

NECMETTIN ERBAKAN UNIVERSITY ENGLISH PREPARATORY SCHOOL
RECOMMENDED SELF-STUDY ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

PRONUNCIATION

Pronunciation – Self-Practice

1. Minimal Pairs – Practice sound contrasts (ship/sheep, cat/cut) out loud.
2. Slow → Normal → Fast – Say the same sentence at three speeds to build fluency and accuracy in pronunciation.
3. Shadowing - Immediately repeat a speaker’s words in real time to closely imitate pronunciation to master rhythm and intonation.
4. Mouth Awareness – Watch your own mouth in a mirror when saying tricky sounds (like “th”).
5. Tongue Twisters – Practice classic ones daily (“She sells seashells...”) to improve articulation.
6. Recording & Playback – Record yourself speaking and listen back to identify pronunciation errors and track improvement over time.

Pronunciation

1. Forvo – Pronunciation dictionary by native speakers worldwide.
Pros: Hear real accents, many languages.
Cons: Not for structured practice.
2. YouGlish – Search engine for real-life English pronunciation examples in context.
Pros: Hear words in thousands of authentic YouTube videos with transcripts.
Cons: Not structured lessons, but great for contextual practice.
3. ELSA Speak – AI speaking trainer with specific focus on pronunciation with instant feedback.
Pros: Very accurate; tracks progress.
Cons: Some lessons require premium.
4. Speechling – Free coaching app with native speaker feedback and daily practice.
Pros: Record your voice, compare instantly, get corrections from coaches.
Cons: Premium unlocks more coaching, but free plan is generous.
5. LingQ (Pronunciation practice feature) – Language learning app with text + audio shadowing.
Pros: Listen, repeat, and shadow real texts with native pronunciation.
Cons: Full course features require premium, but pronunciation practice is free.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary – Self-Practice

1. Word Journal – Write down 5 new words daily, add your own sentence, and review weekly.
2. Thematic Clusters – Group words by topics (e.g., travel, health) to strengthen associations.
3. Keyword Method – Create funny images/phrases that connect new English words with Turkish equivalents.
4. Active Recall – Cover the word and recall its meaning (paper flashcards or notebook).
5. Context Creation – Write a 3–4 sentence micro-story using newly learned words.
6. Collocations Practice – Learn words with their natural partners (e.g., make a decision, strong coffee) instead of in isolation.
7. Personal Connection – Relate the new word to your own life or experiences (e.g., delicious → "My mom's soup is delicious.").
8. Word Maps (Mind Maps) – Draw connections by adding synonyms, antonyms, examples, and pictures around the word.

Vocabulary Tools

1. Quizlet – Flashcards, games, and quizzes for memorizing vocabulary.
Pros: User-created decks; different modes.
Cons: Quality of decks varies.
2. Memrise – Vocabulary learning with mnemonics and short video clips.
Pros: Engaging and gamified; spaced repetition.
Cons: Some advanced features require premium.
3. Anki – Spaced-repetition flashcards for self-study.
Pros: Powerful memory tool; customizable.
Cons: Steep learning curve.
4. WordUp – Focuses on frequency and real-life usage.
Pros: Personalized learning path.
Cons: Less structured for beginners.
5. Vocabulary.com – Quiz-style vocabulary learning with explanations.
Pros: Clear definitions and examples.
Cons: Website-like interface on mobile.

GRAMMAR

Grammar – Self-Practice

1. Sentence Transformation – Take a simple sentence and rewrite it in past, future, negative, question forms.
2. Daily Diary (Grammar Focus) – Write 3 sentences a day practicing a specific tense or structure.
3. Error Spotting – Write 10 sentences deliberately with errors, then correct them.
4. Rule Teaching – Explain a grammar point aloud as if teaching a friend (forces deeper understanding).
5. Pattern Building – Choose a grammar pattern (e.g., “used to”) and create 5 unique examples.
6. Grammar in Context – Highlight examples of a grammar point while reading or watching something in English.

Grammar Tools

1. LearnEnglish Grammar (British Council) – Structured grammar exercises.
Pros: Covers all levels; reliable source.
Cons: Grammar only, no integration with skills.
2. Johnny Grammar’s Word Challenge – Quick quiz game on grammar/vocabulary.
Pros: Fun, gamified approach.
Cons: Not very detailed in explanations.
3. English Grammar Test (SevenLynx) – Comprehensive grammar quiz app.
Pros: Detailed explanations; good for test prep.
Cons: Basic design.
4. Simpli (Simpler English) – Simplifies texts, highlighting grammar structures.
Pros: Helps see grammar in real context.
Cons: Free version limited.
5. Daily Grammar App – Lessons and quizzes for structured practice.
Pros: Easy to use, lesson-by-lesson progress.
Cons: Ads in free version.
6. Lingolia Grammar – Online explanations and exercises.
Pros: Clear rules with examples; available in multiple languages.
Cons: Not very interactive; mainly reading-based. Some features require premium.

READING

Reading – Self-Practice

1. Read Aloud – Improves both reading comprehension and pronunciation.
2. Summarize in English – After reading a paragraph, write or say a short summary in your own words.
3. Underline Unknown Words – Guess their meaning from context before checking later.
4. Skimming & Scanning Drills – Time yourself to find main ideas or details quickly.
5. Re-reading for Depth – Read the same passage three times: first for meaning, second for details, third for vocabulary focus.
6. Vocabulary Notebook – Write down 5 useful words/phrases from each text and make your own example sentences.
7. Silent Reading + Retelling – Read silently, then close the text and retell it in English without looking.

