

English Language Guided Learning tasks.

	Activity	Completed
1	Find two texts that have been written to persuade. List the things they have in common that make them persuasive. Are there any features not common to both texts, for example, particular words?	
2	Find two texts that you think are quite different. Explain why they are different. Study them carefully to see if they have anything in common.	
3	Design a timeline for the development of the English Language.	
4	<p>English sentences can be divided into four different types depending on their function:</p> <p>Declaratives, which tell you something, e.g. Paul sat on the chair.            Interrogatives, which ask you something, e.g. Who sat on the chair?            Imperatives, which tell you to do something, e.g. Sit on that chair.            Exclamatory, which a person cries or calls out, e.g. Ouch!</p> <p>Choose a range of texts, read them through and then count the number of sentences in each. How many of each type of sentence can you identify? What is the most common type of sentence? What differences can you find in the types of sentences used in speech over writing? Why?</p>	
5	Some texts are more formal than others. Choose a range of texts, arrange them in order from most formal to least formal. Why do you think formality is sometimes necessary? When is informality appropriate and even welcome? Photocopy the texts, annotate them and then record your findings in note form.	
6	Collect a range of texts. Note the different ways in which information has been organised. Look for things like layout, subheadings, paragraphs, diagrams etc.	
7	<p>What is a prefix/suffix? Use a dictionary to find out the definitions of each term. Many prefixes and suffixes in English come from Greek and Latin.</p> <p>a) Find out what these prefixes mean: Zygo – Super – Supra – Infra            b) Find as many words as you can that end in –oid and –al. What do these suffixes do to the meaning of the original word?            c) Find out what these familiar prefixes and suffixes mean.            Tele-, photo-, phono-, -graph, -meter, -ology, tri-, crypto-.</p>	
8	<p>In looking at one English word, it is possible to learn something about the structure and meaning that surrounds every word in the language.</p> <p>a) Make a list of some of the many phrases and common sayings (not single words) that use the word ‘head’. E.g. She’s got a good head on her shoulders, don’t worry your head about it. Try to collect 50 examples.            b) Now consider the word ‘head’ on its own, or as part of a longer word or part of words, eg. Headlong, head waiter. Collect examples and arrange them in two columns: one for words beginning with head, one for words ending in head, e.g. headless and ahead. You can include surnames. Watch out for the occasional word with ‘head’ in the middle, e.g. beheaded.</p>	
9	<p>The word ‘head’ can be used in 3 different ways.</p> <p>a) As a noun – the name of a person place or thing.            b) As a verb – an action.            c) As an adjective – to describe a noun.</p>	

	<p>How is it used in each of the following sentences?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) 'Off with his head,' cried the Queen.</li> <li>2) You call the police while I try to head them off at the crossroads.</li> <li>3) He is the head of the secret police.</li> <li>4) She will head up the delegation during their Australian visit.</li> <li>5) They are heading towards disaster.</li> <li>6) We'll give them a head start.</li> <li>7) She has a good head for figures.</li> <li>8) He is a very headstrong young man.</li> <li>9) A headless figure stood at the top of the stairs.</li> <li>10) She headed the ball into the net.</li> </ol> <p>Now make up three sentences and challenge a partner to identify how you have used the word head.</p>	
10	<p>Research and print out an article about a language issue from The Guardian or The Daily Mail website. What attitudes do they convey about language use? Annotate the text to identify how a viewpoint is presented and record your findings using the language levels.</p>	
11	<p>If you were compiling a dictionary entry, which word in each group would you use as the headword?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Descriptive, description, describe, indescribable, described</li> <li>- Comparing, comparative, compare, comparison, comparable</li> <li>- Photography, photographer, photograph, photographing</li> <li>- Special, speciality, specialist, specialise, especially, specialising</li> <li>- Copyright, copied, copiable, photocopy, copycat, copybook, copier</li> </ul>	
12	<p>Write each of the words used in Activity 11 in one of the 3 word classes, noun/verb/adjective. Watch out for words that, without changing them in any way, could be put in more than one class.</p>	
13	<p>For one of the groups of words in Activity 11, write a dictionary entry. Look at a printed dictionary to find out the definition of the word. Compare to your own definition.</p>	
14	<p>Power relationships and rules. What are the rules about speaking in your household? Who makes them? Are the rules the same for all the family?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When and where can you shout?</li> <li>- Are there times or places where you have to whisper?</li> <li>- Are there times or places where you may not whisper?</li> <li>- Who makes the rules for your bedroom?</li> <li>- Who makes the rules for the lounge?</li> <li>- Are there special rules for meal-times?</li> <li>- Do the rules change at night?</li> <li>- Who is allowed to swear? When? How much?</li> <li>- Are there things you are not allowed to talk about?</li> <li>- Are there things you must say? (for example, 'please, thank you')</li> <li>- Who is allowed to use local dialect? When?</li> <li>- Can you use slang?</li> </ul> <p>Present your list of 'Rules for Parents' and 'Rules for Children' or you might draw a plan of the house and show the rules for each room.</p>	

