

Grammar Week 2

What is language?

1. Language is a means of cultural transmission.
2. Language is what people use to talk about things that are important to them.
3. Language is a set of sound and sentence patterns that express meaning
4. Language is a set of rules through which humans can create and understand novel utterances, that have never before articulated or encountered.
5. Language is a means of interaction between and among people.
6. Language is a means for doing something - accomplishing a purpose.
7. Language is a vehicle for communicating meaning and messages.
8. Language is an instrument of power.
9. Language is a medium through which one can learn other things.
10. Language is holistic and is best understood through discourse and whole texts.

What should be the focus of language teaching?

Match the numbers above with the teaching focus below.

- Rules of sentence construction related to permissible word combinations.
- Fixed and semi-fixed sentence patterns, such as statements, questions, intonation, etc.
- Instrumental, such as finding a place to live, interviewing for a job, operating with society.
- Functions, such as agreeing, proposing, expressing preferences.
- Transactional language, especially lexical items.
- Learning about rhetorical and genre patterns, for example narrative and expository prose.
- Interpersonal communication within a social context.
- Everyday life, talking about family, daily routines, shopping, etc.
- Works of literature, poetry, historical texts.
- Content, such as geography, science, academia.

When you have finished, consider what kind of classroom activities would suit each view of language and focus for teaching.