

Module 1

Speech

Consonant clusters: two consonants in initial position

In the English language, some words begin not with just one consonant sound, but with two or three. When this happens, a speaker has to pronounce the word by gliding from the first to the second consonant, without inserting a vowel sound in-between. Practise pronouncing the words in the following table. Note that none of the consonant sounds should be dropped.

1. Consonants in initial position	2. Consonants in initial position
a. site b. tea c. say d. cold e. some f. bead g. pace h. fee i. few j. cow	a. style b. tree c. stay d. scold e. storm f. bleed g. place h. free i. flew j. crow

Practice 1

Study the words in the box above. Notice that words in column 1 have only one consonant sound at the initial position; /c/, /s/, /s/. The words in column 2 have two consonant clusters at the initial position; /s~c/, /s~t/, /s~pl/, etc.

Practice 2

Listen attentively as your teacher pronounces these words without inserting a vowel sound in-between them or dropping any of the consonant clusters.

Now, imitate the teacher's pronunciation pattern.

- Words of common consonant cluster

green	bluff	flour	smart
grow	flew	stand	crime
bride	spider	twin	glass
crown	place	blow	crawl
free	start	crop	green

Practice 3

Your teacher will pronounce the above words first, while you repeat after him paying attention to the consonant clusters at the initial and the end positions. Your teacher will help you to list more words with two or three consonant clusters.

Exercise 1

Read these sentences aloud individually and in groups, paying attention to the bold consonant clusters.

1. The **bride** and the bride**groom** **flew** to Spain for their honeymoon.
2. He **climbed** the mountain in **spite** of the cold winter.
3. The **field** was **cleared** and **planted** with **grain** **crops**
4. The farmer **planted** cassava **sticks** under the open **sky**.
5. The **twin** **brothers** both **breasted** the tape at the same time.
6. He **drank** **from** two **glass** cups.
7. I want you to **clap** for the **pr**incipal.
8. The **st**udent ran **qu**ickly to the **fr**ont.
9. She is a **br**illiant **sp**earer.
10. The **tr**uck **dr**iver **sp**ed down the road.

Exercise 2

Make sentences with these words and read to the class. Pay attention to the consonant clusters.

1. glass
2. stay
3. clear
4. plate
5. praise
6. drink
7. spite
8. printer
9. quiet
10. greed

Grammatical Structure

Uncountable nouns

In *Functional English* for SSS Book 1, we learnt about countable and uncountable nouns. In this module, we shall revise uncountable nouns. Uncountable nouns name concepts that cannot be counted. Most uncountable nouns are solid, liquid or gas substances like wood, rock, butter, oil, milk, water, oxygen, smoke and air.

The components of uncountable nouns cannot be divided into separate parts. So they are usually singular. This is why it is wrong to say:

1. *There are no waters in the bottles.
2. *There are no oils for cooking.

Rather, we should say:

3. There is no water in the bottle.
4. There is no oil for cooking.

Here are some examples of uncountable nouns:

information, furniture, luggage, advertising, applause, cash, food, homework, knowledge, coffee, land, hair, traffic, rubbish, trash, money, music, shopping, climate, waste, weather, thought, success

Division of uncountable nouns

Uncountable nouns can be expressed by the use of countable nouns, like "a piece", "a pile", "a bit", "a bar", "a cubes", etc. e.g.

- i. Give me a *piece* of bread.
- ii. She emptied *the pile* of rubbish.
- iii. After working for hours, I need *a bit* of air.
- iv. She finished *a bar* of chocolate.
- v. He used only *two cubes* of sugar.
- vi. Put the *block* of *ice* in the plastic can.
- vii. They wrote a note on *a piece* of paper.
- viii. Peter needed *a yard* of cloth.
- ix. Daddy finished *a bottle* of beer.
- x. We drank *several cups* of coffee.

Nouns which can be both countable and uncountable.

Some nouns can be countable or uncountable, depending on the context. Find out some examples from the table below.

Uncountable	Countable
-------------	-----------

1. The coffee plant is doing well.	He drank two cups of coffee.
2. Helen has long <i>hair</i> .	I found five strands of grey hairs on my head.
3. Most furniture is made of <i>wood</i> .	We found a snake in the <i>woods</i> .
4. It is better to suffer during <i>youth</i> .	Many <i>youths</i> attended the party.
5. The Ojos bought land for farming	The lands in Africa are fertile.
6. I have some work to do this evening.	Achebe has produced many literary <i>works</i> of international repute.
7. The house is made of glass.	The steward broke several glasses.
8. I have no more room in my apartment.	The house is made up of six rooms.
9. She was deep in thought.	What are your thoughts about her?
10. They are looking for new jobs.	She is looking for some interesting job

Some uncountable nouns which are **abstract nouns** are never countable. They include:

information, homework, progress, happiness, wealth, etc.

