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English in Mind

* Teacher’s Book 3

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Introduction

‘If you can teach teenagers, you can teach anyone.’ Michael Grinder

Teaching teenagers is an interesting and challenging task. A group of adolescents can be highly motivated, cooperative and fun to teach on one day, and the next day the whole group or individual students might turn out to be truly ‘difficult’ – the teacher might, for example, be faced with discipline problems, disruptive or provocative behaviour, a lack of motivation, or unwillingness on the students’ part to do homework assigned to them.

The roots of these problems frequently lie in the fact that adolescents are going through a period of significant change in their lives. The key challenge in the transition period between being a child and becoming an adult is the adolescent’s struggle for identity – a process that requires the development of a distinct sense of who they are. A consequence of this process is that adolescents can feel threatened, and at the same time experience overwhelming emotions. They frequently try to compensate for the perceived threats with extremely rude behaviour, and try to ‘hide’ their emotions behind a wall of extreme outward conformity. The more individual students manage to look, talk, act and behave like the other members of their peer group, the less threatened and insecure they feel.

Insights into the causes underlying the problems might help us to understand better the complex situation our students are in. However, such insights do not automatically lead to more success in teaching. We need to react to the challenges in a professional way.¹ This includes the need to:

- select content and organise the students’ learning according to their psychological needs;
- create a positive learning atmosphere;
- cater for differences in students’ learning styles and intelligences, and facilitate the development of our students’ study skills.

English in Mind has been written taking all these points into account. They have significantly influenced the choice of texts, artwork and design, the structure of the units, the typology of exercises, and the means by which students’ study skills are facilitated and extended.

The importance of the content for success

There are a number of reasons why the choice of the right content has a crucial influence over success or failure in the teaching of adolescents. Teachers

frequently observe that teenagers are reluctant to ‘talk about themselves’. This has to do with the adolescents’ need for psychological security. Consequently, the ‘further away’ from their own world the content of the teaching is, the more motivating and stimulating it will be for the students. The preference for psychologically remote content goes hand in hand with a fascination with extremes and realistic details. Furthermore, students love identifying with heroes and heroines, because these idols are perceived to embody the qualities needed in order to survive in a threatening world: qualities such as courage, genius, creativity and love. In the foreign language class, students can become fascinated with stories about heroes and heroines to which they can ascribe such qualities. *English in Mind* treats students as young adults, offering them a range of interesting topics and a balance between educational value and teenage interest and fun.

As Kieran Egan² stresses, learning in the adolescent classroom can be successfully organised by starting with something far from the students’ experience, but also connected to it by some quality with which they can associate. This process of starting far from the students makes it easier for them to become interested in the topic, and also enables the teacher finally to relate the content to the students’ own world.

A positive learning atmosphere

The creation of a positive learning atmosphere largely depends on the rapport between teacher and students, and the one which students have among themselves. It requires the teacher to be a genuine, empathetic listener, and to have a number of other psychological skills. *English in Mind* supports the teacher’s task of creating positive learning experiences through: clear tasks; a large number of carefully designed exercises; regular opportunities for the students to check their own work; and a learning process designed to guarantee that the students will learn to express themselves both in speaking and in writing.

Learning styles and multiple intelligences

There is significant evidence that students will be better motivated, and learn more successfully, if differences in learning styles and intelligences are taken into account in the teaching–learning process.³ The development of a number of activities in *English in Mind* has been

¹ An excellent analysis of teenage development and consequences for our teaching in general can be found in Kieran Egan: *Romantic Understanding*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, New York and London, 1990. This book has had a significant influence on the thinking behind *English in Mind*, and the development of the concept of the course.

² Ibid.

³ See for example Eric Jensen: *Brain-Based Learning and Teaching*, Turning Point Publishing, Del Mar, CA, USA, 1995, on learning styles. An overview of the theory of multiple intelligences can be found in Howard Gardner: *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*, Basic Books, New York, 1993.

influenced by such insights, and students find frequent study tips that show them how they can better utilise their own resources.⁴

The methodology used in *English in Mind*

Skills: *English in Mind* uses a communicative, multi-skills approach to develop the students' foreign language abilities in an interesting and motivational way. A wide range of interesting text types is used to present authentic use of language, including magazine and newspaper clippings, interviews, narratives, songs and engaging photo stories.

Grammar: *English in Mind* is based on a strong grammatical syllabus and takes into account students' mixed abilities by dealing with grammar in a carefully graded way, and offering additional teaching support (see below).

Vocabulary: *English in Mind* offers a systematic vocabulary syllabus, including important lexical chunks for conversation.

Culture: *English in Mind* gives students insights into a number of important cross-cultural and intercultural themes. Significant cultural features of English-speaking countries are presented, and students are involved in actively reflecting on the similarities and differences between other cultures and their own.

Consolidation: Four 'Check your progress' revision units per level will give teachers a clear picture of their students' progress and make students aware of what they have learned. Each revision unit is also accompanied by a project which gives students the opportunity to use new language in a less controlled context and allows for learner independence.

