

# TalkEnglish

## Training Manual

English through the Bible that connects you to God and to people around the world.





## Introduction

TalkEnglish is a Gospel-based conversational English program that allows you to serve the international community by helping them to practice their English skills while hearing the Good News of Jesus.

If you haven't done so already, take a minute to open both **TalkEnglish workbooks** found on the Student page of our website. Read the **Introduction** of one of the workbooks and review the **Table of Contents** to see all that TalkEnglish has to offer your international friends.

TalkEnglish introduces people to Jesus and can strengthen the faith of young believers. Throughout the program, students are introduced to the importance of reading the Bible daily, prayer, turning from sin, salvation, and commitment to church and fellowship. At the end of the program, they are given the opportunity to go deeper in their faith through confessing sin, being baptized, and committing their lives fully to Christ.

TalkEnglish works best with **intermediate to advanced English language learners** who wish to practice speaking English or build their English skills, i.e. high school, college, intermediate ESL, or graduate students, as well as students preparing for the TOEFL, SAT, GRE, graduate dissertations, or interviews. We've also had success with professionals who need strong English skills for their jobs. **TalkEnglish is not a beginner's program**, but one that *any Christian* can use to share the Gospel with non-native English speakers who are eager to more about Jesus and practice English.

**TalkEnglish IS** a conversational English program. **TalkEnglish IS NOT** a foundational English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program. A **conversational English program** assumes that a student can read and speak English comfortably. Students practice reading, writing, and pronunciation skills that they have already built. A **foundational ESL program** is for first time or early English language learners who need basic speaking, sentence structure, and everyday conversation skills that are not provided in the TalkEnglish program. Students who are learning the basics of English should enroll in a certified ESL program before beginning TalkEnglish.

Students should be encouraged to **participate fully** in the TalkEnglish program. TalkEnglish requires effort and commitment on the student's part but is effective in building skills when commitment is present. Encourage students to **complete assignments, finish activities, and follow suggestions**. The more committed they are to the program, the greater improvement they will see in their English skills.

TalkEnglish offers **free materials for you and your students**, and we are here to support you along with way, if you have any questions. However, choosing the students that best fit this program is the key to success. Students should have a genuine desire to learn more about Jesus and the Bible, as well as the skill level required for the program.

On behalf of TalkEnglish, we want to thank you for sharing your gift of English and the Gospel to all nations. Many blessings to you for your kindness and heart to serve the Lord.

## TalkEnglish: The Book of John – Level 1

### Who is a candidate for TalkEnglish – Level 1?

Level 1 students must be able to do the following:

- ✓ Read English
- ✓ Converse comfortably in English
- ✓ Be able to use both the present and past verb tenses
- ✓ Write some English
- ✓ Desire to improve pronunciation skills
- ✓ Desire to enhance English vocabulary

The TalkEnglish – Level 1 workbook uses the *Easy-to-Read* translation of the Bible.

Turn to the **Table of Contents** of the *TalkEnglish: The Book of John – Level 1* workbook.  
Look at all sections of the workbook.  
For a **sample lesson**, review *Lesson 3: Who is Jesus*.

## TalkEnglish: The Book of John – Level 2

### Who is a candidate for TalkEnglish – Level 2?

Level 2 students must be able to do the following:

- ✓ Read a more advanced level of English
- ✓ Converse comfortably in English
- ✓ Use multiple verb tenses
- ✓ Write English
- ✓ Desire to improve pronunciation skills
- ✓ Desire to enhance their English vocabulary

The TalkEnglish – Level 2 workbook uses the *New International Version* of the Bible.

Level 2 is more advanced than Level 1:

- ✓ Uses the *New International Version* of the Bible: More complicated sentence structure, higher levels of vocabulary, more abstract concepts
- ✓ More challenging reading comprehension questions and assignments
- ✓ More opportunities for students to read and write English
- ✓ More challenging homework assignments

Turn to the **Table of Contents** of the *TalkEnglish: The Book of John – Level 2* workbook.

