FOCUS on 21st Century Skills

Teaching upper secondary students to use English confidently in the 21st century is no longer a special feature for an ELT course - it is an essential one. Find out how 21st Century Learning is embedded throughout FOCUS.

Study Skills

The Word Store is quintessentially learner training - students are encouraged to organise new vocabulary in a variety of useful and memorable ways.

FOCUS requires that students collaborate with each other on a regular basis.

- Pair work accounts for about a third of each unit - it includes reflective and discussion activities as well as answer checking.
Communication

FOCUS constantly sets communication tasks for students.

- A contextual approach to grammar teaches appropriate, situational English.
- Grammar animations illustrate grammar rules in practice.
- Vocabulary emphasis and extra practice (Word Store) help embed essential vocabulary in students’ minds.
- Interactive speaking videos model conversational English for students and allow them to ‘converse’ with the actors to practice their communication skills.

"Focus on culture" is embedded throughout the course.

US TODAY
We asked CS employees Dan about the world’s largest travel community.

What is it?
A worldwide travel network connecting travellers with people who offer free accommodation.

Who is it for?
People who don’t want to stay in hotels, but want to meet local people and experience new cultures.

How much does it cost?
Nothing! It’s free.

How long have you worked for CS?
I’ve been here since it started in 2004. I’ve worked with people from all over the world for more than ten years. Together, we want to create a global community.

Grammar animation videos

Interactive speaking videos
FOCUS covers up-to-date technology topics and social issues. It also provides online learning system and interactive solutions, such as:

- MyEnglishLab interactive exercises and gradebook,
- ActiveTeach IWB software,
- writing text types i.e. blogs and emails.

Technology

Creativity

FOCUS encourages students to use the language they have learnt in new and creative ways. It opts for a ‘guided creativity’ approach and gives students plenty of support and suggestions to stimulate their imagination and ideas.

Imagine that a school wants its students to understand more about environmental problems. Look at the diagram. It shows some things the teachers are thinking about doing. In pairs, follow these steps.

- Talk to each other about whether you think these are good ways to help students understand about environmental problems.
- Decide which of the things it would be best for the school to do.

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organise a talk by a weather expert

visit a recycling plant

take students to a beach clean-up

Put up posters in the classrooms

watch documentaries in class

Which of these things would it be best for the school to do?

Focus 3, U.3.5

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In pairs, read the opening sentence of a story and think of a story that could follow it. Use the questions to help you.

When I got on the bus, it was very crowded and I couldn’t find a seat.

1. Where were you?
2. When were you there?
3. Who were you with?
4. What was the weather like?
5. What happened?
6. What could you see?
7. What could you hear?
8. How did you feel?
9. What did you do next?
10. How did it end?

Focus 3, U.4.7

FOCUS covers plenty of health related topics, including:

- healthy school meals i.e. Focus 2, U.8,
- health myths i.e. Focus 3, U.4,
- what makes a healthy diet i.e. Focus 3, U.4,
- the scandal of global food waste i.e. Focus 3, U.4,
- malaria facts i.e. Focus 3, U.6,
- awareness of disabilities i.e. Focus 3, U.2.4.

Health literacy
**Environmental literacy**

FOCUS covers many environmental issues, including:

- natural disasters i.e. Focus 3, U.5,
- problems of over-population and the solutions,
- vertical farming i.e. Focus 3, U.5,
- how to make a school more eco-friendly i.e. Focus 3, U.5,
- deforestation in the Amazon forest i.e. Focus 3, U.5.

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**Financial and economic literacy**

FOCUS covers topics such as:

- jobs and qualifications i.e. Focus 2, U.6.3,
- work experience i.e. Focus 2, U.6.6,
- Fairtrade i.e. Focus 2, U.7.2.

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**Global citizenship**

FOCUS teaches students to be global citizens by introducing topics like:

- TOMS shoes that support children in the world without shoes i.e. Focus 2, U.7.5,
- how to be a good citizen! i.e. Focus 3, U.6.