

Short Cuts

***Here we go!* Prentice Hall Regents, 1995. (7 levels, Student Book, Teacher's Edition and Audio Program for each level)**

This series is designed for use in pre-primary and primary levels. There is a pre-primary textbook and six primary levels. There is also an audio program available for each level, but it was not examined for this review.

The authors' main principles as stated in the *Introduction the Teacher's Edition* are that languages need to be "presented in context; practiced in a variety of exercises in meaningful and authentic situations." The series is said to make "extensive use of Total Physical Response (TPR) activities in which students demonstrate comprehension of simple commands by giving physical as well as verbal responses." Each unit is divided into three parts: *Let's Begin* in which new vocabulary is presented; *Let's Practice* with a variety of exercises for use in groups, pairs or individually; and *Let's go*, TPR activities. The Teacher's Edition contains additional activities for each unit.

In reality the series is quite traditional. The *Let's Begin* section of each unit in Book 1 and most of Book 2 begins with a numbered list of sentences beginning "This is _____" to introduce vocabulary that appears in a preceding picture. The other books vary the type of sentences used, but the general idea of presenting sentences based on pictures remains.

The units are based on the children's experiences in class and out (Book Four includes units entitled: *Going shopping, Let's go to a movie, Monster house, Holidays*, etc.). Grammar is presented and framed in the upper level books and students write original sentences with the new grammar structure as practice. There are also reading comprehension practices, pronunciation sections, and listening comprehension practices.

All in all, this is a traditional series that includes very little of the new theories which have recently appeared for teaching children (See the previous review.) There is probably enough material available to use in an English class which meets only a few hours a week. However, the English lesson is not related to any academic experiences outside the English class. There is very little project or task-based work (what there is appears in the Teacher's Edition). A creative teacher could use this series, but a new or

less creative teacher might have trouble keeping the children's interest alive.

Photocopiable Materials from Heinemann.

For many years, we English teachers have been daily committing crimes. We are guilty of illegally photocopying material for use in our classes. Haven't you ever made copies of a good exercise found in a resource book to use in your classes? Obviously you weren't going to make all the students buy that book just to do one or two exercises. Well, whenever you photocopied or typed up an exercise you found in a book and gave it to your students you were committing a crime, and as a result, publishing companies and authors both lost income. When an author writes a book, he expects to get a percentage of the sales based on the number of copies of books that are sold. The more books the author or publisher sells, the more books they want to write or publish. No one works for free. That is why authors and publishing companies copyright their materials--so no one can legally use them without paying for that right, that is buying the book.

But what are teachers supposed to do? Books are too expensive. Our students can't buy every book that has an exercise we want to use.

Finally, the publishing houses are coming up with a logical solution--books which are copyrighted, but in which the publisher gives the buyer permission to make copies, legally, of certain pages without paying an additional fee. These books are a little more expensive, since the buyer is really purchasing the rights to use the material, but when a teacher uses photocopies of these materials in classes, it is being done legally. Both the authors and publishers are being paid for their work.

Heinemann has recently published a series of these materials. Here is a selection:

Sue Kay. Move up: Intermediate Resource Pack: Communicative activities for learners of English. 1995.

This Resource Pack has over 50 communicative practices for intermediate-level students. Each activity has one photocopiable worksheet with teacher's notes on the back. Some are designed to be cut up and used as cards. There are game boards, maps, jigsaw activities, crossword puzzles, etc.

Will Forsyth. Skills Plus: Reading and Speaking: Advanced. 1996.

This is a task-based, integrated skills book for advanced adult learners. Each task consists of a reading text and a series of task sheets for reading skills and strategies, speaking practice and vocabulary development. Each reading includes teachers' notes.

David Briggs and Paul Dummett. Skills Plus: Listening and Speaking: Advanced.

Each activity begins with teacher's notes including a tapescript and photocopiable task sheets for students which include a discussion section (pre-listening), listening practices based on the tape, vocabulary development and, finally, a speaking section.

Will Forsyth and Sue Lavender. Grammar Activities I: Intermediate.

These activities are directed at mid-intermediate level students as a course book supplement for presentation and consolidation. There are 81 worksheets dealing with 31 different structures. There are two types of worksheets: contextualized (practice in context) and problem-solving activities (based on a cognitive approach).

Kurt Scheibner, ed. Ready-made English: Multi-level Activities.

This collection of 36 speaking activities includes activities for beginning to low-intermediate level students. Each activity includes clear teacher's notes on the facing page.