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GSE
Global Scale of English

The Global Scale of English: extending the CEFR to help more learners

Mike Mayor
Director, Global Scale of English

Image by Kanae Sato

Defining learner proficiency

Understanding the Common European Framework (CEFR)

In the mid-1990s, a European research study began.

Teachers in Switzerland were given hundreds of ‘can-do statements’ and asked to rate the level of difficulty for each of their students:

> *Can follow short, simple written directions (e.g. to go from X to Y)*
> *Can write very simple personal letters expressing thanks and apology.*
> *Can converse naturally, fluently and effectively.*

The Common European Framework (CEFR) was born.

Why don’t you just use the CEFR?

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001):

- developed in Europe for a European learning environment
- developed for adult and young adult learners
- uneven distribution of Can Do statements across the four skills
- 6 wide levels
- no information below A1
- mainly focussed on general English – insufficient information to support EAP and ESP courses

The CEFR: How many levels?

6

C2	Mastery	Proficient User
C1	Operational eff.	
B2	Vantage	Independent User
B1	Threshold	
A2	Waystage	Basic User
A1	Breakthrough	

10

CEFR LEVELS	
Mastery	C2
Operational eff.	C1
Vantage Plus	B2+
Vantage	B2
Threshold Plus	B1+
Threshold	B1
Waystage Plus	A2+
Waystage	A2
Breakthrough	A1
'Tourist'	

9

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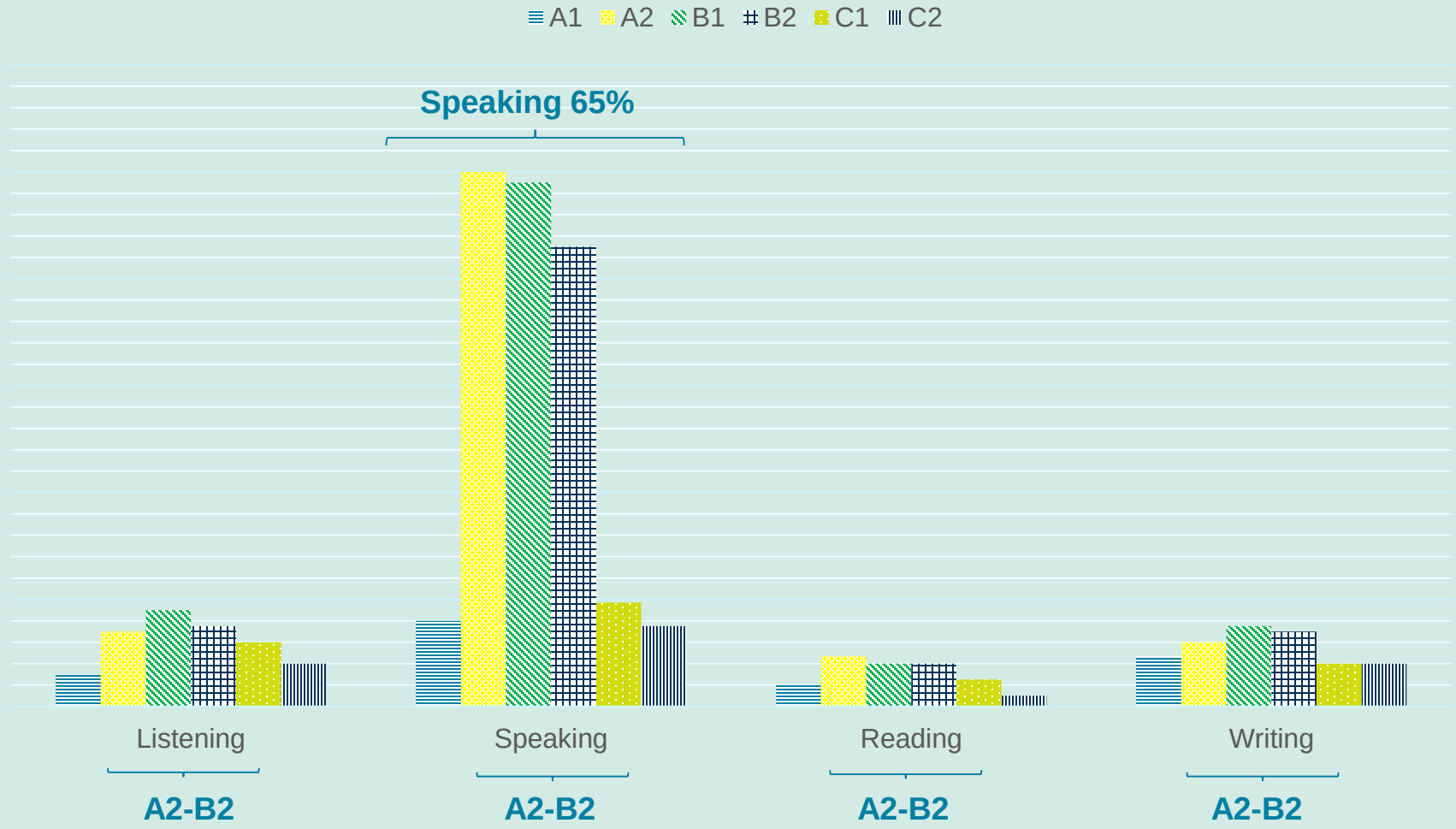
The CEFR: An uneven distribution of Can Do statements



