

Grammar off the Charts

Meaningful Materials for Lower Levels

Alice Savage & Colin Ward
Lone Star College – North Harris
Houston, TX, USA

Charts are great. They tell one story about language that is quite useful, particularly for teachers. However, in order for students to really own language and communicate with other people, they also need to get grammar off the charts and into the real world.

What if grammar points...

- emerged from real life?
- aligned with vocabulary?
- fit immediate needs



ACTIVITY 1

Grammar	Present Simple/third person (recycle: third person pronouns he/she)
Skill	Writing
Task	Write about a friend who influences you.

EXPOSE

I. Read the paragraph below. How is Eliana like a friend that you have? How is she different?

Eliana

My friend Eliana is adventurous. She lives downtown, and she rides her bike on busy streets. She doesn't worry about accidents. She likes to experience the weather and see the people on the street.

Eliana also loves nature. She swims in dangerous rivers, and she climbs mountains. She is not afraid of animals or bad weather.

Eliana makes my life interesting because she encourages me, and I have adventures too.

II. Discuss the following with a friend.

- Underline the subjects and circle the verbs.
- What is the tense?
- When does the verb change?
- What are two rules for when the subject is *he* or *she*?

NOTICE & SELECT

III. Write the names of people you know. Which verbs describe them? Add new words and phrases.

Topics	Verbs/ verb phrases
_____ is adventurous.	climbs mountains, rides a motorcycle, travels to new places
_____ is polite.	says please and thank you, remembers birthdays, listens to friends, helps the neighbors
_____ is social.	has a lot of friends, likes people, goes to parties likes to meet new people
_____ is careful with money.	does not go to restaurants, does not buy expensive clothes, eats at home,

EXECUTE

IV. Write about your friend.

A. Choose one of the topic sentences. Then write about your friend's activities. Answer the questions below:

1. What does your friend do?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. What does your friend not do?
3. How does your friend influence you?

B. Write your sentences as a paragraph.

RECYCLE & REPURPOSE*Homework*

Describe someone in your family. What does your relative do? How does your relative help the family?

Assessment

Think of someone you know who is **not** careful with money. What is the person's name? What does the person do? What does the person not do?

ACTIVITY 2

Grammar Passive voice in the present tense
 Past participle adjectives

Skill Speaking/ordering in a restaurant

Task Role-play a conversation between a customer and a waiter.

EXPOSE

I. Read the menu. Circle items that you like.

Colina's Cafe

APPETIZERS		DRINKS	
❖ Grilled vegetables	10.	❖ Fresh brewed coffee	5.
❖ Green salad	8.	❖ Iced tea	4.
❖ Chilled soup	8.	❖ Hot tea	4.
DINNER		DESSERT	
❖ Baked chicken with noodles	15.	❖ Homemade vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce.	10.
❖ Fish with rice	20.	❖ Fresh fruit	8.
❖ Steak with roasted potatoes	24.		

NOTICE & SELECT

II. Add words to the list. Match the words to make phrases.

Adjectives	Nouns
grilled	meat
mashed	potatoes
baked	fish
iced	chicken
homemade	soup
<i>fried</i>	noodles
<i>fresh</i>	<i>rice</i>
<i>hot</i>	<i>fruit</i>

EXECUTE

III. Write a menu for a restaurant.

APPETIZERS		DRINKS	
DINNER		DESSERT	

IV. Listen to the conversation. What does the customer order?¹

NOTICE & SELECT

V. Write questions and answers from the conversation in the boxes below. Look at the verbs. What is the pattern?

Questions	Answers
How are the vegetables cooked?	The vegetables are grilled.

VI. Use the pattern to add new questions and answers about the food on your menu.

EXECUTE

VII. Write a new dialog between a customer and a server. Use your questions.

VII. Role play the conversation. Change partners for more practice.

¹ Dialog at end of activity.

RECYCLE & REPURPOSE*Homework:*

Write a restaurant review.

Assessment:

Write/roleplay a dialog about healthy and unhealthy ways to prepare food.

Dialog

Waitress: Hello, Are you ready to order?

Customer: Almost, Can you tell me about the vegetables?

Waitress: Yes, today we have eggplant and tomatoes. They are grilled and served with fried rice.

Customer: Sounds good. How about the Chicken? How is the chicken cooked?

Waitress: The chicken is baked in a cream sauce and served with noodles

Customer: Okay, I'll start with the grilled vegetables, and then I'll try the steamed fish, and iced tea to drink.

ACTIVITY 3

Grammar Articles *a/n* for first mention and *the* for second mention

Skill Writing/texting

Task Negotiating plans for a birthday

EXPOSE

I. Read the texts below. What funny thing happened?



NOTICE & SELECT

II. Underline the words *sweater* and *party*. Then discuss your answers to the questions below.

- Why does *a sweater* become *the sweater* in the third example?
- Does the word *party* follow a similar pattern?
- What does it mean to use *the* in front of a noun?

III. You have to organize gifts for several people on a list. Add ideas to the list below and then match the gifts to the people. Write practice sentences.

Possible gifts

- a watch
- a soccer ball
- a toy
- a sweater
- a book

People on your list

1. a classmate: _____
2. your best friend: _____
3. _____

EXECUTE A TASK

IV. Set up a message or email exchange with a classmate and your teacher.

A: Write what you are buying for a classmate. Tell how the person can use the gift, or what they will like about it. Send the Message.

B: Look at the text from your partner. Comment on the gift your partner is buying. Ask a question about it.

C: Make plans for a party for the person. Ask and answer questions about the things you will bring.

D: Repeat with other people on your list.

V. As a class, review your messages. Did you use *the* for second mention?

RECYCLE & REPURPOSE

Homework:

Write a note about your plans for a trip to the beach or the mountains. Write about what you will bring and how you will use it. Pay attention to the way that you use *a/an* and *the*.

Assessment:

Write a recipe for a simple dish. First write a list of ingredients. Next write about how to use the ingredients.

Assessment Considerations

- ❖ Test what is most valuable for students to know.
 - ❖ Mix and match grammatical patterns to support actual production.
 - ❖ Base test items on practice materials.
 - ❖ Allow students to solve language challenges creatively and meaningfully.
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