Teacher support: *English in Mind* is clearly structured and easy to teach. The Teacher's Book offers step-by-step lesson notes, background information on content, culture and language, additional teaching ideas, the tapescripts and answers. The accompanying Teacher's Resource Pack contains photocopiable materials for further practice and extra lessons, taking into consideration the needs of mixed-ability groups by providing extra material for fast finishers or students who need more support, as well as formal tests.

Student support: *English in Mind* offers systematic support to students through: Skills tips; classroom language; guidance in units to help with the development of classroom discourse and the students' writing; a wordlist including phonetic transcriptions; list of irregular verbs and phonetics (at the back of the Student's Book); and a Grammar reference (at the back of the Workbook).

English in Mind: components

Each level of the *English in Mind* series contains the following components:

- Student's Book with accompanying Audio CD / CD-ROM
- Class Audio CDs
- Workbook with accompanying Audio CD / CD-ROM
- Teacher's Book
- Teacher's Resource Pack
- Website resources

The Student's Book

Modular structure: The *English in Mind* Student's Books are organised on a modular basis – each contains four modules of four units per module. The modules have broad themes and are organised as follows: a) a two-page module opener; b) four units of six pages each; c) a two-page Check your progress section.

Module openers are two pages which allow teachers to 'set the scene' for their students, concerning both the informational content and the language content of what is to come in the module itself. This helps both to motivate the students and to provide the important 'signposting' which allows them to see where their learning is going next. The pages contain: a) a visual task in which students match topics to a selection of photographs taken from the coming units; b) a list of skills learning objectives for the module; c) a short matching task which previews the main grammar content of the coming module; and d) a simple vocabulary task, again previewing the coming content.

The **units** have the following basic structure, although with occasional minor variations depending on the flow of an individual unit:

- an opening **reading** text
- a **grammar** page, often including pronunciation
- two pages of **vocabulary** and **skills** work
- either a **Culture in mind** text, a **photo story**, a **Fiction in mind** text or a **song** followed by **writing skills** work.

The **reading** texts aim to engage and motivate the students with interesting and relevant content, and to provide contextualised examples of target grammar and lexis. The texts have 'lead-in' tasks and are followed by comprehension tasks of various kinds. All the opening texts are also recorded on the Class Audio CD/Cassette, which allows teachers to follow the initial reading with a 'read and listen' phase, giving the students the invaluable opportunity of connecting the written word with the spoken version, which is especially useful for auditory learners. Alternatively, with stronger classes, teachers may decide to do one of the exercises as a listening task, with books closed.

⁴ See Marion Williams and Robert L. Burden: *Psychology for Language Teachers*, Cambridge University Press, 1997 (pp. 143–162), on how the learner deals with the process of learning.

Grammar follows the initial reading. The emphasis is on active involvement in the learning process. Examples from the texts are isolated and used as a basis for tasks which focus on both concept and form of the target grammar area. Students are encouraged to find other examples and work out rules for themselves. Occasionally there are also Look boxes, which highlight an important connected issue concerning the grammar area; for example, in Unit 3, work on the present perfect has a Look box reminding students that *know* is not normally used in the continuous form. This is followed by a number of graded exercises, both receptive and productive, which allow students to begin to employ the target language in different contexts and to produce realistic language. Next, there is usually a speaking activity, aiming at further personalisation of the language.

Each unit has at least one **Vocabulary** section, with specific word-fields. Again, examples from the initial text are focused on, and a lexical set is developed, with exercises for students to put the vocabulary into use. Vocabulary is frequently recycled in later texts in the unit (e.g. photo stories or Culture in mind texts), and also in later units.

Pronunciation is included in every unit. There are exercises on common phoneme problems such as /əʊ/ in *though*, as well as aspects of stress (within words, and across sentences) and elision.

Language skills are present in every unit. There is always at least one **listening skills** activity, with listening texts of various genres; at least one (but usually several) **speaking skills** activity for fluency development; **reading skills** are taught through the opening texts and also later texts in some units, as well as the Culture in mind and Fiction in mind sections. There is always a **writing skills** task, at the end of each unit.

The final two pages of each unit have either a **Culture in mind** text, a **photo story**, a **Fiction in mind** text or a **song**. The **Culture in mind** texts are reading texts which provide further reading practice, and an opportunity for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world at large and in particular the English-speaking world. They include a wide variety of stimulating topics, for example, the influence of other cultures in Britain, graffiti and hip-hop culture and weddings in different British cultures. The **photo stories** are conversations between teenagers in everyday situations, allowing students to read and listen for interest and also to experience the use of common everyday language expressions. These **Everyday English** expressions are worked on in exercises following the dialogue. The **Fiction in mind** texts are extracts from the Cambridge Readers series which provide further reading practice. The text is also recorded on the Workbook CD/CDRom for extra listening practice.

The final activity in each unit is a **writing skills** task. These are an opportunity for students to further their control of language and to experiment in the production of texts in a variety of genres (e.g. letters, emails, postcards).