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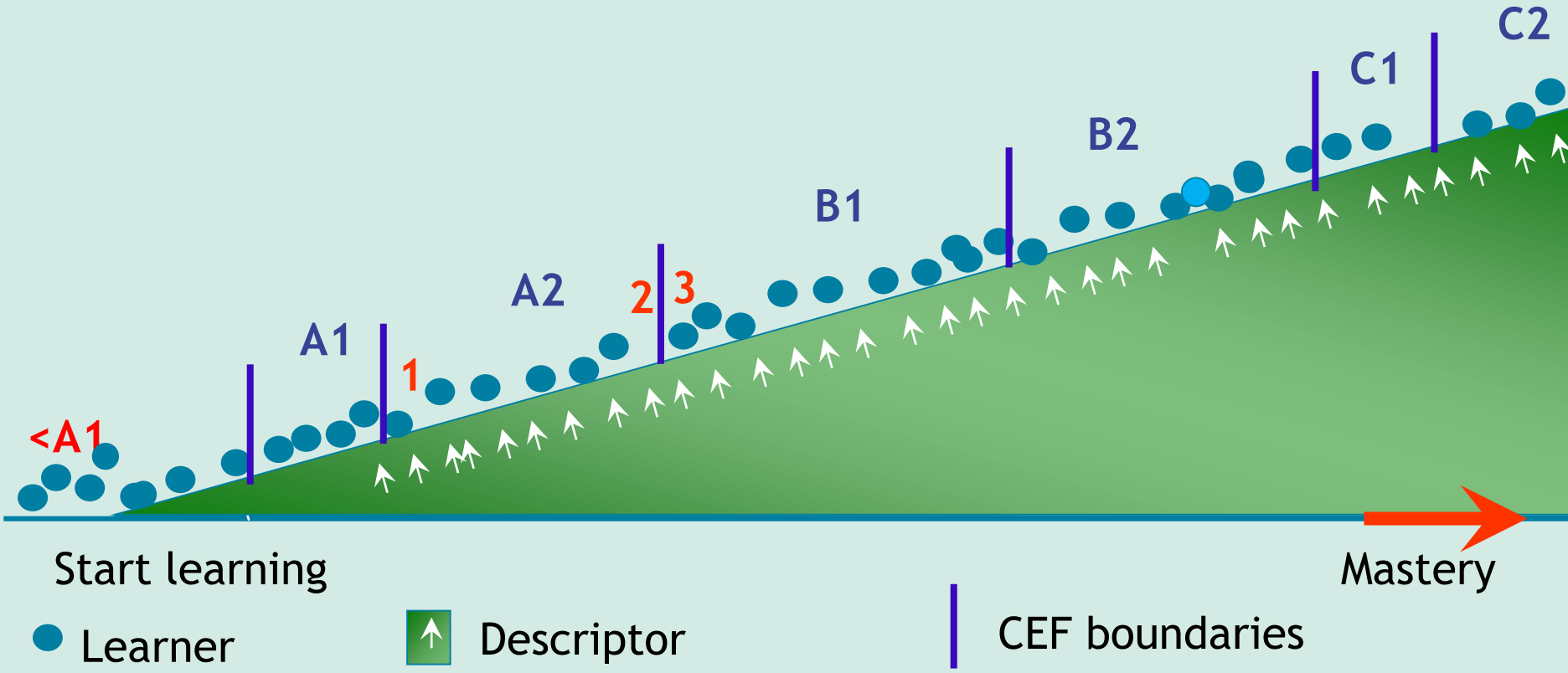
The CEFR: Losing the details of progress



