



What previous participants have said about the *Teach Me Grammar (TMG) Program*...

- *“This course provided me with everything I had hoped for and much more. I can now answer the questions that I had previously annoyed my colleagues with. A tremendous amount of time, effort, thought and expertise has gone into designing and implementing the TMG course, and as a result, it works wonderfully!”*
– Therese Halley, North Metropolitan TAFE, Perth
- *“Over the years, I have attended anything and everything on grammar in an attempt to get a handle on it. This is the first PD course that delivered what I wanted and needed to know. My classroom practice has completely changed. I feel more rounded as a teacher ...; the practices and knowledge gained from doing this course have become part of the way I now think about creating lessons and teaching them. It would be impossible for me to go back to my old ways of teaching.”* – Sara Splatt, ESL Teacher, South Metropolitan TAFE, Balga
- *“Nothing was too much trouble (or so it seemed) and no question was too small; I was not made to feel as if I didn’t know anything so it did boost my confidence to try new things.”* – Penny Blackburne, ESL Teacher, Centacare
- *“Although I was a complete beginner, I have gained invaluable skills... [Grammar] is now one of my favourite hobbies!”* – Susan Bates, L&L Teacher, Emmanuel Centre, East Perth
- *“Vastly improved my understanding of grammar. I came away with not just a better knowledge of grammar but as importantly, a lot less fear, and dare I say a bit of confidence. I look forward to using all I have learnt with my students in the future.”* – Jenni Wieland, ESL Teacher, South Metropolitan TAFE, Fremantle
- *“I now firmly believe that grammar [teaching] must be embedded in the material that students are learning and I’m beginning to understand why some of my earlier ‘grammar’ lessons made no impact on students, because they had no context.”* – Gillian Pow Chong, ESL Teacher, Curtin College and CentaCare, Perth
- *“My ability to teach grammar to my students has improved to the extent that it has become so much easier, in fact exciting, to teach grammar in class.”* – Silvano Fasolo, L&L Teacher, Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison, Kalgoorlie
- *“TMG opened my mind to a whole new ‘grammar world’.”* – Charmaine Marshall, L&L Teacher, ATA Training, West Perth
- *“One student missed out an article and preposition. He wrote “I felt hero.” I used the terms ‘article’ and ‘preposition’ when discussing his editing with him. He corrected his mistake very easily. It was really good to be able to use these terms with him and have him know what I was talking about.”* – Sharyn Dauti, Literacy Teacher, South Regional TAFE, Bunbury
- *“An awesome course that was presented in a fun, enjoyable and informative way [and] modelled excellent learning techniques.”* – Diane Vosganoff, Teacher of the Deaf, WA Institute for Deaf Education, Belmont

In their Program Exit Surveys, all participants without exception since 2011 have said they would highly recommend the *Teach Me Grammar Action Learning Program* to other ESL / Literacy Teachers.



What is the *Teach Me Grammar* Action Learning Program?

Teach Me Grammar is an **Action Learning Professional Development Program** funded by the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development and is open to all Adult Literacy and ESL teachers working in Western Australia.

Now in its seventh year, TMG is a program through which language and literacy teachers of adults learn both the fundamental concepts of grammar and how to teach these in engaging, positive, integrated ways, tailored to the specific needs of their particular learner group. It explores, through learning activities, discussion and personal exploration, the best ways to teach English grammar and sentence structure to adult learners.

From 2017 to 2018, the Department will be running another TMG program for a competitively selected group of 12 language and literacy teachers who, between them, will teach a broad range of adult learners, including native English speakers, Indigenous people, CaLD people, Deaf people, and others. It is hoped that each group will include teachers from both metropolitan Perth and regional Western Australia¹.

Program Delivery Options for 2017-18

For the first time, this year there is a choice of program formats designed to potentially enable more LLN teachers based in the regions to participate. The two options for the 2017-18 program are:

- A face-to-face program consisting of twelve half-day sessions (4.25 hours) conducted in Perth;
- A live-to-air, online program of 25 sessions of approximately 2.5 hours each², delivering simultaneously to several small groups of 3-4 people gathered at various centres around the State.

