UNIT1 Knowledge

ACADEMIC FOCUS: UNDERSTANDING AND PRESENTING INFORMATION



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit covers:

Listening

- Understanding main ideas in a presentation
- · Identifying word class to assist note-taking
- Recognizing signposting in a presentation

Speaking

- Talking about experiences using the past simple and present perfect
- Structuring and signposting a short presentation
- Presenting information about your academic experience and aims

Reading

- · Gaining an overview of an academic text
- · Identifying topics and main ideas
- · Building word families

Writing

- Expanding notes into sentences
- Correcting and evaluating sentences
- · Writing simple and compound sentences

Vocabulary

 Identifying and using general, academic, and technical vocabulary

Discussion

- 1 Think about how knowledge is transferred and how you learn things. Put the following sources in order from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important).
 - the internet in lectures textbooks the media (e.g. television, newspapers) other students
- 2 Work in groups and explain why you chose your particular order.
 - **Example:** The internet is very important because you can search for a wide variety of information, but you can't believe everything you read ...
- 3 Discuss how you use the sources in 1 in your own area of study. Which are the most useful? Give reasons.
 - **Example:** I read the relevant part of the textbook, and make brief notes on the most important points. I revise from these notes later, which helps me to remember the information in the longer term.
- 4 Briefly present your group's ideas to the whole class. Use the following phrases to help you.

We discussed ...

Our group think that ...

istening Short presentations

During your course, you may have to listen to presentations by other students, by professional people, or by experts from your area of study. Presentations usually contain language that tells you how the information in the talk is organized - in other words, it signposts the structure of the talk. You can use this **signposting language** to help you follow a presentation and to take notes.

This module covers:

- Understanding main ideas in a presentation
- Identifying word class to assist note-taking
- Recognizing signposting in a presentation

TASK 1 Thinking about listening

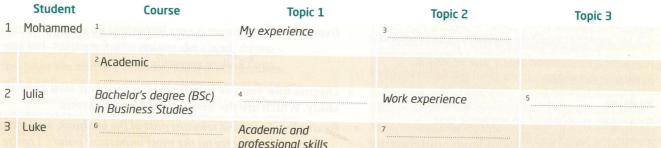
- 1 Read questions 1-4 and think about your own answers. Give reasons and examples.
 - 1 What do you listen to in English?
 - 2 How often do you do this in a typical week?
 - 3 What do you find most difficult about listening to English?
 - 4 How can you improve your listening skills?
- 2 Discuss your answers with a partner.

TASK 2 Previewing the topic

- 1 You are going to watch three people presenting their experiences of educational courses. Work in pairs and discuss the main differences between courses 1-3.
 - 1 A pre-sessional course (a language course before university study)
 - 2 A Bachelor's degree (an undergraduate course)
 - 3 A Master's degree (a postgraduate course)
- 2 What are some of the reasons for taking each of these courses?

TASK 3 Understanding the introduction to a presentation

1 L1.1 Watch Extract 1 and complete the table.



	Student	Course	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
1	Mohammed	1	My experience	3	Edward by Verollina
		² Academic			
2	Julia	Bachelor's degree (BSc) in Business Studies	4	Work experience	5
3	Luke	6	Academic and professional skills	7	

2	▶	1.1 Watch Extract	1 again and complete sentences 1-5.
			hammed. I'm
		So, firstly,	my experience of the course itself and ther how the course
	3	I'm here today	
			three main parts
			overview







TASK 4 Understanding the main ideas in a presentation (1)

- 1 1.2 Watch Extract 2 and take notes on topics 1 and 2.
 - Presentation 1 (Mohammed)
 - 1 Academic reading differences
- 2 Useful things learnt
- 2 Which words helped you to identify the presenter's main ideas?

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

▶ Language reference page 185 45

Word class Using word class to identify main ideas

When you are listening or reading it is important to identify the main ideas. This helps you to take notes on the most important information. The words that carry most of this information are often nouns, verbs, and adjectives. For example:

To give you an idea of what I mean, in academic situations you are always reading for a reason, for example, to write an essay, to give a presentation, to prepare for a test.

You also need to understand the writer's opinion, so you can use it to support your argument.

