

Instant Academic Skills

A resource book of advanced-level academic skills activities

Sarah Lane

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-12162-0 - Instant Academic Skills: A Resource Book of Advanced-Level Academic Skills Activities

Sarah Lane

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521121620

© Cambridge University Press 2011

It is normally necessary for written permission for copying to be obtained in advance from a publisher. The worksheets in this book are designed to be copied and distributed in class. The normal requirements are waived here and it is not necessary to write to Cambridge University Press for permission for an individual teacher to make copies for use in his or her own classroom. Only these pages which carry the wording '© Cambridge University Press' may be copied.

First published 2011

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-12162-0 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel timetables and other factual information given in this work is correct at the time of first printing but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Contents

MAP OF THE BOOK	4
INTRODUCTION	7
THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	9
HEALTH AND MEDICINE	
Unit 1 The secrets of a long life	10
Unit 2 Diet and behaviour	17
Unit 3 Medicine from nature	24
BUSINESS	
Unit 4 Supply and demand	31
Unit 5 Alternative finance	38
Unit 6 Socially responsible business	45
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	
Unit 7 Robots in science	52
Unit 8 Alternative energy	59
Unit 9 Genetic engineering	66
THE ARTS	
Unit 10 Wonders of the ancient world	73
Unit 11 What does music do for us?	80
Unit 12 Controversy in art	87
EDUCATION	
Unit 13 Applying to university	94
Unit 14 At university	101
Unit 15 Issues in education	108
Audioscript	115
Creating a list of references	123
Suggestion for vocabulary development and practice	124
Word lists	126
British vs American English	128

Map of the book

Unit theme	Lesson title	Text	Skills	Focus
1 The secrets of a long life	1A A case study in longevity	podcast describing the lifestyle of an elderly mother	listening	answering main idea questions and short answer detail questions
			speaking	class discussion using language of speculation
	1B 'Long life' gene region found	magazine article reporting the results of a study on genes and longevity	reading	answering main idea questions and matching detail questions
			writing	paraphrasing
2 Diet and behaviour	2A You are what you eat	extract from a lecture on the relationship between diet and behaviour	listening	answering main idea questions and short answer detail questions
			writing	combining sentences using coordination and subordination
	2B Additives and hyperactivity	web page with information about additives and behaviour	reading	determining a text's position on a topic
			speaking	giving informative vs persuasive speeches
3 Medicine from nature	3A Medicinal plants	extract from a lecture on the relationship between herbal and modern medicine	listening	answering main idea questions and short answer detail questions
			writing	using the Cornell method to take notes
	3B Alligator blood and antibiotics	extract from a magazine article on the results of a study on alligator blood	reading	using coherence clues to complete a gapped text
			speaking	using oral citations
4 Supply and demand	4A Marketing motives	extract from a marketing lecture discussing a definition of want vs need	listening	answering comprehension questions; completing sentences
			speaking	paraphrasing; emphasising; asking for and giving clarification
	4B Market forces in tourism	model essay on the effects of high demand on tourism	reading	ordering a text; answering main idea and short answer detail questions
			writing	writing thesis statements
5 Alternative finance	5A A history of microfinance	extract from a lecture on the development of microfinance	listening	predicting lecture organisation and language; deciding if information is correct or incorrect according to what is said
			writing	using symbols, abbreviations and key words to take notes
	5B Microloans in Uganda	model presentation on the role of microfinance in relieving poverty	reading	analysing an informative presentation
			speaking	creating a conclusion to a presentation

