

TRACKS

🇬🇧 preface & justification



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Preface and Justification - Tracks

Tracks is a blended learning English course from Holmwoods Onderwijs. Tracks includes all levels from Beginners to B2. Students may begin the course at their own level and progress to the desired target level, whether that be A1, A2, B1, or B2.

Features and methodology

Tracks uses the 'Flipping the Classroom' methodology. This methodology consists of two parts, namely individual computer-based learning and interactive activities during class¹. Initially, the students work independently online at their own level on all skills and vocabulary. During the first part, the students receive input. The online program adapts by adding or skipping exercises, depending on the student's results, in preparation for classroom lessons. During the second part, the classroom lessons, the focus shifts to the application of the English language. The emphasis then lies on the productive skills: writing, speaking, and conversation. To provide support for classroom lessons, student's books have been developed with exercises, projects, and assignments at A1, A2, B1, and B2 levels. The two parts together ensure the components of the 'schijf van vijf'².

Both the online platform and the student's books immerse students in the English language. The exercises, projects, and assignments are designed to ensure the maximum exposure to, and use of, the English language. In addition, students are introduced to English-speaking countries, providing relevance for the learning of a foreign language.

Online learning trajectory

The entry test determines the starting level of the students. This level could be one of the pre-A1 levels, A1, A2, B1, or B2. These levels correspond to the Common European Framework of Reference for Modern Foreign Languages. Each level contains 12 units that the student can work through independently.

Adaptivity

Based on the student results, exercises are added or skipped. In addition, there is a separate adaptive vocabulary system that keeps track of which words a student needs to practice more. Vocabulary is also recycled from previous units and levels to check that students still remember words learned earlier in the school year.

Different Tracks / differentiation

Some students are faster learners than others; hence, there are multiple tracks to allow students to work at a level best suited to their ability. Set a default track for a class. If students need a challenge they can be moved to a higher track. Table 1 provides an overview of the different tracks and their characteristics.

1 Ayçiçek, B., & Yanpar Yelken, T. (2018)

2 Westhoff (2008)

Table 1: Different Tracks with characteristics

	Central (vmbo/havo)	Circle (vmbo/havo)	Piccadilly (havo+)	Victoria (vwo)
Pre-A1 levels	Extensive	Compact	Compact	Compact
Vocab	50 words per unit	50 words per unit	75 words per unit	100 words per unit
Reading	Short texts	Short texts	Extensive reading	Extensive academic reading
Listening	Short videos / vlogs	Short videos / vlogs	Short videos / vlogs	Long videos
Grammar	Short and simple lessons	Short and simple lessons	Comprehensive lessons	Comprehensive lessons

Insight into results

With Flipping the Classroom, students first work online in their personal environment at their own level. Despite everyone working on different tracks and possibly different levels, it is possible to clearly see the progress of each student with the class results page. At a glance, it is possible to see where in the learning line the students are working, what progress they are making, and how they are scoring. In addition, it can be seen how many minutes the student has worked per week. It is also possible to monitor the progress of students in real time.

Smart goals

Students can work at their own level and pace in Tracks, but teachers can maintain control by using smart goals. A smart goal can be set for each student, a group of students, or the whole class. A smart goal can be for a longer period, for example, for an entire school year. The goal calculates how much time the student must spend practicing each week to achieve the goal. The system bases the calculation on the student's performance and adapts the prognosis should any changes occur.

Student's books

A student's book contains 12 units. At the beginning of each unit, the themes, learning objectives, grammar, and a 'By the Way' page are listed. The 'By the Way' page is extra and contains interesting information about a topic from the unit. The vocabulary for each lesson or unit is in the student's book.

Exercises, assignments, and projects frequently require student collaboration, either in pairs or small groups. From B1, four projects have been replaced by four assignments. Assignments are designed to prepare the students for the final exams.

For each level, teachers are provided with a physical teacher's book with an explanation of the activities, answers, and references to the smartboard or the Extra Materials. The Extra Materials can be found in the student's students' learning area.

Structure per week (flexible)

Table 2 shows a possible structure and distribution of online and classroom lessons per week. This example is based on three lesson hours per week and one unit per three weeks. Of course, this can vary with more or fewer lessons per week, homework or not, the number of units per academic year, and partial or no own content of the classroom lessons.

Table 2. Distribution of online lessons and classroom lessons

A1+A2			
	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
Week 1, 2 and 3	Online lesson	Student's book: practical lesson	Student's book: project lesson
B1+B2			
	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3
Week 1	Online lesson	Student's book: practical lesson	Student's book: practical lesson
Week 2	Online lesson	Student's book: practical lesson	Student's book: practical lesson
Week 3	Project/assignment	Project/assignment	Project/assignment

Tests

All the exercises that the students complete online provide formative feedback. In addition, the students take a short test at the end of each unit. All skills are covered during this test except for speaking and conversation skills.

From level A1, each unit also contains a PDF test that can be taken during the lesson. The test, the correction model, and the listening part can be downloaded. If necessary, multiple unit tests can form one test for, for example, a test week.