Unfortunately, there is only enough funding available to run one program, so, on the application form, applicants are asked to indicate their preferred program format/s. The funding will then be used to run the most supported format.

Please note: The application form also asks applicants to indicate their interest in participating in the Perth-based, face-to-face program scheduled to run from February to November 2018. In the event of the online format being selected for the program starting in 2017, those eligible applicants who select only the face-to-face option will be offered a place in the program starting in February 2018.

Regardless of which format is ultimately selected for the 2017-18 program, participants will participate in a series of professional development sessions to learn about and discuss specific grammar concepts and learn about / experience a range of grammar-teaching strategies / methods. They will then practise what they have learned in each session with their own adult-learners, and reflect on their experience in a blog developed for the purpose.

It is intended that the sharing of ideas, perspectives, experiences and reflections amongst this eclectic mix of teachers will enable an understanding to emerge of what is most relevant and works best for which learners and why, and whether what works for one learner group can also be used as a successful strategy for teaching another learner group.

¹ The training itself is free. Successful applicants from regional areas may also be eligible for a scholarship to cover other costs of attendance. A separate application and approval process applies. Please call Cheryl Wiltshire on 6212 9715 (Mon-Wed) for more information.

² The 25 sessions will largely occur in pairs of sessions on consecutive days: Part 1 on Thursday 2.00-4.30pm and Part 2 on Friday 8.30 – 11.00am, each with 10-15 minute breaks. The first session of the program will consist of a single, two-hour period and will focus on familiarising the participants with the technology associated with the program.



Between sessions, the project leader, Geoff Pearson, will first respond individually to the participants' personal blog reflections and then will collectively summarise these for everyone's benefit. Issues raised will be open for further online discussion and / or discussion /clarification during the subsequent PD sessions.

An alignment of the program to the following Units of Competency from **TAE80113 Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice** is currently being explored.

- TAELLN801 Analyse and apply adult literacy teaching practices
- TAELLN803 Develop English language skills of adult learners
- TAELLN804 Implement and evaluate delivery of adult language, literacy and numeracy skills

Once all program requirements (as detailed below) have been completed, participants will receive a *Certificate of Completion* to add to their professional development portfolio. This *Certificate of Completion* will detail the program content so that participants may in future use this, together with their blog posts, as evidence for RPL against these Units of Competency.

Training Venue

Face-to-Face Format:

If the face-to-face format runs, all sessions will be conducted at the **Department of Training and Workforce Development, 1 Prospect Place, West Perth WA 6005**. Parking is available, and Transperth buses 15 and 990 have stops close to the venue.

Online Format:

If the online format runs, Perth-based teachers will be expected to attend the program in person at the above address.

All other participants will join the program in their small groups via *Blackboard Collaborate Ultra* from their designated regional location.³

³ Much of the *Teach Me Grammar* Program's success is based on participants physically experiencing the various activities so that they can then replicate these with their own students. Many of these activities are deliberately tactile and conducted in small groups. For this reason, the online version of the program has made every attempt to retain this crucial feature of the program. In order to achieve this, during the online sessions, regionally and remotely located participants will need to be physically part of a small group of 3-4 participants in a pre-designated location. This will then allow these participants to physically participate in and experience the various activities in the manner in which they will need to teach them. This may therefore require some participants to travel in from their normal place of work to a regional centre to physically join their online program group.

The Teach Me Grammar Sessions

The PD sessions for the **2017-18** programs will occur at the times and dates set out below under **Options A and B**. Those for the Perth-based, face-to-face program scheduled to **begin in February 2018** are presented under **Option C**.

OPTION A: 2017-18, Face-to-Face Program

- All sessions will take place on **Fridays from 8.30am-12.45pm** on the following dates:

28 July 2017	3 November	6 April
11 August	24 November	4 May
25 August	16 February 2018	25 May
13 October	9 March	15 June

OPTION B: 2017-18, Online Program

- The first session of the program will consist of a single, 2.5-hour period and will focus on familiarising the participants with the technology associated with the program and a general program overview.
- The remaining 24 sessions will then occur in two 2.5-hour sessions on consecutive days, the first on a Thursday afternoon and the second on the Friday morning. Each session will have one 10/15-minute break. The times and dates of all sessions are as follows:

