

# The 4-stage *lesson framework*.

How to structure any 45-60 minute lesson — even if you have nothing prepared.

## THE FOUR STAGES

### 1 · WARM (5-10 min)

Get them talking. Activate prior knowledge. Set the topic. They speak more than you. Always.

### 2 · INPUT (15-20 min)

New vocabulary, grammar, or text. Short. Focused. They notice the language before you explain it.

### 3 · PRACTICE (15 min)

Controlled then freer. Drills → gap-fill → guided dialogue. They use the new language with support.

### 4 · PRODUCTION (10-15 min)

Open speaking task. They use today's language to express their own ideas. No safety net.

## TIMING TRAPS

- **Talking too much in WARM.** 10 minutes max. If you're still warming after 12, you're teaching the warmer.
- **Over-explaining in INPUT.** If a slide takes more than 3 minutes, you're lecturing, not teaching.
- **Skipping PRACTICE.** Drills feel boring but they build automaticity. Don't skip.
- **No real PRODUCTION.** Without it, the lesson is academic. Always end with "use it."

## SAMPLE 60-MINUTE LESSON

00:00 - 00:08	WARM — discussion question on board, pairs talk, brief share
00:08 - 00:12	Set context — quick image, headline, or short video
00:12 - 00:25	INPUT — vocabulary teach + check; grammar elicit
00:25 - 00:32	PRACTICE — controlled gap-fill, pair check
00:32 - 00:42	PRACTICE — freer dialogue or scenario role-play
00:42 - 00:55	PRODUCTION — speaking task using today's language
00:55 - 00:60	RECALL & CLOSE — what stuck? One takeaway each.

## EMERGENCY LESSON — 10 MINUTES PREP

- 1 **Pick a topic they care about.** Work, money, relationships, technology, travel. Adult topics.
- 2 **Write 3 warmer questions.** Personal, open-ended, no yes/no.
- 3 **Pick 8 key words.** Half they probably know, half they probably don't.
- 4 **Write 5 gap-fill sentences** using those 8 words.
- 5 **Write one role-play scenario** where they'd use the language.
- 6 **Write one big closing question.** Personal, open-ended, makes them think.

**The rule of three:** Every stage needs three things — a clear goal, an active task, and a check that learning happened. If you can't name all three, redesign the stage.

## THE STUDENT TALK RATIO

Aim for **70% student talking time**, 30% teacher. Record yourself once a month. Most teachers think they talk 40%. They actually talk 60-70%. Cut your sentences in half.