More info

If you have a question or need advice, feel free to email or call us.

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Sources

Ayçiçek, B., & Yanpar Yelken, T. (2018). The Effect of Flipped Classroom Model on Students' Classroom Engagement in Teaching English. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(2), 385–398. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11226a>

Westhoff, G. (2008). Bijlage 2: Een schijf van vijf voor het vreemdetalenonderwijs, prof. dr. G.J. Westhoff, (2008). *wERKwijzer*, 46–52.

Attachment 1: Overview of unit information

A1	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 1	Leaving friends and traveling Moving house	Present simple Using don't and doesn't Using have and has	Give information about yourself Ask your friend simple questions Talk about favorite clothes Write a simple travel blog Design a memory game
Unit 2	Clothes Houses and homes Meeting people	Comparatives and superlatives Past simple Present simple Yes/No questions	Introduce yourself Interview your classmates Fill in personal details Write a short letter about yourself Describe a route on a map
Unit 3	Clothes Jobs Moods and feelings Sport	Present continuous	Use the present continuous correctly Talk about moods and feelings Talk about different sports Talk about child entrepreneurs Describe your favorite sport
Unit 4	Emergencies Hobbies and free time	Past simple The verb to be Using can	Ask questions using 'can' Use the past simple correctly Talk about hobbies Write a short story Talk about favorite movies
Unit 5	Health Moods and feelings	Adjectives Articles Past simple Present continuous	Use the past simple correctly Tell a story Use adjectives correctly Use the present continuous correctly Write a short poem
Unit 6	Making friends Meeting people	Possessive 's Pronouns	Write a message to a friend Introduce yourself and others Talk about things you like / dislike Ask and answer questions about yourself and others Answer questions about your health
Unit 7	Computer games Living and studying abroad	Past simple Wh-questions	Use the past simple correctly Write a simple letter to a friend Write a simple response to a forum post Ask and answer questions about your hometown Ask and answer questions about what you do in your free time
Unit 8	Daily life Food UK history	Prepositions of place	Use prepositions of place correctly Compare timetables Talk about your favorite food Give someone advice Make a dinner reservation

A1	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 9	Daily life Sport Transport and travel	Present continuous	Use the present continuous correctly Talk and write about sports Talk and write about family Give directions on the airport Make an online party invitation
Unit 10	Friends School and studying Shopping	Prepositions of time	Use prepositions of time correctly Talk about favorite stores Write about qualities Talk about your experiences Give someone a makeover
Unit 11	Cities Friends Music	Adjectives Present simple	Describe your favorite emoticon Write a simple story Talk about the weather Talk about your favorite music Write your own rap
Unit 12	Birthdays Crime Friendships Music	Past simple Some and any	Create your own comic strip Talk about musical instruments Describe heroes and criminals Write a party invitation Report a crime

A2	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 1	Family Routines	Going to and will Modal verbs Much and many	Talk about daily routines Talk about other routines Give advice Write about job qualifications
Unit 2	British and American English Making new friends	Wh-questions Prepositions of movement	Interview someone Tell the differences between British and American English Describe and guess places Write a postcard to a friend Invent your own country
Unit 3	Clothes Socializing	Comparatives and superlatives Order of adjectives	Make comparisons correctly Have a conversation in a clothes store Talk and write about different festivals Write about means of transport Make a PowerPoint presentation
Unit 4	Hobbies (BMX bikes) Relationships (family)	Questions about the past	Make questions in the past Write an answer Talk about unusual sports Interview a criminal Talk about your favorite park
Unit 5	Art Describing people Education Meeting people	Past continuous	Come up with excuses Describe a person Write about meeting a friend Talk about art Design your own school
Unit 6	Directions Music	Present simple Wh-questions	Talk about different musical styles Write a story Write better English sentences Talk about playing a musical instrument
Unit 7	Emergencies First responders Science	Articles Demonstrative pronouns	Ask questions to find out 'Whodunit?' Write a story on emergencies Make an emergency phone call Give a simple First Aid training
Unit 8	Eating and drinking Family Jobs Transport and travel	Demonstrative pronouns Modal verbs	Use demonstrative pronouns correctly Make a phone call Write a reply Continue a story Design a menu

A2	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 9	Special occasions	Questions about the past	Ask questions in the past simple Discuss differences in a text or picture Explain why you did something Write a speech Give a speech
Unit 10	Daily life Family Houses and homes	Irregular verbs	Talk about bad habits Use the past simple correctly Answer a letter Write a poem Write an advertisement
Unit 11	Crime History Houses and homes Money Transport and travel	Irregular verbs Past simple	Create a story Design a perfect house Talk about jobs Write an application letter Make your own CV
Unit 12	Emergencies Moving home Transport and travel	Adverbs Possessive pronouns	Talk about your dream job Interview your classmate Write a letter about moving Write about a surprise party Write and talk about your future

