

Reading medicine labels

Topic: Health

Level: SfL Entry 1 / Access 2 / ESOL learners with basic literacy needs / A1

Time: 70 minutes

Aims

- To develop learners' vocabulary of essential words to do with medicines.
- To revise vocabulary previously learnt e.g. headache, spoon, etc.
- To give practice of reading simple medicine labels and following instructions.

Introduction

This lesson is about reading and understanding medicine labels. It should follow on from previous lessons on the topic of health e.g. looking at symptoms and going to the doctors. It provides learners with essential vocabulary to how to take medicines and also gives reading practice.

Learner worksheets:

- Realia for the warmer and task 1: medicine, tablets and capsules and a model prescription.
- **Pages 1 and 2 (vocabulary cards):** Cut up before class. One set per pair.
- **Task 2 (version 1)** - one per stronger learner
- **Task 2 (version 2)** - one per weaker learner
- **Task 3 (version 1)** - one per stronger learner
- **Task 3 (version 2)** - one per weaker learner
- **Task 4 (practice cards):** Cut up before class. One set per pair.

Procedure

Warmer (10 mins)

- Hold up 3 different medicine bottles/packets and elicit 'medicine', 'tablets', 'capsules'.
- Make sure learners know that we not only use the word medicine for general medication, but also specifically for liquid medication.
- Highlight that tablets and capsules can come in bottles and packets.
- Check pronunciation: elicit the 3 key words again (*medicine*, *tablets* and *capsules*) and write on the board. Mark word stress with large dots to represent stressed syllables and smaller dots for weaker syllable then drill.
- Revise some previously taught ways of describing illnesses e.g. I've got a headache, sore throat, cold, etc. by miming the symptoms and eliciting previously learnt illnesses.
- Ask learners to suggest what you should do if you are ill. Mime and say 'I've got a headache' and they should say 'take some medicine' or 'take a tablet/capsule'. Do a few different examples asking stronger learners to answer.
- Ask the learners to do the same in pairs e.g. miming and saying illnesses. Monitor and assist with answers e.g. illnesses and solutions if learners require it.

Task 1 – Match the picture with the word (15 mins)

- Show pictures from **worksheet pages 1 and 2 (vocabulary cards)** on projector if possible (or hold up the cut up pictures) to elicit the rest of the vocabulary in Task 1. Encourage learners to discuss the pictures. Check pronunciation.
- Make sure the learners are clear about what a prescription and a label is.
- Show picture of chemist's and ask 'Where do you take the prescription? Where do you get the medicine?' Elicit 'At the chemist's,' drill learners then get them to practise the answer in pairs.
- Hand out a set of cut up cards from **worksheet pages 1 and 2** to each pair of learners. Ask them to do the matching task together in pairs.
- When the learners have finished, encourage them to practise pronouncing the words.
- Finally, ask the learners to hold up pictures and test their partners.

Differentiation

- Group learners who are beginner readers together. Work with them to pronounce and read the words.
- For stronger learners, first give them only the pictures with no words. They should try to say then write the words. Finally give them the word cards to use to check.

Task 2 – Consolidation of vocabulary

- There are two different versions of the handout for Task 2: for stronger and weaker learners.

Task 2 – (version 1 – stronger learners) Consolidation of vocabulary (10 mins)

- For stronger learners, hand out **Task 2 (version 1)** and tell them to work individually before checking their answers in pairs. Elicit group feedback.

Task 2 – (version 1 – weaker learners) Consolidation of vocabulary (10 mins)

- Group learners who are beginner readers together.
- This version has questions limited to key vocabulary.
- After the whole group explanation and perhaps showing the worksheet on projector, give these learners the **Task 2 (version 2)** worksheet. Tell learners they can use the vocabulary cards from Task 1 to help them if they wish.

Task 3 – Read the medicine labels and answer the questions (15 mins)

- Task 3 includes 'should' as this is the most natural word for the questions. Learners are not expected to produce this, but they should be able to understand the meaning from the context.
- Using an example learners will know, revise *daily* (something that happens every day), *once a day*, and *twice a day*. For example mime and elicit 'brush your teeth'. Then ask 'How many times a day do you brush your teeth?' Supply answers if learners can't suggest them e.g. 'Two times daily'. Drill and check word stress.
- Hand out the appropriate version of the worksheet for Task 3. Version 1 for stronger learners and version 2 for those who need more support.

Lesson plan – Reading medicine labels

- For **Task 3 (version 1)** learners should read the labels and write short answers to the questions. Stronger learners can write full sentences, using should if possible.
- For **Task 3 (version 2)** weaker learners should read the labels and complete the words.
- Monitor and assist if learners require it.
- When they have finished, encourage learners to check their answers with their partner.
- Elicit correct answers and write on the board. The answers for version 1 and 2 are similar so you can elicit feedback on both versions at the same time.

Task 4 – Asking someone about medicine labels (10 mins)

- Hand out a set of cut up medicine bottle pictures to each pair, which you can find on the worksheet for **Task 4**.
- Learners ask and answer questions about how much medicine to take, based on the information on the bottles in **Task 4**.
- Listen and make notes. Give feedback on common errors after.

Differentiation

- Weaker learners could use the question, 'How much medicine should I take?'
- Stronger learners can change the question to fit whether there are tablets, medicine or capsules in the bottles.

Cooler – Consolidate lesson vocabulary and spellings (10 mins)

- Put learners into 2 groups. Each group chooses a learner to sit at the front of the class with their back to the board, facing their team.
- Hold up a picture from **Task 1**, ensuring the 2 learners at the front cannot see. The two teams should give suggestions to their person at the front of the class to help them guess the word. They should put their hand up to answer.
- Another person from the team should write the words on paper.
- Repeat with other learners coming to sit at the front of the class, using other words from the lesson.
- At the end, show the words and the learners check their lists.
- The groups get 1 point for the correct word and 1 point for the correct spelling.

Extension activities / Homework

- Learners find any medicine bottles or packets at home and write down the instructions on how to take the medication. Tell learners to bring their instructions to the next class.

Answer key

Suggested answers:

Task 2 (version 1):

1. *prescription*
2. *The chemist*
3. *a) capsules, b) tablets, b) medicine*
4. *label*
5. *spoon*
6. *1 time a day*

Task 2 (version 2)

1. *prescription*
2. *The chemist*
3. *a) capsules, b) tablets, b) medicine*
4. *spoon*

Task 3 (Answers for version 1 and 2)

1. *(You should) take 1 tablet.*
2. *(You should) take it 2 times daily.*
3. *(You should) take 1 spoon.*
4. *(You should) take the medicine 3 times daily.*
5. *(You should) take 2 capsules each time.*
6. *(You should) take the capsules 2 times daily.*
7. *(You should) take the capsules for one week.*