TASK 5 Identifying word class

1 Underline the words in sentences 1-4 that express the main idea.

Example: In <u>academic situations</u> you are always <u>reading for</u> a <u>reason</u>, for example, to <u>write</u> an <u>essay</u>, <u>give</u> a <u>presentation</u> or <u>prepare</u> for a <u>test</u>.

- 1 It can be difficult to decide what you need to read and what makes a good source.
- 2 So you have to learn to challenge ideas and not just accept everything you read ...
- 3 Your dissertation is a real test of your academic abilities and it will probably decide the degree classification you get.
- 4 Another 30% of you probably come from different education systems.
- 2 Look back at the words you underlined. Identify the word class for each word.

TASK 6 Understanding the main ideas in a presentation (2)

- 1 \(\bigsim 1.3, 1.4\) Watch Extracts 3 and 4 and take notes on topics 3-7 for both presentations.
 - 3 Getting good marks
 - 4 Work experience importance
 - 5 Dissertation

- 6 Professional and academic skills importance
- 7 Students' backgrounds
- 2 What actual words did you note down? Which word class are they?

TASK 7 Recognizing phrases for signposting a presentation

- 1 Match each phrase 1-5 to functions a-e.
 - 1 To give you an idea of what I mean
 - 2 To go back to what I was saying earlier
 - 3 OK, let's move on and talk about
 - 4 As you all know
 - 5 So, to sum up

- a to return to an important point
- **b** to summarize the main idea
- c to change the subject
- d to give an example
- e to refer to the audience's knowledge
- 2 1.5 Watch the five short clips and check your answers to 1.

TASK 8 Responding to a presentation

- 1 Look back at your notes from Tasks 4 and 6. Work in pairs and discuss these questions.
 - 1 Is getting work experience important to your future success? Why / Why not?
 - 2 What skills can your area of study give you that will help in your future career?

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The classroom provides only some of your opportunities for learning. You need to practise listening outside the classroom too - for example, by watching online lectures or presentations.

Next time you have the chance to listen to English outside the classroom, note down what, and how much, you understood.

1B **Speaking** Short presentations

Presentation skills are important in many academic contexts. You may have to give a short presentation in a seminar, or a more formal presentation to a particular audience. You need to think about what to say, and what language to use. This module helps you to prepare a short presentation about yourself, your experiences, and your aims or ambitions. It also reviews language for talking about past and recent experiences.

This module covers:

- Talking about experiences using the past simple and present perfect
- Structuring and signposting a short presentation
- Presenting information about your academic experience and aims

TASK 1 Preparing personal information

- 1 Make brief notes on the following points. Then answer questions 1 and 2 for each point.
 - Your education experience in the last 1–2 years: for example, where you studied, the main subjects you studied, any inspiring teachers.
 - Your recent experience: for example, work experience, places you have travelled to, new skills you have learnt.
 - 1 What did you learn from the experience?
 - 2 What difficulties did you have? How did you overcome these difficulties?

Tense and aspect Talking about experiences Past simple Use the past simple to talk about what you did in the past, especially with a time reference (e.g. last year / in 2012 / when I was at school): Last year I studied English and Business. Also use the past simple to talk about a sequence of events: On the course I learnt how to give a presentation; then I focused on research skills. Present perfect Use the present perfect to talk about things that were completed in the past but are also relevant now, especially experiences and achievements: The course has helped me to develop core academic skills. I've researched and written three long essays. It has also given me greater confidence. Questions

How did it help you do this?

TASK 2 Using questions to discuss experiences

In a conversation, follow-up questions are often in the past simple:

Did you **learn** anything new?

1	Co	omplete questions 1 -5 below using question words (how, what, when, why) and/or did.
		is the most useful thing you learnt? Howyou learn it?
	2	you decide to go there?
	3	you spend most of your free time when you were studying?
	4	you ever think about studying something different?
	5	this experience help you?
2	Di qu	scuss your own experiences with another student. Ask and answer follow-up testions.
	Ex	cample: So you've been to Russia. Why did you decide to go there?

TASK 3 Understanding a short presentation

1 1.6 Watch a short presentation by a Japanese student and complete the notes.