15	<p>Rules in society. Who makes the rules about who can speak and how and when in each of the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In a religious service – in the playground – in a courtroom</li> <li>- At an auction – in a school assembly – at meal times – in a sports match</li> <li>- At the dentist's.</li> </ul> <p>What are the rules in each case? What happens when the rules are broken?</p>	
16	<p>Use your camera phone to collect images of signs that give you commands or requests. What is the tone of each of the signs: polite? Helpful? Stern? Threatening? List them in order from the most friendly to the least friendly. Explain what it is about each sign that makes it friendly or unfriendly. List the signs in order from the most effective to the least effective. For each sign note down:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where it is sited</li> <li>- How effective you think the sign is.</li> </ul>	
17	<p>Collect as many tickets as you can: bus tickets, cinema tickets, any tickets. Are there any features which all the tickets have in common? What differences are there between the tickets?</p>	
18	<p>Prepare a display called 'The language of tickets'. Use labels to show the similarities and differences between the tickets in your display.</p>	
19	<p>What do you think makes a good ticket? Draw up a list of five qualities a good ticket should have. Give each of the tickets you have collected a score out of 10 for each of the five qualities you have chosen. Which do you consider is the best ticket?</p>	
20	<p>Many people believe that women talk more than men, but research shows the exact opposite. How can you explain this? Support your ideas with reference to articles from the internet.</p>	
21	<p>What do you think of the proverb 'sticks and stones'? Can words hurt? Write an opinion piece for The Guardian Newspaper about the power of language.</p>	
22	<p>Collect and annotate examples of official letters. What are the key features?</p>	

## **Taboo Language**

**Task:** Look at words/phrases which were considered 'bad language' in previous centuries.

**Draw up a list.**

**Task:** Are there any other words and phrases which are acceptable today which your grandparents or their parents might have frowned upon? Interview an older person and ask them.

**Write up the interview.**

## **Gendered Language**

**Task:** Compile a list of 'male' and 'female' versions of similar words. You may need to go online for this.

Make a table using the following headings:

- word is no longer in use
- Both words in the pair still have similar meanings
- Male term has gained a more positive meaning
- Female term has gained a more negative meaning

**Fill in the table.**

**Task:** Research on line to find two newspaper articles dealing with the topic of gendered (sexist) language.

Print them off, annotate them and present them to the rest of the group.

## **Taboo Language**

**Task:** Devise a questionnaire to find out people's attitude towards taboo language. Make sure your questions are framed to find out useful information, and that you draw from a wide range of respondents.

**Ask your questions, analyse your findings and present them to the rest of the group.**

## **Language and Gender in conversation**

**Task:** with the permission of the participants, use your mobile phone to record a conversation with a mixed sex group of your friends.

**Transcribe and annotate the conversation. Then, using the ideas discussed in lessons, write a brief analysis of the conversation.**