B1	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 1	Asking directions Houses and homes Meeting people	Adverbs of time, place, and frequency Much and many Present continuous	Give directions Write a personal text Talk about your new home Do an interview about a haunted house Present your own haunted house
Unit 2	Daily life Eating and drinking Jobs	Adverbs of time, place, and frequency Modal verbs Present perfect	Devise word definitions Write a creative story Describe your neighborhood Create a background story of a crime Make a promotional leaflet about a job
Unit 3	Family Special occasions Sport	Past perfect Past simple Prepositions of time	Write a text for the school newspaper Write a sports commentary Talk about a favorite movie Perform a role-play of a surprise visit Practice your reading skills
Unit 4	Crime Family Transport and travel	Affixation: prefixes and suffixes Irregular verbs	Summarize a crime report Fill in a police report Learn about road safety Write a proposal on improving public transport Learn about Shakespeare
Unit 5	Crime Family Relationships	Past continuous Zero and first conditionals	Report an emergency situation Describe a news item Summarize a video Write a personal email
Unit 6	Cooking Relationships	Present perfect: for and since Present perfect: past events The future tenses	Talk and write about favorite recipes Discuss a poem about family Write a synopsis of a book Write an informal letter Give feedback on your classmate's work
Unit 7	Emergencies Jobs Music Relationships	Present perfect: past events	Talk about music Understand different songs Record a voicemail message Give advice on mending a broken heart Pitch your idea for a music club
Unit 8	Emergencies Geography Weather	Must, should, and have to	Understand a video on North America Write about your vacation Discuss the work of a meteorologist Discuss climate change Conduct a research

B1	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 9	Eating and drinking Emergencies Geography Hobbies and free time The natural world Transport and travel	Past perfect Present perfect: for and since	Write about a hiking trail Discuss a rescue plan Write about a bear encounter Talk about favorite foods Improve your listening skills
Unit 10	Emergencies Family Health Moods and feelings	Passive	Write an article about an imaginative encounter Perform a role-play Use the passive correctly Write an emoji story Design your own board game
Unit 11	Health care Hobbies and free time School and studying Special occasions	Past perfect	Promote an online sports game Write a letter of complaint Decline a birthday present Complete a birthday story
Unit 12	Friends Hobbies and free time Special occasions Sport Transport and travel	Affixation: prefixes and suffixes	Take part in a discussion Write about traveling the world Talk about unusual plans Write an acrostic Have an argumentative discussion

B2	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 1	Geography Moods and feelings Sustainability Transport and travel	Prepositional adverbs The future tenses	Read a text in detail Practice note-taking Write about sustainability Give advice on sustainability Design a brochure to promote tourism
Unit 2	Australian wildlife Geography Meeting people Money	The future tenses	Write a story Talk about your future Predict the topic of a text Talk about Australian wildlife Design a new section of a zoo
Unit 3	Hobbies and free time Hydroponics Relationships Transport and travel	Adjectives Comparatives and superlatives Countable and uncountable nouns	Talk about your perfect date Discuss options in a travel agency Write a letter of complaint Learn about linking words Practice reading skills
Unit 4	Geography History Relationships Transport and travel	Affixation: prefixes and suffixes Modal verbs Passive	Understand an article in detail Write and respond to a forum post Discuss a problem at border security Write about personal experiences in an email Use prefixes and suffixes
Unit 5	Foreign languages Sustainability Technology Transport	Relative clauses Word formation	Create compound and blend words Understand a text in detail Write an advisory email Write a creative story Express your opinion in a discussion
Unit 6	Eating and drinking Meeting people Working abroad	Prepositions	Explain and stick to your point of view in an informal discussion Use prepositions in a proper way Ask for and give advice Retell a story of the Aboriginal Dreamtime Write a formal letter
Unit 7	Culture Health Homelessness Jobs	Phrasal verbs Phrasal verbs: separable and inseparable	Make a leaflet on A Christmas Carol Understand a documentary on Charles Dickens Make and respond to a voicemail Write a short story Write an essay

B2	Themes	Grammar	Learning goals - book
Unit 8	Culture Sports injuries Weather	Narrative tenses	Write an article Talk about sports injuries Write a summary Discuss cultural differences Talk about your own cultural heritage
Unit 9	Daily life Relationships	Reported speech	Write an opinion piece on inequality Understand different texts Talk about miscommunication Write a postcard from Paris Improve your listening skills
Unit 10	Crime Hobbies and free time Transport and travel	Confusing verbs	Pitch a recreational activity Read and understand longer texts Write an informal email Take notes while listening Make a video on weird hobbies
Unit 11	Health Shopping Translation	Second and third conditionals Zero and first conditionals	Understand a video in detail Simplify a difficult process Write a poem about friendship Perform a role-play Create a WebQuest
Unit 12	Moods and feelings Reunions Sustainability	Modal verbs Negative modals of can and need	Retell an interesting anecdote Summarize a text Design your own tiny house Respond to a forum Improve your listening skills