**Look at all sections of the workbook.**

Compare **Lesson 3** in both the Level 1 and Level 2 workbooks.

## Finding Students

Where can you find local people who wish to practice their English skills?

- College and graduate campuses
- Your job
- Parks and neighborhoods
- International grocery stores
- Cultural events
- Libraries
- Online conversation exchange websites\* (please read Terms of these sites before using)
- Language schools
- Places of business
- Fitness centers and playgrounds
- International restaurants
- International chambers and clubs
- Recreation and cultural centers

**Make a list** of places where you feel comfortable meeting new students.

What are some ways you could begin conversations with potential TalkEnglish students?

- I noticed your accent. Where are you from?
- How long have you been here in this country?
- What do you like about this country? What do you miss about your country?
- Can you recommend any good local restaurants that serve food from your country?
- What are you studying in school, or what kind of work do you do?
- How did you learn English?
- How do you practice English now? Do you take classes or participate in any English conversation programs?

To invite your new friend to become a TalkEnglish student, you can simply say this:

*I am a volunteer instructor for a program called TalkEnglish. TalkEnglish is a free conversational English program that's based on the stories of Jesus in the Bible. We read the stories, answer questions, and talk about how these stories can change our lives. I am actually looking for students to work with. Would you be interested in becoming my student?*

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If your new friend is interested, **show the website to your friend, and view the workbooks together**. Help your friend to select the most appropriate level for his level of English. Make sure that he understands that while the homework is not required, he **will** learn more if he is willing to do the assignments.

If your student is eager to start, then **schedule a time and place to meet**. Always confirm the time and place of your appointments in writing through text or email.

\* **Conversation exchange websites** are a great way to meet people who wish to practice their English skills. Please read the Terms of these websites before using. These sites usually do not want you referring participants to other sites. Therefore, in the course of natural conversation, feel free to share with your new friend who you are and that you volunteer for TalkEnglish. You can also share as much as you want about the program. If your friend asks more questions and is interested in learning more about the program, then you can give him our website address, but please let him initiate. Make sure that you have read the TalkEnglish Terms of Service and Code of Conduct before using online sites for the purposes of TalkEnglish.

Practice a natural, introductory conversation with a partner.

## Time Commitment

How long should a TalkEnglish session last?

- Most sessions last about **one-and-a-half hours**.
- How to make the sessions shorter:**
  - Encourage your student to use the **TalkEnglish Pronunciation Teacher** to practice pronunciation skills, along with the Pronunciation Guide found in our workbooks
  - Students can also **complete all questions in advance** to keep the class moving quickly
- Hand-pick questions and activities** if you are running out of time.

How often should we meet?

- You should meet **one to two times a week**. Students who meet at least twice a week *and* complete assignments show the most improvement in their English skills.
- Students will have **one to two hours of homework** after every session, depending on the assignments they choose to complete. Be sure to give your student enough time to **complete homework assignments** before the next lesson.

## Advertising

Where can you advertise your TalkEnglish program?

- Church/personal websites
- College and graduate campuses
- Coffee shop bulletin boards
- International grocery stores
- International newspapers
- Local libraries
- Medical or science research centers
- Cultural centers
- Apartments complexes
- International chambers of commerce

Please feel free to use our logo to create your own **TalkEnglish Advertising Posters** and **TalkEnglish Business Cards** advertise your own TalkEnglish classes or service!

**Make a list of locations** where you can advertise for your TalkEnglish program.

## Session Locations

Where can you meet with students?

- Restaurants
- Coffee shops
- Libraries
- Parks
- Board rooms
- Schools / dorms
- Shopping malls
- Civic centers
- Bookstores
- Churches
- Offices
- Online (use only encrypted platforms, i.e. Zoom or WhatsApp)

For safety reasons, we recommend that TalkEnglish sessions take place in a **public area** or **online**. We never encourage meeting in alone with students in a private setting. Also, we encourage you to pick a **consistent place and time** for meeting.