Study how they are used in sentences:

- i. We did not receive any information that night.
- ii. The teacher gave us some homework to do.
- iii. A lot of progress has been made.
- iv. My children are a source of happiness to me.
- v. He is a man of great wealth.

Determiners and uncountable nouns

Even though uncountable nouns are usually singular, they are still used to reflect either a large or small quantity. It is important to note the qualifier that is suitable for different contexts.

A. Determiners like *some*, *all* and *none* are used with uncountable nouns to show varying quantity, e.g.

- i. *All* of the oil has been used.
- ii. *Some* of the wood has been used.

iii. *None* of the water has been used.

B. Determiners like *much*, *a lot* and *a great deal* are used to show a large quantity. Here are examples:

- i. *Much* of their support was lost during the scandal.
- ii. *A lot* of noise was made during the elections.
- iii. *A great deal* of information was gathered during the investigation.

C. Determiners like *a bit*, *very little* and *a few* are used to show a small quantity, e.g.

- i. He caused *a bit* of trouble during the election.
- ii. *Very little* furniture was lost during the fire outbreak.
- iii. *A few* of my luggage was seen at the airport.
- iv. I promised to take *very little* of your time.

Exercises

1. Form sentences with the following words both as countable and uncountable nouns.

experience, difficulties, land, hair, wood, coffee, time and noise

The first has been done for you.

- 1. I am a teacher of many years *experience*.
Tell me your *experiences* as a bachelor.
- 2. From the words or group of words lettered A – D, choose the word that best completes each of the following sentences.
 - i. Lend me cash, please.
 - A. many
 - B. a few
 - C. a little
 - D. few
 - ii. oxygen is necessary for the surgery.
 - A. An
 - B. A few
 - C. Any
 - D. Some
 - iii. The lorry carried waste from the major streets.
 - A. a bit
 - B. few
 - C. a great
 - D. a lot
 - iv. of progress has been made at the site.
 - A. A few
 - B. Much

- C. A great deal
 - D. A lot
 - v. There wasn't traffic during the elections.
 - A. a lot
 - B. a bit
 - C. many
 - D. much
 - vi. I gathered knowledge from the workshop.
 - A. many
 - B. little
 - C. a few
 - D. few
 - vii. The villagers need land for the project.
 - A. a little
 - B. little
 - C. many
 - D. great
 - viii. This meal requires oil.
 - A. many
 - B. any
 - C. a little
 - D. few.
 - ix. Maria asked her father to give her land.
 - A. a
 - B. much
 - C. many
 - D. some.
 - x. The mathematics teacher has experience.
 - A. many
 - B. much
 - C. a lot
 - D. great
3. Tick the determiner(s) that should go with the uncountable nouns listed below. One has been done for you.

Noun	much	any	an	some	a piece	a
1. oil	*	*		*		
2. advice						
3. luggage						
4. land						
5. wood						
6. water						
7. umbrella						
8. egg						
9. grass						
10. milk						

Reading Comprehension

Before reading, discuss the following:

- ❖ *Do you know that one of the most important tasks of a student is to read?*
- ❖ *Yet, many students spend years without being able to read properly.*
- ❖ *Why? The reason is that many problems militate against their being able to read well.*
- ❖ *In this passage, some of the problems are discussed.*
- ❖ *Try to see if some of these apply to you.*

The Enemies of Efficient Reading

In considering problems that a learner may encounter in getting to grips with a reading task, we should take special note of those specific ones which apply mainly to learners in a second language situation. As you are learning English as a second language, let us consider a few such factors.

First is that of slowness in word *recognition* which is often characteristic of beginners in reading. It *manifests* in a learner considering a word for long moments, perhaps spelling it letter by letter silently, before **making a head or tail out of it**. The trait may get so *entrenched* in the learner as to become a regular practice even when he has gone far in learning.

Quite related to the foregoing is the factor of word-by-word reading. It may in fact owe its origin to slowness in word recognition. The problem occurs when a person *concentrates* on one word at a time rather than sweeping the eyes smoothly across the page so as to cover many words at a time, which is the ideal in reading.