Example: Focus of presentation: educational experience and aims

- 1 Aim of presentation:
- 4 Ryo's chosen department:
- 2 Ryo's first main aim:
- 5 Ryo's second main aim:
- 3 Ryo's university:
- 6 Ryo's main message:

2 1.6 Watch the presentation again and notice the language Ryo uses to organize his ideas. Tick the phrases in each column (A, B, or C) that you hear.

My first main aim was

Today I'd like to talk to you about ...

What I want to talk about today is ...

The next stage of my presentation is ...

And this brings me on to my second main point.

I'd like to finish my presentation by ...

My first main aim was to ...
I plan / hope / aim / want to...
What I would really like to do is ...
My main aim / ambition is to ...

- 3 Match headings 1-3 with the appropriate column A-C in 2.
 - 1 Talking about plans, aims, and ambitions
 - 2 Introducing the topic of your presentation
 - 3 Moving on to the next point

TASK 4 Evaluating a presentation

- 1 1.6 Watch the presentation again, and evaluate it using the checklist on page 195.
- 2 Compare your evaluation with another student.

TASK 5 Preparing and giving a personal presentation

- 1 Prepare a short presentation of about two minutes, talking about your own experience of education or work. Use guidelines 1-4 to plan your ideas.
 - 1 Decide on a maximum of <u>three</u> points that you want to make. Note them down in order. For example: your recent experience; your present situation; your future plans, aims, and ambitions (academic / other).
 - 2 Think of a way of introducing yourself and your presentation. Today I want to talk about ... In this presentation I'd like to tell you about ...
 - 3 Think about the language you will use to:
 - talk about your experiences in the past
 - · move from one point to the next
 - talk about your future plans, aims, and ambitions.
 - 4 Think of a phrase to end your presentation. For example: I'd like to finish my presentation by saying ...
 The main thing I learnt from this experience was ...
- 2 Work in pairs and practise your presentation. Aim to speak clearly and not too fast. Give each other feedback and suggest improvements.
- 3 Work in groups and take turns to give your presentations.
 - 1 Aim to speak for about two minutes, and respond to any questions at the end.
 - 2 While you listen, note down any main points and key information, as in Task 3.1.
 - 3 Think of a question to ask after each presentation.
 - 4 Give feedback to the other presenters in your group using the checklist on page 195.
- 4 Evaluate your own presentation, using the checklist on page 195. Note down two things you would like to improve.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Other students' input can be very useful in developing your presentation style.

Next time you give a presentation, ask other students to evaluate it, then agree at least two things you could improve on.



1c Reading Textbooks (1)

Understanding textbooks can be difficult, because they often express complex concepts or ideas, and use specialized vocabulary. This module shows that by developing some simple reading strategies, you can get the information you need even from a difficult text. When you read academic texts, you will need to skim, scan, or close read. **Skimming** means reading quickly for the general meaning, or gist. This is useful when you have large amounts of text. **Scanning** is reading for specific information or details. **Close reading** is when you read line by line, and every word. This is useful when concentrating on a short, specific piece of text.

This module covers:

- Gaining an overview of an academic text
- Identifying topics and main ideas
- Building word families

TASK 1 Thinking about reading

- 1 Note down short answers to questions 1-4 about your own reading.
 - 1 Do you enjoy reading texts in English?
 - 2 What sorts of texts have you read in English recently?
 - 3 Where do you find the texts that you read?
 - 4 What do you find difficult about reading texts in English?
- 2 Compare your answers. Discuss what you can do to be a better reader in English.

TASK 2 Preparing to read

- 1 Work in pairs. Explain an idea related to your area of study to your partner.
 - **Example:** Aerobic exercise is moderate exercise which you do over a long period of time, like jogging or swimming. It increases the amount of oxygen your body takes in.
- 2 How easy or difficult was it to (a) give your explanation, and (b) understand your partner's explanation?
- 3 Read the two definitions from the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.

psychology /sar'kplad3i/ noun ¹[U] the scientific study of the mind and how it influences behaviour **cognitive** /'kpgnatıv/ adj connected with mental processes of understanding

- 1 What do you know about psychology? Have you ever studied it?
- 2 What do you think cognitive psychology is?