## Teaching TalkEnglish

Turn to *Lesson 3* in the *TalkEnglish: The Book of John – Level 2* workbook.

- Review the **Vocabulary** words. (5-10 min.)
  - ✓ Ask your student if he has any questions about how to **pronounce** the words listed in the Vocabulary section.
  - ✓ If your student mispronounces a word, **gently correct** him. Compare the word to other words he might already know. (i.e. *heir* sounds like *air, bear, care*, etc.)
  - ✓ Take notes about pronunciation on the **Lesson Documentation Form**. Use the **Pronunciation Guide** at the back of the workbook for ideas on how to write pronunciation tips.
  - ✓ Ask your student if he has any questions about the **definitions** of the words. You can **ask the other students** if they want to contribute a definition for the word before you define the word. For a simple English dictionary, please refer to the **online dictionary** found on the [Student](#) page under TalkEnglish Class Tools.
  - ✓ Focus on definitions that relate to the **context** of the text.
  - ✓ Have your student write in their language the **translation** of any word needed in their workbook or notebook.
  
- Slowly read the **Text** in small sections. (20 min.)
  - ✓ Invite the student to ask questions about any **definitions** of the **words** in the text as you read.
  - ✓ **Instructor reads** a sentence to a paragraph first, depending on the English skill of the student.
  - ✓ Then the **student reads** the same text read by the instructor.
  
- Help your student with **Pronunciation**.
  - ✓ **Encourage** your student on what he pronounced well! Give a specific example.
  - ✓ Help your student practice his pronunciation of **one or two English words or phrases** that he mispronounced in the text he just read.
  - ✓ Focus on words that are **most relevant** to the student's life (i.e. *representation* rather than *Nazareth*).
  - ✓ Write these words or phrases on the **Lesson Documentation** form along with the pronunciation tips.
  - ✓ In general, look for and work on **pronunciation trends**.  
Examples:
    - ✓ *th*: gather, other, brother
    - ✓ *v*: loaves, save, give
    - ✓ *ed*: (-t) walked, talked, stopped vs. (-ed) started, parted, foldedNote: In American English, we pronounce the *-ed* in words that end in *t* or *d*.



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- If needed, take a minute to use **pronunciation tools**: (practice with *gather* and *world*)
  - ✓ How am I forming my lips and mouth?
  - ✓ Where am I placing my tongue?
  - ✓ Does my tongue drop or stay in one place?
  - ✓ What am I doing with my teeth?
  - ✓ How much air am I pushing through my teeth?
  - ✓ Does my chin drop or stay level?
  - ✓ Are my mouth and jaw areas relaxed or tight?
  - ✓ Imitate the incorrect sound. What is causing the problem?
  
- In the **Comprehension Question** sections, allow your student to **read and answer each question**. (30 min.)
  - ✓ For time, only **correct words** you practiced in the vocabulary and reading sections.
  - ✓ If your student has trouble with a question, **refer him back to the text**, if the answer is in the text. Have him reread the verse(s) where the answer is found.
  - ✓ Some questions without verses are **open-ended questions** that give the student and the instructor a chance to discuss a variety of possible answers.
  
- If your student is still **having trouble** with a question:
  - ✓ Try **rephrasing** the question.
  - ✓ Ask the student to **reread the verse** in his own language.
  - ✓ If your student is still having trouble, then **explain** the answer.
  - ✓ Keep your answers **short and simple** to understand.
  - ✓ Refer to the *Comprehension Question Answer Key*, if you both need help. 😊
  
- *Personal Sharing* is a time for you to **share about your life** and for your student to share about his life. (20 min.)
  - ✓ Be **vulnerable and open** about your life. If a question requires vulnerability, you should consider answering the question first to help your student feel comfortable sharing as well.
  - ✓ **Share stories**.
  - ✓ **Be real**, listen well, ask deeper questions.
  - ✓ Use this time to build a **genuine friendship**.
  - ✓ This is an important section, so be sure to **leave enough time** for discussion.
  - ✓ If your student does not have enough time to answer all the questions, he can finish the questions for **homework**.
  