Thurs 2.00 – 4.30pm		Fri 9.30 – 12.00 noon		Thurs 2.00 – 4.30pm		Fri 9.30 – 12.00 noon	
		13 October 2017					
19 October		20 October		12 April		13 April	
2 November		3 November		3 May		4 May	
16 November		17 November		17 May		18 May	
15 February 2018		16 February 2018		31 May		1 June	
1 March		2 March		14 June		15 June	
22 March		23 March		28 June		29 June	

OPTION C: 2018 Face-to-Face Program

- All sessions will take place on Mondays from 8.30am-12.45pm. NB: The following dates are indicative at this stage. The final schedule will be confirmed late 2017.

12 February 2018	14 May	27 August
26 February	18 June	15 October
12 March	23 July	5 November
9 April	6 August	26 November

PD Session Content

At each session, the 12 participants will:

- learn about / extend their knowledge of fundamental grammar concepts;
- explore positive grammar-teaching methods and strategies;
- discuss these methods and strategies with the other participants who collectively teach a range of adult learner types; and
- as required, practise the learned concepts and teaching methods / strategies with the other participants.

The content of the sessions will include the following:

- What is grammar and how can explicit knowledge of it be valuable for both LLN teachers and learners?
- Fundamental concepts of grammar:
 - key word classes (nouns, verbs, pronouns etc.) and grammatical terms (subject, object, subordinate clauses etc.)
 - basic sentence patterns
 - simple, compound and complex sentences
 - identifying the grammatical functions of words, phrases and clauses in context
 - links between vocabulary and grammatical structures
 - tenses (the 12 main past, present and future tenses in English)
 - practical applications (how does context dictate the language we should use?)

The sessions will also emphasise:

- the importance of focussing on positive grammar-teaching and feedback methods, and the need to avoid deficit-centred, error-focussed teaching methods
- using *The Grammar Disc – Pah!*⁴ with different adult language and literacy learner groups
- adapting this (and other grammar teaching and learning resources) for use with adult learners from different linguistic backgrounds and with different learning needs
- the importance of using visual and kinaesthetic teaching techniques with all learners, not just the Deaf
- integrating grammar-teaching and learning into relevant, learner-centred, communicative tasks
- using PowerPoint, organic charts, function cards etc. to support visual / kinaesthetic / auditory learning

On the Application Form, applicants are asked to indicate what else they would personally hope to learn from the program, both grammar and the teaching of it. Due to strict time constraints, we cannot promise that all such suggestions will be catered for, but, where possible, these will be built into the program.

What is Action Learning?

Action Learning is a process of learning by doing, reflecting on the experience, and then sharing these thoughts with others in order to reach a collective understanding of what works, what doesn't and what needs to change in order to improve outcomes next time. During previous programs, this has proven to be an invaluable way for participants to review and consolidate their own learning.

⁴ *The Grammar Disc – Pah!* is an Australian interactive DVD-Rom initially designed as a visual resource to teach the basics of English grammar to Deaf adults. It also contains a voiceover for hearing learners.



Before attending the each face-to-face session or pair of online sessions, participants are required to:

- preview / review the relevant sections of *The Grammar Disc – Pah!* (and other grammar-learning resources) and complete the associated exercises (approx. 1.5 hours per session); and
- pre-read and be prepared to discuss various readings on the teaching of grammar (approx. 30 minutes per session).

Following each face-to-face session or pair of online sessions, the participants are required to:

- use a personal action-learning project blog to complete an initial reflection on personal gains, thoughts and questions relating to the content of the PD (approx. 15 minutes);
- practise teaching the new grammar concepts to their own group of adult learners using the various teaching strategies / methods presented during the PD sessions (3-4 hours); and then
- use the action learning project blog to complete a second personal reflection, recording questions, thoughts and suggestions for improvements / modifications to the teaching strategies used in light of this teaching experience. (approx. 20 minutes).

The project blog is designed specifically for (and open only to) the 12 participants in the particular group, plus the project leader and the program administrator. (For those new to blogging, the first session includes a hands-on introduction to the blogs, and ongoing support is provided by the project leader. For the online program, the first session will also be used to familiarise participants with the online technology used for delivering the program.)

What knowledge, skills and experience are required?

