for symbolism, metaphors, similes, foreshadowing, and other devices. Analyse how they contribute to the story’s depth and meaning.

**Point of View:** Determine the narrative perspective (first-person, third-person, for example). Consider how the point of view affects your understanding of the story.

**Style and Tone:** Examine the author’s writing style and tone. Note the use of language, sentence structure, and how these affect your perception.

## Non-Fiction

**Purpose:** Identify the main purpose of the writing (to inform, persuade, entertain, and so on). Consider the intended audience.

**Thesis:** Locate the central argument or thesis. Summarise the main points that support this thesis.

**Evidence:** Evaluate the evidence and sources used. Consider the reliability, relevance, and sufficiency of the supporting details.

**Structure:** Analyse the organisation of the text. Look at the introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. Note how effectively the ideas flow and connect.

**Author's Perspective:** Consider the author's perspective and any potential biases. Reflect on how the author's background might influence her or his viewpoint.

**Tone and Style:** Examine the tone and style of writing. Determine how the language, formality, and rhetorical strategies impact the message.

**Critical Response:** Reflect on your own response to the text. Consider how your response affects your understanding of the topic and whether it challenges or reinforces your views.

In both fiction and non-fiction, a thorough analysis requires a close reading of the text, critical thinking, and an understanding of the broader context in which the work was created.

### Activity 9.4

Explain in your own words to two of your friends; the importance of prediction in real life situations.

### Activity 9.5

Study the two pictures below

1. What can you say about the two pictures above? Predict what they are about.
2. How will prediction help you in your reading and comprehension?



Figure 9.1.



Figure 9.2

**Read the text below and perform the activities that follow.**

### **I Thought All was Rosy in Adult Life**

When I was a small boy, I always thought of growing up early so I could have my freedom. This was because I saw the hard training that my parents were giving me as abuse, and so the reason for me wanting to grow fast to become an adult was in order to be free from the “abuse”.

One day I told my father that they were maltreating me so it was my desire to also become an adult so that they would stop worrying about me. My father smiled and said, “My son, I appreciate your thought, but I want to tell you that a lot goes into being an adult. It is not as you perceive it. It comes with a lot of responsibilities such as preparing shelter for your family, making sure there is always food for the family, ensuring there is peace and harmony, and others. We are not maltreating or abusing you but rather giving you that hard training so that when we are gone, you will be a useful being to yourself, your family, your community, and the nation at large.”

As young as I was, I did not regard all these as problems because I saw my father always having money on him, buying all that he needed and also there was food in the family all the time. This evidence gave me the hope that all would be well in my adult life. I thought all was going to be rosy for me.

Today, here I am, as an adult. The way I used to see things has turned upside down. The things I saw clearly when I was young are now seen as very blurred. Nothing seems to be working perfectly for me unlike what happened to my parents. It is difficult for me to get three square meals a day not to even talk of raising a comfortable shelter or accommodation for my family. This confirms a saying that what an elder sees up in the sky when he/she is sitting on the ground, a child will climb a tree and will not see that. Now I have come to realise that my parents did not hate me for giving me that hard training but rather loved me. If I had ignored the training entirely, my life would have been worse. With the experiences above, I got to realise that all is not rosy in adult life.

### Activity 9.6

1. With the aid of the title, predict what is likely to be the end of the text. Discuss it with a colleague.
2. Discuss with colleagues how prediction helps in text comprehension.
3. Would you consider this text as fiction or non-fiction? Why?

### Activity 9.7

1. Read the passage below carefully

As I walked through the dense forest on my way back from the village market, I couldn't shake off the feeling that I was being watched. The trees seemed to loom over me, casting long shadows in the fading light of day. I had heard stories about this forest, how it was home to ancient spirits and curses. I had always dismissed them as mere myths, but now I wasn't so sure. Suddenly, I heard a faint rustling in the bushes ahead. I froze, my heart pounding in my chest.