- **Review** the Homework together before you end your session (5 min.)
  - ✓ **Ask your student to read** the list of assignments.
  - ✓ **Make sure** he knows *what* to do for each task and *where* to find the materials

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- ✓ We do not want students to feel overwhelmed or pressured to do the homework, so just **encourage** students to do their best. Students who complete the homework excel in their English skills **much more rapidly** than those who do not.
- The *History Chat* activities help your student to gain **knowledge** about the history of Jesus. (5-10 min.)
  - ✓ You will examine **maps** and **timelines**. (Students will learn the names of places in English.)
  - ✓ In the **Level 2** workbook, you will discuss historical **readings**. Your student will also have the chance to practice **writing** responses to the readings in English.
  - ✓ Students can complete these activities in class or for **homework**, and you can ask the student to submit this homework to you by email.
- Confirm the **time and location** of your next session.

Practice teaching Lesson 3 with a partner using this step-by-step teaching process.

## How to Teach Lesson 1: Introduction to the Bible

Turn to *Lesson 1* in the *TalkEnglish: The Book of John – Level 2* workbook.

- Review the **Vocabulary** words and take turns reading the text.
- Explain that the Bible is divided into two sections: The **Old Testament** and **New Testament**.
  - ✓ “**Testament**” means *promise* or *plan*.
  - ✓ The **Old Testament** covers the period of time *before* the birth of Jesus
  - ✓ The **New Testament** covers the period of time *after* the birth of Jesus.
- Explain to your student a **layout of the Old Testament**:
  - ✓ **Books of the Law**: God gave the Law to ancient people to teach them how to obey him.
  - ✓ **Books of History**: These books contain historical accounts of people who lived in the Middle East since the beginning of civilization.
  - ✓ **Books of Poetry/Wisdom**: These books contain poetry about God and books that tell us how to gain wisdom.
  - ✓ **Books of Major and Minor Prophets**: The terms *major* and *minor* refer to the lengths of the books, not the importance of the prophets.

*You do not need to spend time pronouncing the Books of the Old Testament.*

- Explain to your student the **layout of the New Testament**:
  - ✓ **The Gospels of Jesus**: “Gospel” means *Good News*.
  - ✓ **History of the Apostles**: The Book of Acts tells the history of the first church and of the Apostles, or the first twelve followers of Jesus.
  - ✓ **Paul’s Letters to the Churches**: Paul was an important follower of Jesus. He wrote letters to the churches to remind them of Jesus’s teachings.
  - ✓ **Letters from Other Authors**: Other followers also wrote letters to the churches to help them better understand the teachings of Jesus.
  - ✓ **Book of Revelation**: Revelation contains a dream that Jesus sent to John to help John understand Jesus’s future plan for Christians.
  
- Finish the lesson by answering the **Questions** and reviewing the **Homework** as you did in Lesson 3. Be sure that your student knows where to find any assignments listed in the workbook or on the website.
  
- Confirm the **time and location** of your next session.

Practice teaching Lesson 1 with a partner using this step-by-step teaching process.

## Lesson Documentation

- The Lesson Documentation form is a document that you and your student can use to take notes during your lesson.
  
- In the notes section, write words and sounds that you want your student to practice. Your student can also bring a journal so they can take notes as well.

Example:    th → *further, whether, the, that*  
              v  → *river, ever, very*

## Ending the Program

Turn to *Lesson 20* in the *TalkEnglish: The Book of John – Level 2* workbook.

Read the three options in this section of how to end your program.

To make ending the program a positive experience, you can apply for a **TalkEnglish Certificate of Completion** found on our website and present this certificate to your friend.

Place this document in a sturdy folder and give to your student from them to treasure.