Resulting from these two problems is the next: that of *excessive eye fixation*. It manifests itself in a person fixing his eyes on an individual word for too long rather than gliding the eyes across the page. Ideally, a good reader should spend as short a time as possible on any individual word, and this ideal would not be achieved if one fixes the eyes excessively on individual words. Remember that ideally individual words should not be the primary concern of any reader; rather the goal is to get the meaning through a holistic grasp of the whole sentence and consequently of the whole passage.

At the root of most of the problems is the factor of poor mastery of the second language. We can *appreciate* the seriousness of this problem if we realize that native speakers too often have problems with their own language. This broad problem of poor mastery of the second language may be *specifically* analysed as lack of basic language skills, and lack of comprehension skills. The former manifests itself in a learner experiencing difficulty with the lexical and grammatical items of the language, while the latter obtains when one finds it difficult to understand the content of a given passage. To read efficiently then, it is incumbent on a person to master the fundamentals of the language first. (404 words)

1. The problem of word recognition may be due to
 - A. studying the words very closely.
 - B. one's poor mastery of the language.
 - C. the length of a particular word.
 - D. silently spelling out a word.
2. The factors of slowness in word recognition and that of word-by-word reading are related in the sense that
 - A. both mean that a reader is slow on a word.
 - B. both mean that a reader has eye problem.
 - C. the first is that of inability to spell, the second is that of inability to join letters.
 - D. the first results from spelling inability, the second from grammar

inadequacy.

3. Why does the author say that excessive eye fixation results from the two earlier problems?
 - A. Both earlier problems cause eye problems.
 - B. Both problems make one read slowly, which is a symptom of eye fixation.
 - C. Both problems and eye fixation result from weak mastery of the language.
 - D. All three result when a person comes across a word for the first time.
4. Language problems in reading are
 - A. peculiar to second language users.
 - B. peculiar to first language users.
 - C. common to both classes of users.
 - D. common more with mother tongue users.
5. What is the major message of the writer in this passage?
 - A. There are bound to be problems of reading, no matter how much we try.
 - B. If we really try, we will overcome the problems of reading.
 - C. Mother tongue users of English should not have reading problems.
 - D. By really trying, we could solve most reading problems.

Read over the passage and then attempt the following questions.

6. What does it mean to be a learner of English as a second language?
7. From the second paragraph, say what the learner should do to get over the problem of slow recognition of words.
8. In what ways are the first three problems discussed related?
9. In what ways are all the problems related to poor mastery of the language?
10. **making a head or tail out of it**
What does this idiomatic expression mean as used in the passage?
11. Give one word or phrase to replace of each of the following in the passage:
 - a. *recognition*;
 - b. *manifest*;
 - c. *established*;
 - d. *concentrate*;
 - e. *Sweeping*;
 - f. *excessive*;
 - g. *fixation*;

- h. *appreciate*;
- i. *specifically*;
- j. *incumbent*.

Note on idiomatic/figurative expressions

It is a policy to teach various idiomatic and figurative expressions in this book. In this our first passage, we single out this idiomatic expression. So what is an idiom? Every language has its own idioms. An idiom, in whatever language it occurs, is an expression made up of several words. Now when you take all these words together, they combine to produce a meaning which is different from the meanings of each of the different words making up the group. That is, you cannot easily arrive at the total meaning of the idiomatic expression by putting together the meanings of the different words making it up. Let us consider an example through a very common idiom:

The man has kicked the bucket.

Now, what does the expression *kicked the bucket* mean? It means that the man has died. Examine the idiom, *kicked the bucket*. There is nothing in the act of kicking that suggests death, nor is there anything in a bucket that suggests death. But then, the three words, *kicked the bucket*, has come to be used to mean death because it is the norm among the people.

However, some idioms do lead readers to their meanings, i.e. if you know enough about what the words are associated with in several contexts. Let us consider the present text: *making a head or tail out of it*. Think of the head and the tail of an animal. Everybody should be able to differentiate between the head and the tail of an animal. So, if a child is able to differentiate which is the head and which is the tail of an animal, we can say he has known something important. But think of somebody who cannot say which is the head and which is the tail of an animal: we should say such a child has not known anything about animals.

Furthermore, a coin has two sides, referred to as the head and the tail. In making a decision, some people could decide to toss a coin; saying that if the head faces up, they would take a particular line of action; but if the tail faces up, the other action would be taken. Now, think of a person who does not know which is the head or which is the tail on a coin. We will say such a person does not understand anything.

From these you would know what this type of old idiom means.