2. Predict what happens next before you read the next paragraph.

As I stood there, a figure emerged from the shadows. It was tall and gaunt, with eyes that seemed to bore into my soul. I tried to run, but my legs felt heavy and unresponsive. The figure began to move towards me, its eyes fixed on me with an unnerving intensity. I tried to scream, but my voice was caught in my throat. Just as the figure was about to reach out and grab me, everything went black.

3. Was your earlier prediction in line with the continuation of the story?
4. Predict what happens next after the second paragraph.



5. Invite three of your friends and sit together to write down a prediction of what happens next and end the story. Support your prediction with evidence from the text.
6. You and your friends should present your work in class for other friends to critique.

## TENSE AND ASPECT

### The Simple Present Tense

The simple present tense is one of several forms of tenses in English. It is used to describe habits, unchanging situations, general truths and fixed arrangements. The simple present tense is simple to form. Just use the base form of the verb:

For example: *I take*

*You take*

*She takes*

*He takes*

*It takes*

*We take*

*They take.*

Note that the third person singular, *she/he/it*, has an *-s* at the end.

#### Forming the simple present tense forms of the verb 'to think':

Affirmative	Interrogative	Negative
I think	Do I think?	I do not think so.
You think	Do you think?	You do not think so.
He thinks	Does he think?	He does not think so.
She thinks	Does she think?	She does not think so.
It thinks	Does it think?	It does not think so.
We think	Do we think?	We do not think so.
They think	Do they think?	They do not think so.

## Notes on the Simple Present and Third-Person Singular

- In the third-person; the verb always ends in **-s**:  
*He wants, she needs, and it gives*
- Negative question forms use **DOES** (=the third person of the auxiliary 'DO') + negator + the infinitive of the verb. For example:  
*He/she wants ice cream. Does he/she want strawberry? He/she **does not want** vanilla.*  
**Note:** The main verb in these sentences do not take the **-s** inflection because '**does**' has already taken an inflection.
- The third-person changes verbs ending in **-y** to **-ies**:  
*Fly changes to flies; cry to cries (as in: it flies; he/she cries)*
- Exception: if there is a vowel before the **-y**:  
*Play changes to plays; pray changes to prays (as in: it plays; he/she prays)*
- Add **-es** to verbs ending in **-ss, -x, -sh, -ch, -o**:  
*Pass changes to passes; fix becomes fixes; push becomes pushes; catch becomes catches; do changes to does; go changes to goes; undergo becomes undergoes (as in: he passes; she fixes; it pushes; it catches; she does; he goes; it undergoes).*

### Other examples

*He **goes** to school every morning.*

*She **understands Ghanaian** culture.*

*It **catches** the rodents.*

### The simple present tense is used

- To express habits, general truths, repeated actions or unchanging situations, emotions and wishes. For example:

a.	Habits	<i>I cycle every day.</i>
		<i>They watch television regularly.</i>
		<i>Rakia eats only fish and vegetables.</i>
b.	Repeated Actions/Events	<i>We catch the bus every morning.</i>
		<i>It rains every afternoon in the hot season.</i>
		<i>They drive to Accra during the harmattan season.</i>
c.	General Truth	<i>Water freezes at zero degrees.</i>
		<i>Her mother is Ghanaian.</i>
		<i>The earth revolves around the sun.</i>
		<i>Accra is a large city.</i>

2. To give instructions or directions. For example:
  - a. You walk for two hundred metres, then turn left.
  - b. Open the packet and pour the contents into hot water.
3. To express fixed arrangements, present or future. For example:
  - a. *Your exam starts at 9 am.*
  - b. *Their father arrives tomorrow.*
  - c. *Our holiday starts on the 26<sup>th</sup> March.*
4. To express future time, usually but not always after some conjunctions such as *after, when, before, as soon as, until*. For example:
  - a. Munira **arrives** after tomorrow.
  - b. Henry **prepares** his supper as soon as he comes home.
  - c. The minister **commissions** the 18-unit classroom block next month.

**Be careful:** *The simple present is **not** used to describe actions actually happening now.*

## The Present Continuous

The present continuous tense, also called the present progressive, is used to express an action that is still going on at the present moment.