## Basic Teaching Tips

- Learn the **name of Jesus** in your friend's language. (Students may not recognize the name *Jesus* in English but may know Jesus's name in their language.)
- Use **simple words**. Define words that might be difficult for your student to understand.
- Speak **slowly** and **clearly enunciate** your words.
- Avoid **slang** ("Same here," "I get it," etc.), **fillers** ("like," "you know," etc.), and **idioms**. ("We'll circle back around...," "Oh, yeah, piece of cake!"). If you do use any of these terms, be sure to teach them to your student so he can enjoy new, common phrases.
- Confirm** your friend's **understanding** of your speech by asking them questions, like "Did you understand what I just said?" or "Do you the know the word \_\_\_\_\_?," if they seem lost.
- Print the **Comprehension Question Answer Key** and keep it with you as a reference.

## Tips on Teaching a Class

- If you are teaching online, be sure to download the **Acrobat PDF Reader**. In Reader, click the Fill and Sign icon on the right side of your document to write notes in the text while you are teaching. Notes might include the following:
  - **Pronunciation** of words (see the workbook Pronunciation Guide for ideas) and pronunciation trends
  - **Definitions** of words
  - Answers to **fill-in-the-blank questions**
  - **Optional:** Answers to other comprehension questions (in the margins)
  - You do not need to write answers to the Personal Sharing Questions.
  
- Keep open the **online dictionary** for easy reference.
  
- Keep a **list of students' names** beside you as you teach. In the order of your list, make sure that each student has a chance to read and answer questions.
  
- **Use the links** in the workbooks to toggle back and forth between sections and tools.
  
- For the sake of time, have only **one student answer each Comprehension Question**, unless they need help answering the question. Have **one or two students answer the Personal Sharing questions**, depending on the time.
  
- If a student continues to **answer a question incorrectly**, invite another student to add to the discussion. If the other student is having trouble as well, feel free to answer the question.

## Building a Friendship

1. Introduce your friend to a home-cooked meal from your country.
2. Go to dinner with your friend at a restaurant that serves an authentic version of your friend's native food.
3. Visit a local museum, zoo, or amusement park together. Go site-seeing together.
4. Exercise with your friend, i.e. take a walk, ride bikes, go swimming, etc.

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5. Take your friend to a local cultural event that highlights your friend's culture.
6. Invite your friend to church, Bible discussions, small group meetings, church events, or community outreach projects.
7. Celebrate your friend's birthday.
8. Serve your friend, i.e. introduce him to your city, help him to learn how to drive in your country, help him to learn the bus system, help him to shop at the grocery, etc.
9. Reach out to your friend through phone calls, emails, social media, and text messages.
10. Pray with your friend and for your friend. Prayer shows your friend how much God loves him and that you too genuinely care about his life.
11. Running out of things to say? Try the *Conversation Builders* in the TalkEnglish workbook on the Instructor's page of our website.

## Creating Community

1. Invite all the TalkEnglish students to a party where you can play games that help them with their English.
2. Invite all the TalkEnglish students on an outing to a local museum, park, lake, or international event.
3. Host a pot-luck lunch or dinner where students bring food from their home country.
4. Host a movie party and watch a Christian movie together.
5. Host a community prayer time for the instructors where instructors pray for the students.
6. Host a time for the instructors to ask questions and share stories about their students.

## A Note about Sensitive Countries

If you are working with students from sensitive countries, please do not use religious language in emails, unencrypted chat services, or unencrypted meeting platforms.

## Terms of Use, Code of Behavior, and Privacy Policy

Before beginning TalkEnglish as an instructor or seeking out new students, please read our Terms of Use, Code of Behavior, and Privacy Policy. These Terms are for your safety and security. For the safety and security of your students, please make sure that they read these Terms as well before beginning our program.

## A Final Word

As you share your gift of English and the Gospel with your new international friends and invite them into your life, you will naturally grow closer to the students you serve. While there is great joy in serving your students with their language needs, genuine friendship and the love of Christ will be the experience your friends will never forget. Some students may become lifelong friends and even new believers in Jesus – or God for the first time.

Thank you for serving our international friends and may God bless your sacrifice and service for the glory of his name!