Map of the book

Unit theme	Lesson title	Text	Skills	Focus
6 Socially responsible business	6A Business and climate change	three model one-minute talks on climate change and business	listening	matching speakers to what they say
			speaking	giving spontaneous one-minute talks
	6B In search of the good company	extract from a magazine article on corporate social responsibility	reading	understanding vocabulary from its context
			writing	writing summaries
7 Robots in science	7A Meet Stan D. Ardman	extract from a radio show discussing how robots help to train medical students	listening	using mind maps to take notes
			speaking	comparing and contrasting in discussions
	7B Reducing animal testing	article from a magazine on the use of robots in toxicity testing	reading	answering multiple-choice questions
			writing	punctuating quotations
8 Alternative energy	8A Plankton, pumps and CO ₂	extract from a radio show discussing how an invention could reduce atmospheric CO ₂	listening	answering main idea questions and multiple-choice detail questions
			writing	writing introductions to academic essays
	8B Pros and cons of wind farms	extract from a website on renewable energy sources	reading	generating comprehension questions from a text
			speaking	using notes to paraphrase; debating an issue
9 Genetic engineering	9A Malaria and GM mosquitoes	newspaper article on a potential method of eradicating malaria	listening	listening for unfamiliar vocabulary; answering main idea and detail questions
			writing	correcting common sentence errors
	9B GM crop contamination	newspaper article on scientists' concerns about GM crop contamination	reading	choosing titles related to main ideas; answering true / false / cannot be inferred detail questions
			speaking	creating rebuttals in debates
10 Wonders of the ancient world	10A Ancient Egyptian art	lecture on the how the role of ancient Egyptian art influenced its characteristics	listening	answering multiple-choice questions from notes
			speaking	using transition phrases in presentations
	10B Emperor Qin's terracotta army	magazine article giving an overview of an archaeological find in China	reading	using coherence clues to insert sentences
			writing	creating a correct list of references to document sources

Map of the book

Unit theme	Lesson title	Text	Skills	Focus
11 What does music do for us?	11A Music as protest	four short monologues on music and protest	listening	identifying different speakers
			writing	writing effective attention-getters for essays and presentations
	11B Music lessons improve the mind	newspaper article reporting the results of a study on music and learning	reading	answering main idea questions and true / false / not given detail questions
			speaking	participating in small group discussions
12 Controversy in art	12A A question of ownership	four short monologues on whether looted artefacts should be returned	listening	identifying opinions and reasons
			speaking	acknowledging opposing viewpoints
	12B What is art?	extract from an article on how art has been defined in different times	reading	answering main idea questions and true / false / not given detail questions
			writing	inserting quotations into sentences
13 Applying to university	13A The interview	three model interviews for admission to university	listening	evaluating a speaker
			speaking	information exchange; practice interview
	13B The written application	two application essays for university admission	reading	answering detail questions; evaluating essays
			writing	creating vivid descriptions
14 At university	14A Welcome to our university	orientation talk for new students at a university	listening	answering main idea questions and multiple-choice inference questions
			speaking	discussing strategies for academic success
	14B The global student	five paragraphs about international students' experiences at university	reading	answering short answer detail questions
			writing	pre-writing activities
15 Issues in education	15A Online learning	conversation between a student and an advisor	listening	answering main idea questions and detail questions
			writing	note-taking; using formal and informal language
	15B Plagiarism	article from a student newspaper about Turnitin.com	reading	reordering a text using transition phrases and context clues
			speaking	expressing opinions in a role play

Introduction

Who is *Instant Academic Skills* for?

- *Instant Academic Skills* is a resource book for instructors teaching pre- and in-session academic preparation programmes. The material is aimed at advanced learners of English who have successfully completed an upper-intermediate course, passed an exam such as the Cambridge First Certificate in English or achieved a score of around 5.5 on the IELTS exam (around 70 on the TOEFL iBT).
- This book provides ready-to-go, photocopiable supplementary material for busy teachers who want to give their students extra practice either for general skills such as reading comprehension or for specific skills such as writing thesis statements.

How will *Instant Academic Skills* help my students?

- *Instant Academic Skills* uses authentic, engaging materials related to the main areas of study for international students attending English-speaking universities.
- The texts discuss issues relevant to a general audience, rather than specialists in the field, so that the lessons under the theme of 'Business', for example, will be of as much interest to a student in a science or medical programme as to one embarking on an MBA.
- The book provides enjoyable, meaningful activities that focus on general academic skills needed by university students in all fields, such as quoting and paraphrasing accurately. Learners are given explanation when appropriate, as well as guided practice.
- The integrated skills approach provides a realistic model of how all language skills are related and used together in the academic world.