Summary Work

In this module, the first in the book, we should tackle the question of what a good summary is. To start with, you should recognise the following facts:

- a. We are all making summaries all the time. For instance, when you tell someone about a football match or a television film you watched when your friend was not around, you cannot possibly cover every happening you saw. Neither you nor your friend can have that type of time required. So, in reporting, you sieve out all the non-essential facts and present only the most cogent points.
- b. In making a summary, you report in a language that could be most easily understood by the person you are reporting to. So, you do not use high-blown, difficult terminologies. Also, you should avoid the use of figures of speech as much as possible. Why is this? Discuss among yourselves and find out how correct you are in a later module.
- c. Finally, a good summary should cover as much of the original piece as possible. Or, if you are directed in the summary question to a specific point, you should cover that specific point and nothing more.

Now, try your hand at the following task:

In four short but closely connected sentences, summarise the four major reading problems spelt out in this passage.

Reading problems	Summary sentences
First	
Second	
Third	
Fourth	

Vocabulary Development

The world of sports

Names of major national games

You have learnt some registers in the previous years. In this module, you will learn about words associated with sports. The exercise is all about the REGISTER OF SPORTS. The first aspects of this we shall be examining are names of major national games. Quickly study the names of major national games:

cricket; handball; basketball; hockey; football; boxing; athletics; volleyball, karate.



Now here is a list of the national games indicated above and others.

Handball; Lawn tennis; Basketball; Table tennis; Cricket; Sprint; Hockey; Hurdles; Volleyball; High Jump; Athletics; Javelin; Football; Discus; Boxing; Cycling; Swimming; Climbing; Karate; Shotput.

Let us consider some of the words in the following sentences:

Football: I usually play football on Saturday evenings.

Swimming: I go swimming twice a week.

Volleyball: Every Saturday morning I play volleyball.

Activity I

Use your dictionary to find the meanings of the following words. One is done for you.

Words	Meanings
Cricket	A game in which two teams try to get points by hitting a ball and running between two sets of sticks.
Hockey	
Hurdles	
Boxing	
Volleyball	
Discus	
Swimming	

Wrestling	
Shotput	
Handball	

Activity II

Form correct sentences with the following:

Boxing
Wrestling
Hockey
Hurdles
Handball
Discus

Activity III

Complete the sentences in column B with words chosen from Column A

A

slipped, whistle, give in, breasted, matched, sprinters, line, speed, race, competition

B

Right from the beginning of the "1", it was a keen "2", From the time the "3" was blown, the "4- were running at about the same "5" such that it was difficult to predict who would win. It was clear that they were all equally "6". This continued until they were close to the finishing "7". None of them was ready to "8" to the others. But it was just then that one of them "9- and fell. One other staggered, another halted momentarily while the fourth spurred forward and "10" the tape.

Continuous Writing

Expository writing "1

Study the following hints on expository writing:

Hints on expository writing

Use of language is very important in expository writing. There are certain expressions which you may use to illustrate points when writing an expository essay. These include:

for example	for instance	therefore	take for instance
moreover	thus	thereby	as follows

Expository type of essay is written to:

- a. explain a process. It demands the explanation of the process in which something operates;
- b. inform—it may call for an account of how a person carries out a particular task;
- c. instruct—it may require giving some instructions on moral, religious, political, or social issues, etc.

A very good expository essay must have:

- ❖ relevant examples
- ❖ adequate illustrations
- ❖ clear explanations
- ❖ adequate description
- ❖ detailed information.

From the foregoing, it is clear that expository writing calls for a very clear understanding of the topic. Students should have a sound knowledge of many different facts through the class lessons and profuse reading of different types of books, magazines and newspapers.

Essay topics in this category also require a sound knowledge of the register of a particular field. If for instance, you are asked to explain how a car works, you need to know such words as *steering wheel, brake, clutch, accelerator, fuel pump, shock absorber*, etc.

Examples of this kind of essay include the following:

You have been named the senior prefect of your school for the next academic year. In your first address to the students, outline your plans for ensuring a high standard of discipline in the school. (SSCE, NOV. 1992)

The national population board is organising an essay competition for final year secondary students on the topic: “The importance of census in national development”. Write your entry. (SSCE, NOV. 1995)

Notice that some of the features of expository writing have been highlighted above. All other facts indicated above should always be at your finger tips when you are writing an expository essay. Now that you have studied the tips, write on the following:

Imagine that your father is a farmer. A group of youths touring Nigeria from abroad have asked you to explain the process of preparing garri. Set out your explanations.