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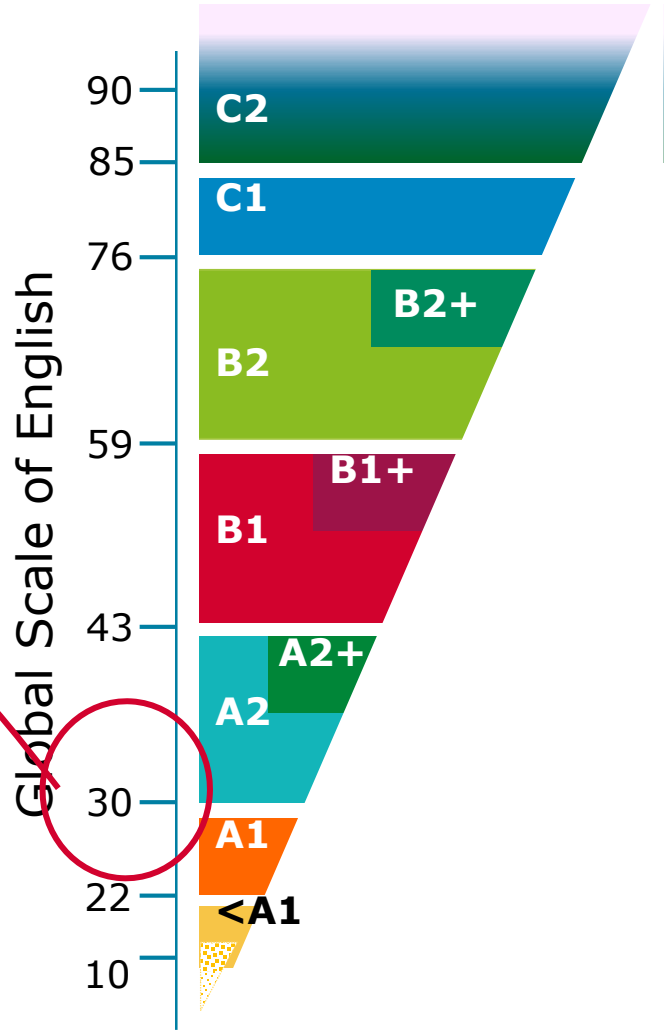
Taking the CEFR back to a more granular scale