How is *Instant Academic Skills* organised?

- The book consists of 30 complete lessons divided into five general areas that would be of interest to learners preparing to enter academic fields: Health and Medicine, Business, Science and Technology, The Arts and Education. Each area has three units, each containing two lessons. The lessons take an integrated approach, focusing on two of the four main skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), so that all four skills receive roughly equal emphasis in every unit, although not necessarily in the same combination. For example:


Health and medicine	Unit 1: The secrets of a long life	Lesson 1A	listening and speaking
		Lesson 1B	reading and writing
	Unit 2: Diet and behaviour	Lesson 2A	listening and writing
		Lesson 2B	reading and speaking

- While the units and lessons are grouped together by general theme, they are designed so that they can be done individually. The teacher may dip into this book and choose a lesson according to whether it fits in with a theme being covered in class or whether it focuses on a skill that requires more practice. It is not necessary to do both lessons in any one unit.
- *Instant Academic Skills* is not intended to be used in any particular sequence and apart from a general grouping by theme, the lessons are in no way related to each other and appear in no special order. Guidance on how to address a particular task that appears more than once throughout the book, for example multiple-choice questions, generally appears in the first lesson containing the type of task.
- Each lesson consists of one page of teacher's notes and two or three photocopiable worksheets. Sometimes sections of the worksheets may be cut into strips or cards, although the lessons are designed so that this is usually optional. Apart from this, no preparation is required.
- Every lesson starts with a brief warm-up activity to introduce the topic and generate interest. The lesson continues with either a reading or listening text around which the lesson is based. One other main skill, speaking or writing, is introduced in the second half of the lesson. Of course, in reality every lesson practises all four skills, but emphasis is placed on two per lesson.

Introduction

- The lessons are designed to last roughly one hour, although this timing is for general guidance only and will vary depending on the class. With such short lessons, it is not possible to tackle large tasks such as how to write an entire research paper. Rather, the lessons focus on specific skills, such as writing a thesis statement or practising a particular note-taking system.
- At the advanced level, there are times when it is necessary to make some assumptions about students' capabilities. In the teacher's notes, there is a section noting any assumptions the lesson is based on. There are also cross-references to lessons relating to these assumptions if the skill in question is covered in this book.

What is the best way to use *Instant Academic Skills* in the classroom?

- The teacher's notes include step-by-step guidance on how to use the material, as well as answer keys. There are suggested follow-up activities that could be used in class if time permits or assigned as homework to take up in the next class. The tasks are designed so that they give meaningful practice to the student while not contributing greatly to a busy academic preparation instructor's heavy marking load.
- There is scope to extend every lesson if time permits. For example, most of the lessons do not have any focus on vocabulary, and grammar is beyond the remit of this book. Teachers are encouraged to extend the lessons in ways that suit their individual classes. For example:
 - On pages 124–5 there are suggestions for creating simple vocabulary practice activities. There are also word lists on pages 126–7 with vocabulary selected from the lessons.
 - If the class needs practice with quoting or paraphrasing, any reading text could be used to generate practice activities
 - Any listening could be used for note-taking practice, even if this skill is not the focus of the lesson. Instead of having the students answer questions as they listen, ask them to take notes and then use the notes to answer the questions on the worksheet.
 - For grammar practice, use white correction fluid to remove target language (for example prepositions) from a copy of a reading text, and ask the students to fill in the blanks.
 - Using different-coloured highlighter pens, the students identify the different types of clauses and see how they relate to other parts of the sentence. (This exercise can also identify some surprising reading comprehension errors in texts composed of long complex sentences.)
 - Any writing generated by the students could be collected and distributed around the classroom – for example, pinned on the classroom walls. The students then circulate and provide peer feedback by writing suggestions on each other's papers.
- Teachers are also encouraged to be imaginative and make the lessons more fun if appropriate for the class. For example:
 - Mask the questions related to a listening or reading text when copying the worksheet and make an overhead transparency of them instead. Divide the class into teams and uncover the questions one at a time. Award points according to which team gets the correct answer first.
 - As above, but instead of using an OHT, read the questions aloud to test listening comprehension.
 - Use the game described in Lesson 8B, Exercise B for any lesson containing a reading text. After the students have played the game, hand out the questions that go with the assigned text and see if the students can answer them. Again, this could be done as a competition.
- A useful website has been included for each lesson, indicated by the symbol . Sometimes they are websites primarily for teachers to use, but others are websites that might be of use to students. These websites could also be used to extend a lesson.