### Forming the Present Continuous

The present continuous of any main verb is composed of two parts – the appropriate form of the present tense of the verb ‘to be’ + the present participle of the *main verb* (simply, *-ing* form of the verb). For example: *He is talking; She is playing; They are moving* and *Aba is smiling*.

<b>Affirmative</b>	Subject + to be + base + ing She is talking
<b>Negative</b>	Subject + to be + not + base + ing She is not (isn't) talking
<b>Interrogative</b>	To be + subject + base + ing Is she talking?

**Example:** *TO GO*, present continuous

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative
<i>I am going</i>	<i>I am/I'm not going.</i>	<i>Am I going?</i>
<i>You are going</i>	<i>You are/You're not going.</i>	<i>Are you going?</i>
<i>He/She/It is going.</i>	<i>He/She/It is not/ isn't going.</i>	<i>Is he/she/it going?</i>
<i>We are going/</i>	<i>We are not/ aren't going.</i>	<i>Are we going?</i>
<i>You are going.</i>	<i>You are not/aren't going.</i>	<i>Are you going?</i>
<i>They are going.</i>	<i>They are not/aren't going.</i>	<i>Are they going?</i>

**Functions of the Present Continuous**

As with all tenses in English, the speaker's attitude is as important as the time of the action or event. When someone uses the present continuous, they are thinking about something that is unfinished or incomplete. This is why in sports commentary; you hear the present continuous tense such as *He is racing down the left wing...* being used since the actions are unfinished.

**The Present Continuous is used:**

1. To describe an action that is on-going. For example:
  - a. *You are using* the Internet.
  - b. *You are studying* English Grammar.
2. To describe an action that is related to a period of time or a trend. For example:
  - a. *Are you still working* for the same company?
  - b. More and more people *are becoming* vegetarians.
3. To describe an action or event in the future which has already been planned or prepared. For example:
  - a. *We're going on holiday tomorrow.*
  - b. *I'm meeting my cousin tonight.*
  - c. *Are they visiting you next harmattan?*
4. To describe a temporary event or situation. For example:
  - a. *He usually plays the drums, but he's playing the bass guitar tonight.*
  - b. *The weather forecast was good, but it's raining at the moment.*
5. To describe habitual behaviour. In this usage, the verb moves with adverbs such



as *always*, *forever* and *constantly*. For example:

- a. *Harry and Sadia are always arguing!*
- b. *You're constantly complaining about your mother-in-law!*

NOTE: Some verbs are not usually used in the continuous form. Verbs that express perception or senses, opinions and emotions refer to states rather than actions and hence, are called stative verbs. As a result, they are not used in the continuous form.

### Activity 9.8

Join at least a friend and perform the following. These activities will help you understand the concept of the simple present tense.

1. Dramatise daily routines e.g., waking up, eating, going to school.
2. After, read the questions below and think about the appropriate answers. Then, join a friend to compare your answers, discuss and write them down. Finally, share the answer with other friends:
  - a. 'What do you do at 7am?' (Sample response: *I wake up at 7am.*)
  - b. 'What do you do after waking up?'
  - c. 'How do you go to school every morning?'
3. Dramatise job interviews: Take turns with one of your friends, one as an interviewer and the other as an interviewee. The interviewer should ask the questions below while the interviewee provides appropriate answers. Switch roles.
  - a. 'What do you do?' (Sample response: *I am a student*)
  - b. 'What are your responsibilities?'
4. Act out good habits like *exercising* and bad habits like *biting nails* to a friend. Let your friend do the same.
5. Take turns to ask and answer the questions below:
  - a. 'How many days in a week do you exercise?'
  - b. 'Why do you bite your nails?' (Sample response: *'I bite my nails when I'm nervous'*)

### Activity 9.9

Perform these activities in Activity 9.8 again with a friend: they will help you understand the concept of the present continuous tense:

1. One friend should act out an office scene – *typing*, *meeting* or *making phone calls*.

- While performing the action, the other friend should ask one dramatising question, ‘What are you doing at the moment?’ Repeat this for every act. Switch roles.
2. Describe the actions in Figures 9.3, 9.4 and 9.5 below using the present continuous tense:



**Figure 9.3**



**Figure 9.4**



**Figure 9.5**

3. Fill in the blanks in the charts with the appropriate form of the simple present tense.

Affirmative	Interrogative	Negative
I dance		
	Do I dance?	
		He/She/It does not dance.
We dance		
	Do they dance?	

