

PLATO Course TABE Language Level D

Course Overview

The PLATO Course TABE Language Level D is outlined according to the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE). The TABE is an analytical and reliable test, created to assess proficiency levels and aptitude of adult learners. The PLATO Course TABE Language Level D consists of three units designed to enhance your language skills. The first unit will focus on language structure and functions, and contains detailed lessons on grammar. The second unit is comprised of diverse writing strategies to improve your writing ability. The third unit will help you enhance your workplace writing. There are sections in each lesson that explain concepts in an easy-to-understand manner and help you practice what you have learned through activities and tests.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Study prepositions, and recognize and use a prepositional phrase in a sentence.
- Use articles and identify adjectives as well as adverbs in a sentence.
- Recognize three kinds of verbal phrases—participial, gerund, and infinitive.
- Learn three pairs of confusing verbs—“lie/lay,” “sit/set,” and “rise/raise,” and choose the correct verb form to use in a sentence.
- Use word signs to identify prepositional and participial phrases, and independent and dependent clauses.
- Study subject-verb agreement and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
- Correct run-on sentences, use “so” correctly in sentences, and learn when to use commas in sentences.
- Correctly use confusing words such as “principal/principle,” “affect/effect,” “accept/except,” and “lose/loose,” and understand the difference between the words in these pairs: “whose/who’s,” “lay/lie,” and “sit/set.”
- Identify and connect sentences that do not connect logically, and learn to develop and organize a paragraph.
- Anticipate counterarguments in your thesis, and study strategies to improve the quality of your peer review feedback.
- Learn to write precisely, and correct the overuse of the verb “to be.”
- Use parallel structures to emphasize your ideas, and expand a knowledge inventory to explore outside perspectives on your topic.
- Take control of your sources by avoiding plagiarism, and use a checklist to proofread your work.

- Monitor your thesis and use an effective anecdote to strengthen the introduction and conclusion of a paper.
- Reason out arguments for which you have no direct evidence, and narrow your topic by looking at a group of facts.
- Write a letter of application in response to an advertisement, and respond to items in an application correctly.
- Explore different strategies to write business letters and memos.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Understand the basics of spreadsheet software, such as Microsoft Excel or Google Spreadsheets, but having prior computing experience is not necessary.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email, and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Course Materials

- Notebook
- Computer with internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft Excel or equivalent

Unit 1: Language Structure and Function

Summary

Unit 1 will introduce you to prepositions. Here, you will recognize and use a prepositional phrase in a sentence. You will use articles and learn to identify adjectives and adverbs in a sentence. Then, you will recognize three kinds of verbal phrases—participial, gerund, and infinitive, and learn three pairs of confusing verbs—“lie/lay,” “sit/set,” and “rise/raise,” to choose the correct verb form to use them in a sentence. You will choose a verb that agrees in number with the subject of a sentence, and a pronoun that agrees with the noun to which it refers. You will also select the correct form of a pronoun based on its function in the sentence. Further, you will learn to use adjectives and adverbs properly in various degrees of comparison. In this unit, you will also use word signs to identify phrases such as prepositional and participial, and clauses such as independent and dependent. You will correctly use confusing words such as “principal/principle,” “affect/effect,” “accept/except,” and “lose/loose.” Apart from this, you will learn the differences between a sentence fragment and a complete sentence, and distinguish between independent and dependent clauses in sentences. You will find and correct run-on sentences. You will also use “so” correctly in sentences and learn when to use commas to set off words or phrases that identify other words or phrases nearby. This unit also helps you to study the difference between the words in these pairs: “whose/who’s,” “lay/lie,” and “sit/set.” In the latter part of this unit, you will use the right kind of linking word to join two thoughts in a sentence. You will also use hyphens in modifiers that contain more than one word when the first one ends in -ly. Lastly, you will be able to differentiate and use the following words appropriately: “borrow/lend,” “bring/take,” and “all ready/already.”

Unit 2: Writing Strategies

Summary

In Unit 2, you will identify the qualities of a good topic sentence, and identify and choose the correct topic sentence for a paragraph. You will also arrange a series of related sentences in their logical order and identify sentences that are arranged illogically. Further, you will identify sentences that do not connect logically, identify methods to connect those sentences, and choose a word that best relates one sentence to another. This unit also helps you to identify and eliminate wordiness, unclear meaning, and improper use of voice in paragraphs, and select improved structures. Additionally, you will identify paragraphs developed by examples, sequences of events, comparing and contrasting, and cause and effect. In one of the lessons in this unit, you will learn to identify the sentences in a paragraph that develop the topic sentence and identify which sentences within a paragraph do not relate to the topic sentence.

In the next level, the lessons focus on various writing strategies. Here, you will generate counterarguments with the help of a friend, develop counterarguments to help you write a persuasive essay, and identify as well as analyze potential counterarguments to your thesis. You will study strategies to increase the quality of your peer review feedback, conduct peer reviews in multiple passes, and make comments that provide specific suggestions for improvement when doing a peer review. This unit also contains lessons where you will correct overuse of the verb “to be,” correct vague descriptions and imprecise verbs, and replace vague language with precise phrasing. You will use parallel structures to foster emphasis and clarity in your writing without overusing them, and use your creativity to expand your use of outside perspectives in a knowledge inventory. You will also generate questions for people who will review your essays so that they give good feedback. Then, you will learn to avoid plagiarism by controlling your use of research in a paper, interpret and decide between ways to use the source material in a paper, and take control of your sources. You will also use a checklist to proofread your work and personalize your proofreading checklist.

Later in this unit, you will expand your research by using one source to find other sources and to identify experts and recent publications. You will identify and replace inflated or complicated language in your writing. Additionally, you will monitor your thesis to ensure your essay is relevant to the topic, check each paragraph against the thesis statement, and rewrite your thesis if your essay has digressed from the topic. You will use spoken sources of information such as debates and interviews, prepare a careful list of research questions, take appropriate notes, and use these spoken sources to find and develop ideas for a research paper. You will also write strong anecdotes, use an anecdote in the body of an essay to clarify a difficult concept or to support an argument, and understand how an effective anecdote can strengthen the introduction and conclusion of a paper. This unit will also help you to reason out arguments for which you have no direct evidence, generate indirect evidence for a position and its key arguments, and uncover reasoning to support arguments you believe are true but are hard to explain. Then, you will use an interesting fact to help narrow down your paper topic. Toward the end of this unit, you will carefully plan and draft tests, read a test question and organize your essay, and take your test essay through the revision process.

Unit 3: Writing for the Workplace

Summary

In this last unit, you will define the types of business writing and its characteristics and features. You will then identify the purpose and intended audience and describe the scope and medium of business messages. You’ll also identify audience needs and describe the use of different types of rhetoric in business writing. In addition, you will

write and format business memos and letters. Lastly, you will learn to write letters of application and describe the different parts of an application.