

# Step– Tips for new online teachers of English

## Answers

### 1. Get to know your student, do a needs **analysis**.

It's important to get to know your learners to find out what their interests are, what they want to learn, and what they are good at in English and what they are not good at. This will help you to plan lessons to meet your learners' needs.

### 2. Planning is key but have a **back-up** plan.

Make sure that you plan thoroughly and that you anticipate possible problems so that you are prepared when things go wrong or don't work as you planned.

### 3. Plan fully and make sure there is a **variety** of different materials.

In the classroom, a teacher can be dynamic and learners can move around, maintaining a good pace to the lesson. In the digital classroom this isn't possible, so a teacher needs to plan to fill every minute of the lesson and to make sure there is a good variety of activities and materials to help vary the pace.

### 4. Check that the **technology** works.

Problems occur, but you can prevent some by checking everything works in advance. When working for yourself, consider having a technology check with a learner before a lesson for 10 minutes. This will help the first lesson to go more smoothly.

### 5. Understand your **platform** and practise using it.

Even with a simple platform that doesn't have a lot of features, it's important to be able to use it confidently so that you can focus on delivering lessons and not the technology. Get to know your platform well by watching video tutorials or reading Help pages on the website. Then, practise using the platform by asking friends, family or colleagues to play the student or by offering a student a free lesson. If you do the latter, make it clear that there may be technical problems.

### 6. **Review** the teaching materials beforehand.

When planning your own lessons, this isn't so likely to be required, but if you're using ready-made material, it's very important. Make sure you're

familiar with the teaching material, so you exploit it in a way that ensures you achieve the learning goals.

**7.** Make sure the students are **confident** with how the class works.

Establish classroom rules and make expectations clear to the learners. This will help lessons to go more smoothly.

**8.** Run an **orientation** session before you start teaching.

Whether you're setting up an online class with a group of learners or with a one-to-one learner, it's useful to contact your learners and run an 'orientation' session before you start the actual lessons. This allows you to familiarise learners with the technology and the platform and to get to know the learners a bit. This makes the first lesson easier because you and the learners are more relaxed.

**9.** Be prepared to use your **face** a lot.

When you're teaching online your face is in front of the learner more than in a face-to-face classroom. You can use this to your advantage to create and maintain rapport by smiling and by being friendly.