Note the meaning of the following words:

**Affirmative:** It is a positive sentence, or it expresses agreement.

**Interrogative:** It is asking a question.

**Negative:** It is a sentence that shows that a subject does not possess a particular quality.

4. Write down two verbs and add *-ing* to them to form the present continuous tense. One has been done for you.

Verb	+ ing
Jump	Jumping

### Activity 9.10

Read the following deceptively simple poem by the American poet Theodore Roethke. In it, the use of verbs is deliberate and powerful; you should consider the impact of the 'ing' words in your group. At the end of your careful reading, without consultation, write down why you think the 'Child is on Top of the Greenhouse'. The different answers should bring further discussions of the psychology revealed here:

**Child on Top of a Greenhouse** by Theodore Roethke (1942)

The wind billowing out the seat of my britches,

My feet crackling splinters of glass and dried putty,

The half-grown chrysanthemums staring up like accusers,

Up through the streaked glass, flashing with sunlight,  
A few white clouds all rushing eastward,  
A line of elms plunging and tossing like horses,  
And everyone, everyone pointing up and shouting!

There are few better examples of how a seemingly straightforward poem can have so many complexities - and with further exploration of the work (here and online) you will find it hard to forget the poem, its context and its images. And present participles will be lodged firmly in your mind.



# Review Questions

1. What are fricatives?
2. State four examples of fricatives.
3. Write four words which contain the sounds you have identified in question (2) above.
4. Differentiate between fictional and non-fictional texts.
5. Identify some text features that can help you predict what will happen in a text.
6. Write an imaginary/creative story on any plot or topic of your choice.

## Choose the correct form of the simple present tense to complete the sentence below:

7. Amina ..... (is/are/was) here now.
8. Kofi and his mother ..... (walk/walks/walking) to the market every day.
9. I ..... (have/has/had) a pen in my bag.
10. Use the following verbs to form a sentence each: wash, dance, sweep, writes and plays.
11. Write down three sentences from a football game in the present continuous tense.

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No.	Name of Image	Reference (link)
1	Funeral sympathisers	<a href="https://images.app.goo.gl/9bWsy91ay79gNRYE7">https://images.app.goo.gl/9bWsy91ay79gNRYE7</a>
2	Naming ceremony	<a href="https://images.app.goo.gl/htt1T7BoW1QiXtK59">https://images.app.goo.gl/htt1T7BoW1QiXtK59</a>
3	A family eating together	<a href="https://images.app.goo.gl/wzdiLSq1jEVEEd2CQ8">https://images.app.goo.gl/wzdiLSq1jEVEEd2CQ8</a>
4	People weeding	<a href="https://images.app.goo.gl/H8qQKFTjUs9x39uFA">https://images.app.goo.gl/H8qQKFTjUs9x39uFA</a>

No.	Name of Video	Reference (link)
1.	Fricatives	<a href="https://youtu.be/j_72SlHIqDE?si=dG7K0xQbHGuhJiln">https://youtu.be/j_72SlHIqDE?si=dG7K0xQbHGuhJiln</a>
2.	Tongue twisters	<a href="https://youtu.be/-E400637oKk?si=qukOYosR3a9mWUEU">https://youtu.be/-E400637oKk?si=qukOYosR3a9mWUEU</a>
3.	Fricatives	<a href="https://youtu.be/eNfGINhN-LE?si=RNL7daFP_6izW9aQ">https://youtu.be/eNfGINhN-LE?si=RNL7daFP_6izW9aQ</a>

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