

General English for Students of Geography

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Dr Mahdi Dahmardeh, Faculty Member at the University of Tehran

More information at <http://dahmardeh.com/dahmardeh-mahdi/en/node/310>

*In
The Name
Of God*

The text 'In The Name Of God' is written in a highly decorative, cursive calligraphic font. The words are arranged in three lines: 'In' on the top line, 'The Name' on the middle line, and 'Of God' on the bottom line. The letters are intertwined with elegant flourishes, including swirls and small stars. A large, dark, crescent-shaped shadow or underline is positioned beneath the words 'The Name Of God'. The entire graphic is set against a background with a faint, diagonal watermark.

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Introduction	1
Introductory Sections	
Phonetic Symbols of the English Language	3
Reading Strategies	5
How to Use a Dictionary	8
English Grammar in a Nutshell	11
Letter Writing	17
Writing a CV or resume	19
Unit 1	
Geography	20
Unit 2	
The Environment	41
Unit 3	
Travel & Tourism	58
Unit 4	
Religion	75
Unit 5	
Countries, Nationalities and Languages	96
Unit 6	
Globalisation	118
Unit 7	
Alternative Energy	139

Introduction

The following material is designed for the 1st year undergraduate students of Geography at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literature, the University of Tehran. The need for this type of learning material has emerged from my personal teaching experience at this faculty and the lack of specific learning material for this target group of students.

Before I introduce the main objectives of the textbook I would like to emphasise the fact that I managed to use this material in practice and adjusted it to the needs of the students. The truth is that the level of English with 1st year students of Geography is very diverse. However, I hope to have incorporated this fact in the material and put more emphasis on vocabulary for more advanced students and less demanding in grammar area for less advanced students. The main objective of the textbook is to improve essential language skills (mainly speaking, reading, listening and vocabulary) with intermediate students with an especial focus on the topics related to their field of study.

This textbook is mainly designed to cover general English. It also introduces basic geography topics. Prior to teaching the main units, my dear colleagues are recommend spending two or three sessions on teaching the introductory sections (Phonetic Symbols of the English Language, Reading Strategies, How to Use a Dictionary, English Grammar in a Nutshell, Letter Writing and Writing a CV or resume).

The course book consists of 7 units, each of them designed for 4 teaching sessions which should sufficiently cover 16-week term. The layout of each unit is very similar and I aimed to focus on all skills. Each unit starts with a recitation from the Holy Quran. Students are expected to listen to a Surah from the Holy Quran and then try to answer the questions that follow. The topic of each unit is introduced with a picture. The next stage is to elicit any ideas students might have about the topic dealt with and slowly concentrate on the vocabulary used with such topic. Comprehension check is a pre-speaking activity which eventually leads to a discussion or doing a quiz. Since our university students often struggle with written assignments and giving presentation, the very last activity of each unit should sum up the main issues discussed either in a written form or an oral presentation.

As mentioned above, giving presentation is one of the main things that the university students in Iran often struggle with. To cope with the problem, it is highly recommended during the first session of the term, lecturers ask every one of the students to choose a topic (i.e. a city outside Iran, Unit 1 – last page) for presentation. It is lecturers' responsibility to teach the students the main points that must be covered during a good presentation. This activity would help students in different aspects. The very first thing would be making them familiar with strategies that are required in presenting an oral presentation. Secondly, students would have to learn working with at

least one programme i.e. Microsoft PowerPoint. Thirdly, students are required to carry out a research in order to collect relevant data about their topic. Finally, this activity would empower students with the ability to talk in front of their colleagues as well as being able to answer possible questions that may emerge later. It's lecturers' responsibility to make students participate in such activities.

Some of the main features that distinguish this book from the available materials in market can be named as: **This is the first book in general English which is printed all in colour, I am also proud to announce that the book that you've got in your hands is well written based on the Islamic and Shia beliefs so that it would fill the gap that exists, finally it has to be pointed out that this textbook is designed according to the latest strategies for teaching the English language as well as applying authentic materials.**

Since I am not educated in geography, my main resources were reliable internet websites as well as textbooks which are prepared dealing with such topics and direct confrontation with students of this subject.

I would also like to indicate that I would appreciate your kind feedback and comments so that I can make this textbook more compatible with your needs within the next editions. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to recommend visiting the website (<http://www.dahmardeh.com/2/gesg>) regularly for supporting materials.

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