





# Weekly Dictation

**MODULE: Learning to Learn**

**LEVEL: 3 / 4 / 5**

<b>Time:</b> 60+ mins	<b>Focus:</b> Accuracy, esp. spelling and punctuation; raising awareness of common errors; practice in using monolingual dictionary. Encouraging learner autonomy.
<b>Class organisation:</b> Whole class; pair work	<b>Type of activity:</b> Listening, writing, dictionary work, speaking
<b>Can be adapted to:</b>	<b>Prerequisites:</b>
<b>FETAC:</b>	
<b>ELP:</b>	

**For this activity you need...**

- A class set of dictation template handouts.
- A class set of monolingual learner dictionaries, e.g. Oxford Wordpower.
- If possible, a set of highlighter pens.

**N.B.**

In class procedure is quite detailed but as this is a weekly activity, it is very straightforward to do after the first week.

**In class procedure at a glance**

1. Plenary. Teacher reads aloud dictation 4-5 times; students note down what they hear.
2. Students attempt to recall dictation line by line without looking at their scripts.
3. Pair work. Students compare their dictations with their partner's. They underline differences between the two scripts, then use a monolingual dictionary to try and correct errors.
4. Plenary. Individually, students rewrite the dictation on the board, one line or sentence for each student. The remaining students offer suggestions for improving what they see, if necessary. The teacher can observe, and need only intervene if there is an outstanding error.
5. If possible, text could be typed out either in a computer class or for homework.

### In Class Procedure in Detail/ Comments

1.  
Discuss the topic of the dictation with students. Try to elicit some of the key vocabulary / points of information included in the text.  
(The actual text used for the dictation can be based on that week's topic, or could include example of that week's grammar points. Usually, 100-120 words is long enough, given time constraints).
2.  
Read aloud the text at normal speed. Students listen but do not write.
3.  
Distribute the dictation template. Explain to students that you will read the text slowly and that they should write what they hear on the white lines. They can use the grey lines to make corrections when the dictation is finished.
4.  
Read the text slowly, including any punctuation marks (commas, full-stops etc, but not capital letters). Explain to students before you start that you will not go back to repeat individual words or phrases, but will continue reading until you get to the end of the text. If students miss any part of the text, they can simply leave a space and listen carefully for the missing word / phrase during the third or fourth reading of the text. Explain also that you will read the text more quickly the third time, and will read it at normal speed the fourth and final time.
5.  
When the dictation is finished, ask a student to collect the dictations and give them to you. Ask students if they can remember the text. Individually, students who remember a sentence can volunteer to say it out loud to the class. Collectively, they should try to recite the text sentence by sentence. You can give students clues if they're struggling to remember.
6.  
Return the dictations to the students. Ask them who is going to correct their dictation. When they reply, "Teacher", tell them that in fact they are going to correct it themselves, by sharing their knowledge and by using the monolingual dictionary. They can follow these steps:
  - a. Read over their text one final time and check for any mistakes.
  - b. Pair work: identifying mistakes. Ask students to look for a **maximum** of 12 differences between their text and their partner's, and highlight them with a pen or simply draw a circle around them. You could put an example on the board to illustrate this: if one student has written "*intresting*" and their partner "*interesting*", this is a difference. They should highlight it and check it (tell them it doesn't always mean they've made a mistake). You could also ask students what kind of mistakes they think they will have. Try to elicit spelling, punctuation and missing words. Students may also suggest "understanding problem" or "pronunciation problem". When they've finished, ask how many differences they found, and what kind of mistakes they are.

- c. Students try to correct these problems by using the dictionary or helping each other: more able students will be confident in providing corrections. Allow students about 10 minutes to do this. Do not provide any answers at this stage. Tell students there will be a final group check at the end to help them with any problems they can't correct. You can use this time to give guidance on using the dictionary for less confident students.

7.

Invite students individually to come up to the board and write their correct versions of the text, one sentence / line at a time. When each student has finished writing, they invite suggestions from the class for any further changes. The teacher can usually observe these process without much intervention – apart from making sure that no mistakes are left in the text. This means that you can tell students at the end of the process that they did indeed correct the dictation themselves, with very little help from their teacher.