There are model texts for the students to aid their own writing, and exercises providing guidance in terms of content and organisation. Through the completion of the writing tasks, students, if they wish, can also build up a bank of materials, or 'portfolio', during their period of learning: this can be very useful to them as the source of a sense of clear progress and as a means of self-assessment. A 'portfolio' of work can also be shown to other people (exam bodies, parents, even future employers) as evidence of achievement in language learning. Many of the writing tasks also provide useful and relevant practice for examinations such as Cambridge ESOL PET or Trinity Integrated Skills Examinations.

Exam section following **Check your progress** is an additional revision and extension part of every Module. There are various stimulating and up-to-date topics, for example, traditional Irish dances, FAQs about cats and dogs and a story of a celebrity kick-boxer who sacrificed his career for his sick daughter. Activities present in the **Exam section** closely resemble those from the final Gimnazjum exam. The goal is for students to get used to the format of the exam type activities. **Culture lessons** end the Modules. Every lesson is divided into 3 stages:

- new vocabulary presentation / speaking,
- reading,
- project work.

Readings cover a variety of cultural topics, for example, The European Union, Celtic culture, Polish legends, or the famous F1 racer, Robert Kubica. Projects are related to culture, either Polish or European. Project presentations are always oral, encourage students to practice speaking skills and promote working in groups.

Beyond the modules and units themselves, *English in Mind* offers at the end of the Student's Book a further set of materials for teachers and students. These consist of:

- **Projects:** activities (one per module) which students can do in pairs or groups (or even individually if desired), for students to put the language they have so far learned into practical and enjoyable use. They are especially useful for mixed-ability classes as they allow students to work at their own pace. The projects produced could also be part of the 'portfolio' of material mentioned earlier.
- An **irregular verb list** for students to refer to when they need.
- A listing of **phonetic symbols**, again for student reference.
- A **wordlist** with the core lexis of the Student's Book, with phonetic transcriptions. This is organised by unit, and within each unit heading there are the major word-fields, divided into parts of speech (verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc.). The wordlists are a feature that teachers can use in classrooms, for example, to develop students' reference skills or to indicate ways in which they themselves might organise vocabulary notebooks, and by students at home, as a useful reference and also to prepare for tests or progress checks.

The Workbook

The Workbook is a resource for both teachers and students, providing further practice in the language and skills covered in the Student’s Book. It is organised unit by unit, following the Student’s Book. Each Workbook unit has six pages, and the following contents:

Remember and check: this initial exercise encourages students to remember the content of the initial reading text in the Student’s Book unit.

Exercises: an extensive range of supporting exercises in the grammatical, lexical and phonological areas of the Student’s Book unit, following the progression of the unit, so that teachers can use the exercises either during or at the end of the Student’s Book unit.

Everyday English and **Culture in mind:** extra exercises on these sections in the units corresponding to the Student’s Book.

Skills in mind page: these pages contain a separate skills development syllabus, which normally focuses on two main skill areas in each unit. There is also a skill tip relating to the main skill area, which the students can immediately put into action when doing the skills task(s).

Unit check page: this is a one-page check of knowledge of the key language of the unit, integrating both grammar and vocabulary in the three exercise types. The exercise types are: a) a cloze text to be completed using items given in a box; b) a sentence-level multiple choice exercise; c) a guided error-correction exercise.

Exam section and **Culture lesson** activities are the next two pages checking the student’s knowledge of the vocabulary presented in the Student’s Book, the same sections. They also revise grammatical points introduced in the unit. Again the format of the activities resemble the Gimnazjum exam tasks.

At the end of the Workbook, there is a **Grammar reference** section. Here, there are explanations of the main grammar topics of each unit, with examples. It can be used for reference by students at home, or the teacher might wish to refer to it in class if the students appreciate grammatical explanations.

The Teacher’s Book

The Teacher’s Book contains:

- clear, simple, practical **teaching notes** on each unit and how to implement the exercises as effectively as possible
- complete **tapescripts** for all listening and pronunciation activities
- complete **answers** to all exercises (grammar, vocabulary, comprehension questions, etc.)
- **optional activities** for stronger or weaker classes, to facilitate the use of the material in mixed-ability classes
- **background information** relating to the content (where appropriate) of reading texts and Culture in mind pages
- **language notes** relating to grammatical areas, to assist less-experienced teachers who might have concerns about the target language and how it operates (these can also be used to refer to the Workbook Grammar reference section)
- a complete **answer key** and **tapescripts** for the Workbook.

The Teacher’s Resource Book

This extra component, spiral bound for easy photocopying, contains the following photocopiable resources:

- an **entry test**, which can be used for diagnostic testing or also used for remedial work
- **module tests** containing separate sections for: Grammar, Vocabulary, Everyday English, Reading, Listening (the recordings for which are on the Class Audio Cassettes/CDs), Speaking and Writing. A key for the tests is also provided
- **photocopiable communicative activities:** one page for each unit, reflecting the core grammar and/or vocabulary of the unit
- **photocopiable extra grammar exercises:** one page of four exercises for each unit, reflecting the key grammar areas of the unit
- **teaching notes** for the above.

Web resources

In addition to information about the series, the *English in Mind* website contains downloadable pages of further activities and exercises for students, as well as other resources. It can be found at this part of the Cambridge University Press website:

www.cambridge.org/elt/englishinmind