Reading Tools

1. Beelinguapp – Parallel texts with audio narration.
Pros: Side-by-side Turkish/English texts.
Cons: Free library limited.
2. LingQ – Read authentic materials, highlight and save vocabulary.
Pros: Personalized reading input.
Cons: Some content locked behind premium.
3. BBC Learning English – Stories Section – Authentic news and stories.
Pros: Updated regularly, reliable source.
Cons: UK accent focus.
4. News in Levels – News articles written at three difficulty levels.
Pros: Great for graded reading.
Cons: Limited to news genre.
5. Sözlük Plus (Türkiye-based) – Reading with fast English–Turkish dictionary support.
Pros: Useful for academic reading.
Cons: Best as support tool, not full lessons.
6. English e-Reader (<https://english-e-reader.net/>)
Pros: Free access to hundreds of graded short stories and books.
Cons: Some classic stories may be slightly outdated; limited interactive exercises.

LISTENING

Listening – Self-Practice

1. Shadowing Technique – Listen to short audio (or your own recording) and repeat immediately, imitating rhythm and intonation.
2. Dictation Practice – Listen to any audio (even a song you know) and write down what you hear.
3. Chunk Repetition – Replay a 5–10 second clip until you can repeat it fluently.
4. Pause & Predict – Stop mid-sentence and predict what comes next.
5. Re-listen with Focus – First listen for general meaning, second for specific words, third for pronunciation/intonation.
6. Summarize Aloud – After listening, close your notes and retell the main ideas in your own words.
7. Speed Variation – Play audio at 0.75x for clarity, then again at 1.25x to train faster comprehension.

Listening Tools

1. Voscreen (Türkiye-based) – Movie/TV clips with comprehension checks.
Pros: Fun, addictive; Turkish-made.
Cons: Focused on short clips, not extended listening.
2. VOA Learning English – Simplified American news with transcripts.
Pros: Good for intermediate learners.
Cons: Slower than natural speech.
3. TED-Ed – Educational short talks with subtitles.
Pros: Inspiring, academic style.
Cons: Can be advanced.
4. BBC Sounds (Learning English Podcasts) – Interviews, stories, and drama.
Pros: Wide variety of listening genres.
Cons: UK-centric.
5. Ello.org (App) – Thousands of short listening clips with quizzes.
Pros: Many accents and topics.
Cons: Outdated interface.
6. BBC Learning English – 6 Minute English
Pros: Short, practical, focused on everyday topics.
Cons: Limited depth, only a few minutes long.

WRITING

Writing – Self-Practice

1. Daily Journal – Write 5–10 sentences about your day.
2. Timed Writing – Give yourself 10 minutes to write on any topic, no stopping, then review.
3. Paraphrasing Exercise – Take one of your sentences and rewrite it in 2–3 different ways.
4. Sentence Expansion – Start with a short sentence and gradually add details to make it more complex.
5. Peerless Editing – After a break, re-read your own writing and find 3–5 mistakes to fix.
6. Summary Writing – Read a short article or watch a video, then write a 3–5 sentence summary in your own words.

Writing Tools

1. Grammarly – Checks grammar, style, and clarity in writing.
Pros: Real-time corrections.
Cons: Advanced features require premium.
2. LanguageTool – Free grammar/style checker.
Pros: Open-source; multilingual.
Cons: Less detailed than Grammarly.
3. Write & Improve (Cambridge) – Submit essays and get instant CEFR-based feedback.
Pros: Excellent for academic prep.
Cons: Requires internet.
4. Drafts – Minimalist writing app for note-taking and practice.
Pros: Distraction-free writing.
Cons: No corrections.
5. Notion (free version) – Organize essays, drafts, and research notes.
Pros: Great for structure and planning.
Cons: Needs self-discipline, no auto-corrections.
6. Writing Pal – AI-powered writing tutor with practice exercises.

Pros: Provides guided writing strategies, feedback, and interactive tasks to build academic writing skills.

Cons: Less known than Grammarly/Write & Improve; interface may feel dated.

SPEAKING

Speaking – Self-Practice

1. Mirror Speaking – Talk to yourself in English for 2 minutes in front of a mirror.
2. Topic Monologues – Pick a random topic (e.g., food, travel) and speak for 1–2 minutes.
3. Self Q&A – Ask yourself a question (e.g., “What did I do yesterday?”) and answer in full sentences.
4. Record & Reflect – Record your voice daily and listen for errors or unclear parts.
5. Thinking in English – Spend 5 minutes mentally describing what you see around you in English.
6. Shadowing Practice – Listen to a short podcast or video and repeat what you hear at the same time, imitating pronunciation and intonation.

Speaking Tools

1. HelloTalk – Voice/text chat with learners worldwide.
Pros: Real interaction, cultural exchange.
Cons: Free version has limits.
2. Tandem – Language exchange via text, audio, or video.
Pros: Peer-to-peer speaking practice.
Cons: Depends on finding active partners.
3. Speak English Fluently (TalkEnglish) – Practice common phrases with audio.
Pros: Focuses on everyday conversation.
Cons: Less interactive.
4. Speechling – Record speech and compare with native audio.
Pros: Great for fluency practice.
Cons: Premium needed for tutor feedback.
5. ConversationExchange (App version) – Find speaking partners for online practice.
Pros: Free partner search tool.
Cons: Less structured, partner quality varies.
6. Speeko – AI-powered speech coach for presentations and speaking practice.

Pros: Real-time feedback on pace, tone, fillers, and intonation; progress tracking; personalized exercises.

Cons: Full features require subscription; mostly iOS/Mac (limited Android support).