TASK 3 Understanding a text: topic, purpose, and main idea

- 1 When you read part of a textbook, you need to understand the *topic*, the *purpose* of the text, and the *main idea or ideas*. Match terms 1–3 with the best description a–c.
 - 1 topic a the most important thing that the author wants to communicate
 - 2 purposeb what the text is about3 main ideac the reason for writing
- 2 Look at Text 1 from a psychology textbook, paying attention to the title and any words that are highlighted in bold. Select the best answer to Question 1.

Question 1: What is the text about?

- 1 people's experiences
- 2 cognitive processing and psychology

INDEPENDENT STUDY

When approaching a new academic text, it is useful to gain an overview by quickly looking at key parts of the text, starting with the title and any headings and words highlighted in bold or italics.

Find a textbook extract from your own area of study and look at it in this way. 3 Read Text 1 quickly and select the best answer to Question 2. Use the glossary to help you.

Question 2: What is the purpose of the text?

- 1 To introduce the concept of cognition and some of the ideas related to it.
- 2 To explain how and why people behave as they do.
- 4 Read Text 1 again and decide which of the following two statements best expresses the main idea.

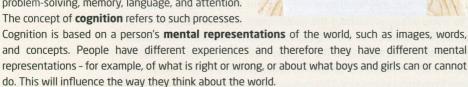
Question 3: What is the main idea?

- People process information about the world in different ways, and this has an effect on how they think about things.
- 2 People need to understand cognitive psychology in order to understand the world.
- 5 Compare your answers to Questions 1-3 with another student.

Principles that define the cognitive level of analysis

TEXT 1

- a mathematical problem, trying to remember the title of a book, observing a beautiful sunset, telling a joke they have heard, or thinking about what to do tomorrow, they are involved in cognitive processing. Cognitive psychology is concerned with the structure and functions of the mind. Cognitive psychologists are involved in finding out how the human mind comes to know things about the world and how it uses this knowledge. Cognitive neuroscience combines knowledge about the brain with knowledge about cognitive processes.
- 2 The mind can be seen as a set of mental processes that are carried out by the brain. Cognitive processes include perception, thinking, problem-solving, memory, language, and attention. The concept of cognition refers to such processes.



SOURCE: Crane, J. & Hannibal, J. (2009). p.67. IB Psychology: Course Companion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



GLOSSARY

analysis (n) the detailed study or examination of sth in order to understand more about it

cognition (n) the process by which knowledge and understanding is developed in the mind

influence (v) to have an effect on the way that sb behaves or thinks

mental representation (n) an image or idea in the memory

TASK 4 Reading in detail to understand key information

- 1 Read Text 1 carefully and find the key terms or concepts 1–6 related to the word *cognitive*. Complete the notes for items 2–5.
 - 1 Cognitive processing: *involves* problem-solving, remembering something, thinking
 - 2 Cognitive psychology: is concerned with
 - 3 Cognitive psychologists: are interested in finding out
 - 4 Cognitive neuroscience: concerns knowledge of
 - 5 Cognitive processes: include
 - **6** Cognition, i.e. cognitive processes: *are based on* how the human mind represents the world (e.g. images, words, concepts)

TASK 5 Explaining key terms

- 1 Work in pairs. Use the words / phrases below to explain or give more information about key terms or concepts from your own area of study.
 - are based on involves is concerned with
 - **Examples:** Civil engineering **involves** building bridges, roads, canals, and other structures. Plate tectonics **is concerned with** the movement of the earth's surface.
- 2 How might cognitive psychology be useful in your area of study? Give examples.

TASK 6 Predicting the content of a text

- 1 You are going to read another extract from the same textbook. Read the title and decide which *four* of items a-e you would expect the text to include.
 - a An explanation of what schemas are.
 - **b** An example to show what *schema theory* is.
 - c Information about how schema theory is used.
 - d Information about how psychologists define schema theory.
 - e A comparison of schema theory and other academic theories.
- 2 Read Text 2 quickly and check which of your predictions in 1 were correct.
- 3 Match one item from 1 to each paragraph of Text 2. There is one item you do not need to use.