1. Teaching / Experience

All successful applicants **must have an adult learner⁵ group to teach for the duration of the program**, and be able to attend **all the PD training sessions**.

In addition, they should have **at least one** of the following:

- a teaching qualification which qualifies them to teach English language / literacy skills to adults
- a minimum of three years' continuous experience teaching English language / literacy to adults in a formal setting⁶.

Note: If you are interested in participating and believe you have the necessary skills to do so, but cannot meet either the qualification or experience requirement, the selection panel will consider your application on its own merits. You are therefore still encouraged to submit an application with a clear statement of why you feel you should be selected. This statement should be made on a separate sheet attached to the application form.

2. Knowledge of Grammar

There is NO requirement for participants to have any formal knowledge of English grammar. However, it is probable that some will have some basic knowledge of grammatical terms, such as verbs, nouns, and adjectives etc. Others may have more than this, particularly if they are ESL teachers / linguists.

⁵ For the purposes of this program, "adult" is defined as "Year 11 age and above".

⁶ Any educational institution following a formal learning program. If you are unsure, please contact Geoff Pearson on 9330 8989 to discuss.



The Application Form includes a brief assessment of your current level of grammatical knowledge. **This is not a test or a method of screening applicants in or out.** It is simply a way to ascertain the background knowledge of the group prior to the start of the program. As such, it will have no bearing on the selection process for this program.

Whatever your level of knowledge of English grammar, it is important to recognise that **the program will assume no prior knowledge and will teach the fundamentals of English grammar from scratch**, focussing primarily on those items indicated earlier in this document. In light of this, any potential applicants who already have a significant knowledge of English grammatical terminology and concepts, and a strong repertoire of effective grammar-teaching techniques, may wish to reconsider their reasons for applying before doing so.

So, is the *Teach Me Grammar* Program for you?

The time commitment for the program is roughly 10-12 hours every 3-5 weeks:

- 4.25 hours in the face-to-face PD session / 2 x 2.5 hours in the online PD session pairs, and
- 6-7 hours on the various activities between sessions. (Teaching, reflecting, session preparation)

The value of the training (i.e. cost to the funding body) is estimated at \$3600.00 per participant. As the selected participants will be offered a place in the program **free-of-charge**, and as it will not be possible for replacement people to join after the program has started, it is essential that the selected participants commit to:

- attending⁷ and actively participating in all sessions; and
- completing all the between-session viewing, reading, teaching and reflecting (action-learning) activities, as described above.

These will need to be completed in a timely manner to ensure the participant is prepared for moving into the next session

If you cannot honestly make this commitment, you should not apply.

Please Note: Withdrawing from the program once it has started, without a valid reason⁸ backed up by relevant medical certificates or other documentation, will leave the individual participant (or their employing organisation) liable for a cancellation fee of \$300 for each of the unattended sessions.

For the online format, non-attendance at either session of any pair of sessions without a valid reason⁸ will incur the same penalty.

NB: SUBSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

⁷ For regional online participants, “attendance” means “participating from the designated location for your regional group”

⁸ Valid reasons are: loss of employment, serious illness / injury, death / death of an immediate family member requiring the absence of the participant.

Submitting your application

Ultimately, the selection process will seek to establish a group of adult language / literacy teachers who, between them, teach a broad range of adult-learner groups and who individually are enthusiastic, energetic and passionate about going on a learning journey with a group of like-minded others to discover how to teach grammar to their students in the most positive, effective ways.

If, after reading the above, you are interested in participating in this program and are able to make the commitment required, you are strongly encouraged to complete the attached application form.

Please return your completed and signed Application Form to Geoff Pearson by:

5.00 pm on Monday 26 June 2017

You can do so in any of the following ways:

by email to: gpearson@agendacommunication.com.au

(Please use **Application for Teach Me Grammar Program** as the subject line of your message)

by post to: Agenda Communication Pty Ltd
A7, 550 Canning Highway
Attadale WA 6156

by fax to: (08) 9330 9736

Successful applicants will be notified by **5.00pm on Friday 30 June**.

Please direct all enquiries to:

Geoff Pearson (Project Leader) on 9330 8989 / 0412 893 897 or via the above email address.