

Welcome to Touchstone!

We created the **Touchstone** series with the help of the *Cambridge International Corpus* of North American English. The corpus is a large database of language from everyday conversations, radio and television broadcasts, and newspapers and books.

Using computer software, we analyze the corpus to find out how people actually use English. We use the corpus as a “touchstone” to make sure that each lesson teaches you authentic and useful language. The corpus helps us choose and explain the grammar, vocabulary, and conversation strategies you need to communicate successfully in English.

Touchstone makes learning English fun. It gives you many

different opportunities to interact with your classmates. You can exchange personal information, take class surveys, role-play situations, play games, and discuss topics of personal interest. Using **Touchstone**, you can develop confidence in your ability to understand real-life English and to express yourself clearly and effectively in everyday situations.

We hope you enjoy using **Touchstone** and wish you every success with your English classes.

Michael McCarthy
Jeanne McCarten
Helen Sandiford

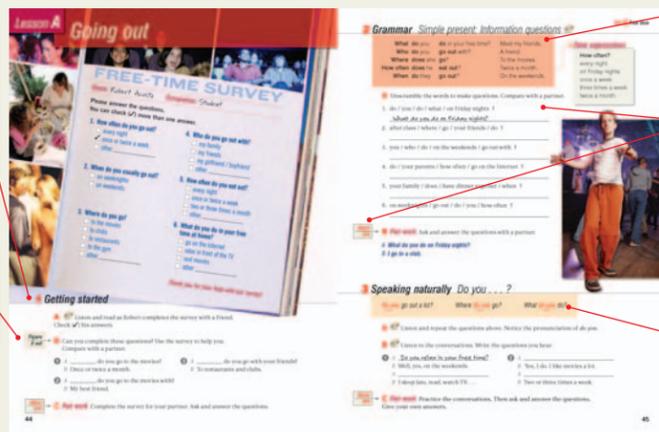
Unit features

Getting started presents new grammar in natural contexts such as surveys, interviews, conversations, and phone messages.

Figure it out challenges you to notice how grammar works.

Building language builds on the grammar presented in Lesson A.

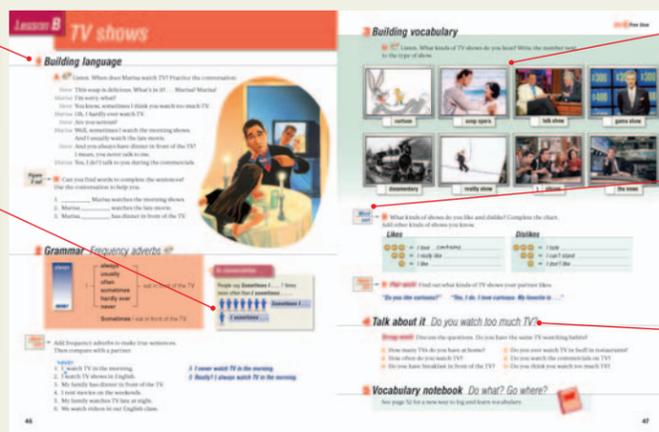
In conversation panels tell you about the grammar and vocabulary that are most frequent in spoken English.



Grammar is presented in clear charts.

Grammar exercises give you practice with new structures and opportunities to exchange personal information with your classmates.

Speaking naturally helps you understand and use natural pronunciation and intonation.



Building vocabulary uses pictures to introduce new words and expressions.

Word sort helps you organize vocabulary and then use it to interact with your classmates.

Talk about it encourages you to discuss interesting questions with your classmates.

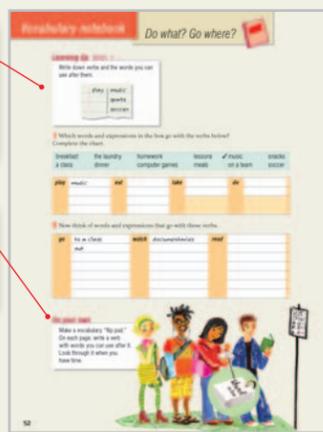
Conversation strategy helps you “manage” conversations better. In this lesson, you learn how to ask questions that aren’t too direct. The strategies are based on examples from the corpus.



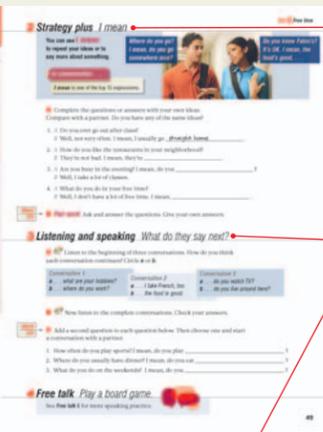
Reading has interesting texts from newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. The activities help you develop reading skills.



Vocabulary notebook is a page of fun activities to help you organize and write down vocabulary.



On your own is a practical task to help you learn vocabulary outside of class.



Strategy plus teaches important expressions for conversation management, such as **I mean**, **Well**, and **Anyway**.

Listening and speaking skills are often practiced together. You listen to a variety of conversations based on real-life language. Tasks include “listen and react” activities.

Writing tasks include e-mails, letters, short articles, and material for Web pages.



Help notes give you information on things like punctuation, linking ideas, and organizing information.

Free talk helps you engage in free conversation with your classmates.



Other features

A **Touchstone checkpoint** after every three units reviews grammar, vocabulary, and conversation strategies.

A **Self-study Audio CD/CD-ROM** gives you more practice with listening, speaking, and vocabulary building.

The **Class Audio Program** presents the conversations and listening activities in natural, lively English.

The **Workbook** gives you language practice and extra reading and writing activities. **Progress checks** help you assess your progress.