A theory of cognitive process: schema theory

TEXT 2

- When an expert football player kicks the ball directly into the goal for a penalty, it may look like any other goal. However, this particular kick is the result of many hours of practice, combined with an adjustment to the challenges of the particular situation. The player needs to think about the position of the goalkeeper and predict the goalkeeper's possible reactions, as well as determining how he should kick the ball. This is done based on his previous experience, which is stored in his memory as knowledge but there is more to it than this. The most successful players have learnt this behaviour to perfection, but they need to modify it to fit the particular situation. The player must respond to visual information about the goalkeeper's position and movement, and its possible consequences. This is based on the recognition of patterns. This 'how-to-score knowledge' will help a player decide what aspects of the situation he needs to pay attention to in order to place the ball accurately between the goalposts. Specialists in a certain field have expert knowledge that comes from hours of practice. This means that to some extent they can do the right things at the right time more or less automatically, but they always need to be able to analyse each individual situation.
- 2 Cognitive psychologists would call this 'how-to-score knowledge' a schema, and schema theory is a cognitive theory about information processing. A cognitive schema can be defined as networks of knowledge, beliefs, and expectations about particular aspects of the world.
- Schemas can describe how specific knowledge is organized and stored in a person's memory so that it can be accessed and used when it is needed as in the example of the expert footballer. It is not possible to see a schema inside someone's head, but using concepts like schemas help psychologists and all of us to understand, and discuss, what it would otherwise not be possible to do.
- Schema theory suggests that what we already know will influence the outcome of information processing. This idea is based on the belief that humans are active processors of information. People do not passively respond to information. They interpret and integrate it to make sense of their experiences, but they are not always aware of it. If information is missing, the brain fills in the blanks based on existing schemas, or it simply invents something that seems to fit in. Obviously this can result in mistakes called **distortions**.

source: Crane, J. & Hannibal, J. (2009). pp.70-1. IB Psychology: Course Companion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

GLOSSARY

determine (v) to calculate sth exactly

integrate (v) to combine two
or more things so that they
work together

interpret (v) to explain the meaning of sth; to decide that sth has a particular meaning and to understand it in this way

modify (v) to change sth slightly

outcome (n) the result or effect of an action or event

recognition (n) the act of remembering or identifying what sth is



TASK 7 Identifying the topic and main idea in a paragraph

- 1 Each paragraph of an academic text typically has a topic and a main idea. Look at paragraph 3 of Text 2 below and match items a-d to parts 1-4.
 - a an example
- c information about schemas and how they are used
- **b** the topic 1
- d an explanation of what schemas do

¹Schemas ²can describe how specific knowledge is organized and stored in a person's memory so that it can be accessed and used when it is needed – ³as in the example of the expert footballer. ⁴It is not possible to see a schema inside someone's head, but using concepts like schemas help psychologists – and all of us – to understand, and discuss, what it would otherwise not be possible to do.

- 2 Which part of paragraph 3 includes the main idea?
- 3 Read paragraphs 1, 2, and 4 of Text 2 again and identify the topics and the main ideas. Write the number of each paragraph next to the notes in the table.

Paragraph	Topic	Main idea
3	Schemas	Schemas help us understand and discuss knowledge.
	Schema theory	In cognitive psychology, schema theory explains how we do things.
	'How-to' knowledge	Experts and specialists use their experience, 'how-to' knowledge, and analysis to do difficult things.
	Human information processing	How schema theory explains how people process information using experience and knowledge.

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Language reference page 185 45 / page 177 4

Academic vocabulary (1) Building word families

By learning word families, you will greatly increase your vocabulary. Word families are groups of words based on the same root word, but with different forms, for example:

Noun Adjective Adverb Verb theory theoretical theoretically theorize

Some words within a word family may be more common than others - for example, the noun *theory* is more frequent and more useful than the verb *theorize*. Not all forms of the word are found in all word families.