Thanks and acknowledgements

I would like to thank Nóirin Burke, who commissioned this book, Caroline Thiriau and Emily Hird of Cambridge University Press, Hazel Meek, and Lyn Strutt, who edited the material. I would also like to thank the following colleagues and students who kindly allowed me to use their work: Jacqueline Foster, Bruce Ballam, Jungyun (Chloe) Kim, Hayeon Kwak, Justyna Szelwach, Karolina Korzyna, Thamer AbdulAziz AlAsseri, Viktor Sin, and Chika Hayashi. Lastly, I'd like to give special thanks to my husband, Richard, who encouraged me to write this book and gave me wholehearted support throughout this project.

Publisher's acknowledgements

The author and publishers would like to thank the ELT professionals who reviewed the material: Stephen Button, Phil Scherb and Christina Maurer Smolder.

The authors and publishers acknowledge the following sources of copyright material and are grateful for the permissions granted. While every effort has been made, it has not always been possible to identify the sources of all the material used, or to trace all copyright holders. If any omissions are brought to our notice, we will be happy to include the appropriate acknowledgements on reprinting.

p. 15: National Geographic for the article 'Long life' gene region located on human chromosome'. Copyright © National Geographic News/National Geographic Stock; p. 22: Food Additives and Ingredients Association for the article 'Additives and ingredients for healthy eating'. Copyright © Food Additives and Ingredients Association 2010; p. 28: National Geographic for the article 'Alligator blood may lead to powerful new antibiotics'. Copyright © Avasthi, Amitabh/National Geographic Stock; p. 50: The Economist for the article 'In search of good company'. Copyright © The Economist Newspaper, London, 06.09.07; p. 57: Scientific American for the article 'Reducing animal testing'. Reprinted with permission. Copyright © 2008 Scientific American, a division of Nature America, Inc. All rights reserved; pp. 63–64 Consumer Utility Services for the text 'Pros and cons of wind farms'. Reproduced with permission. www.cus.net; p. 68: The Guardian for the adapted article 'Malaria and GM mosquitoes' by Ian Sample, The Guardian 20.03.07. Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2007; p. 71: The Guardian for the adapted article 'Consequences of GM crop contamination 'are set to worsen'' by James Randerson, The Guardian 18.02.08. Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2008; p. 78: National Gallery of Art for the text on 'A microcosm of the heavens and earth: Emperor Qin's terracotta army' by Michael McLean. Reproduced with permission from the National Gallery of Art. www.nga.gov/education/chinatp_emp.shtm; p. 84: The Guardian for the adapted article 'Study finds music lessons improve the mind' by Debbie Andalo, The Guardian 20.09.06. Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2006; p. 92: Department of Art History, Sweet Briar College, for the adapted text 'What is art?' by Christopher Witcombe. Reproduced with permission. www.arthistory.sbc.edu/artartists/artartists.html; p. 115: National Geographic for Lesson 1A. Copyright © Daniel Buettner/National Geographic Stock.

Photographs: Alamy/Blend Images p. 102, Alamy/Chris Cheadle p. 35 (r), Alamy/Martin Harvey p. 91 (r), Alamy/Noble images p. 91 (c), Alamy/A T Willett p. 91 (l); Getty Images/Image Bank p. 35 (l); Shutterstock p. 32, Shutterstock/Amy Nichole Harris p. 35 (b); Shutterstock/Ke Wang p. 78.

Picture research by Alison Prior.

Proofreading by Kevin Doherty.

Recordings produced by Leon Chambers.

Text design and page make-up by Kamae Design.

Illustrations by Kathy Baxendale, John Dillow, Nigel Dobbyn, Mark Duffin and Ben Swift.