Suffixes

Suffixes are a group of letters added to the end of a word to change the form of that word. For example:

Noun suffixes include: -tion, -ity, -ism, -ness (cognition, reality, criticism, happiness)

Adjective suffixes include: -al, able, -ive, -ful (critical, memorable, informative, successful)

Adverbs typically take the suffix -ly: (critically, successfully)

The verb suffix -ize is very frequent: (criticize, theorize)

TASK8 Choosing the right word form

1 Complete the table with the correct forms of the words from Texts 1 and 2. Use your dictionary to help you.

Noun	Adjective	Adverb	Verb
theory	theoretical	theoretically	theorize
			base (on)
	cognitive		
information			
			involve
knowledge			
memory			
	possible		
	<u>-</u>		process
representation			

2	Complete the sentences	with the correct f	form of the v	vord in brackets.
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1	The theory is that people choose how they behave. (base)
2	This latest piece of research a significant achievement. (representation)
3	There seems to be no that the research can be successfully completed. (possible)
4	In a presentation it's important to speakabout your subject. (knowledge)
5	In order to learn new information, try representing it as a picture, and then it. (memory)
6	It's difficult to complete a group assignment without the of the whole team (involve)

3 Look at how words from the table in 1 are used in Texts 1 and 2 on pages 013 and 014. Select three or more words from the table and use them to write your own sentences.

TASK 9 Reflecting on your learning

1 Look back at Task 1.1, question 4 on what you find difficult about reading in English. Think of at least one way that this module has helped you.

Example: The technical terms in the texts looked difficult, but I now realize that they are explained in the text with examples. In this kind of text, if I focus on the explanations, I should be able to understand the concepts.

2 Note down two or three aims for improving your reading. Think of strategies for achieving these aims.

Example: Aim: By the end of the academic year I want to be able to read textbooks in my subject and understand the main points.

Strategies: I can do this by setting myself short tasks, such as reading two pages from a textbook, with deadlines. Then I can increase the difficulty by adding another page, and taking less time.

1E Vocabulary Academic vocabulary

Academic texts in English use a large number of words to present information and express meaning. Such texts typically contain about 80% *general* vocabulary. The remaining 20% is divided into *academic* and *technical* vocabulary, less frequent words, and proper nouns (e.g. *Oxford*). Academic vocabulary items can be found in texts from all subjects: *result in, concept,* and *significantly*. Technical vocabulary is specific to one or more disciplines, e.g. *schema* in Psychology. It is useful to be able to identify whether a word is general, academic, or technical, in order to use it in the appropriate context.

TASK 1 Identifying general, academic, and technical vocabulary

- 1 Read the descriptions of types of words a-f. Decide if they are examples of *general*, academic, or *technical* vocabulary.
 - a grammatical words: determiners (e.g. the), pronouns (e.g. it) and prepositions (e.g. as)
 - b adjectives and nouns relating to subjects and perspectives, e.g. psychology
 - c adjectives expressing familiar qualities / characteristics / time, e.g. possible
 - d names of familiar concepts, e.g. information
 - e descriptions of specific concepts, e.g. top-down, cognitive
 - f adverbs used to show sequence, e.g. finally
- 2 Read the text, which illustrates the use of general, academic, and technical vocabulary. Check your answers to 1 and find one further example for categories a-e in 1.

One of the most fundamental principles of cognitive psychology is that human beings are information processors and that mental processes guide behaviour. One goal of cognitive research is to discover possible principles underlying cognitive processes. Psychologists see the mind as a complex machine – rather like an intelligent, information-processing machine using hardware (the brain) and software (mental images or representations). According to this line of thinking, information input to the mind comes via bottom-up processing – that is from the sensory system. This information is processed in the mind by top-down processing via pre-stored information in the memory. Finally, there is some output in the form of behaviour.

SOURCE: Crane, J. & Hannibal, J. (2009). pp.67-8. IB Psychology: Course Companion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- 3 Decide on the word class for each academic word 1-5. Then match the words with definitions a-e.
 - 1 fundamental
- a series of things that are done in order to achieve a particular result
- 2 process
- b a law, a rule, or a theory that sth is based on
- 3 principle
- c a careful study of a subject, especially in order to discover new facts or information about it
- 4 research5 complex
- d serious; affecting the most central and important parts of sth
- e difficult to understand

TASK 2 Selecting and using academic vocabulary

1 Complete the text with the most appropriate words / phrases from the list.
models demonstrated deal with challenges complexity theories

behaviour. Cognit	gnize the importance of over 2 and		applied to real-world	of human
Health and sports how people think	about themselves and	that there	is a subtle relationsh	ip between

2 Select at least five of the academic words from the texts in this module, and write sentences containing the words. If possible, relate the sentences to your own area of study.

Example: The theory that supply affects prices is a fundamental principle of economics.