A scale based on the original CEFR research

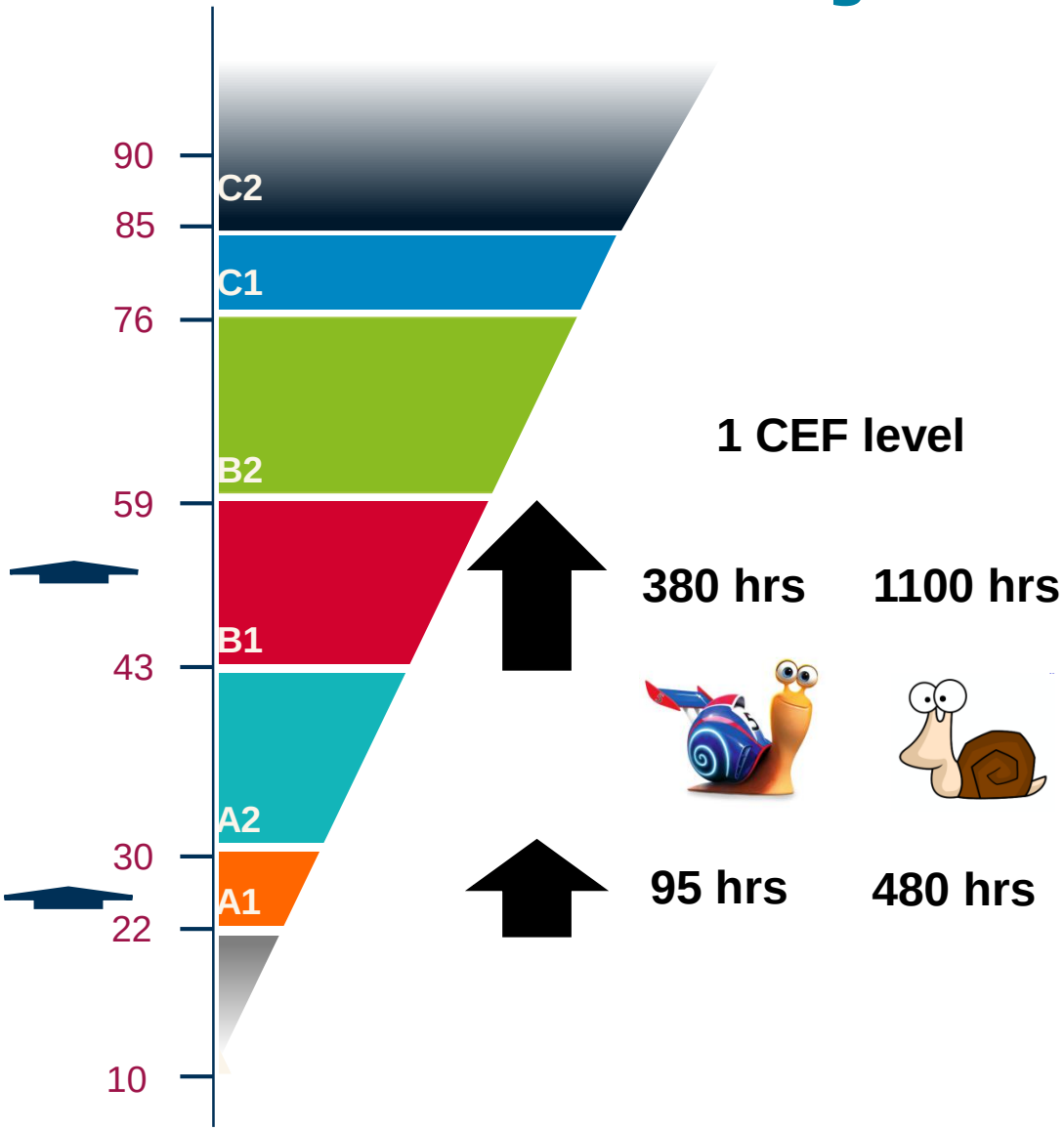
The original CEFR (North) research data was psychometrically aligned to the Global Scale of English through a linear transformation

LOGIT	CEFR	
>3.80	Mastery	C2
2.80	Operational eff.	C1
1.74 0.72	Vantage	B2+ B2
-0.26 -1.23	Threshold	B1+ B1
-2.21 -3.23	Waystage	A2+ A2
-4.29	Breakthrough	A1
-5.39	'Tourist'	



Motivational benefits of Global Scale of English

A more granular scale enables us to demonstrate progress over a shorter period of time.



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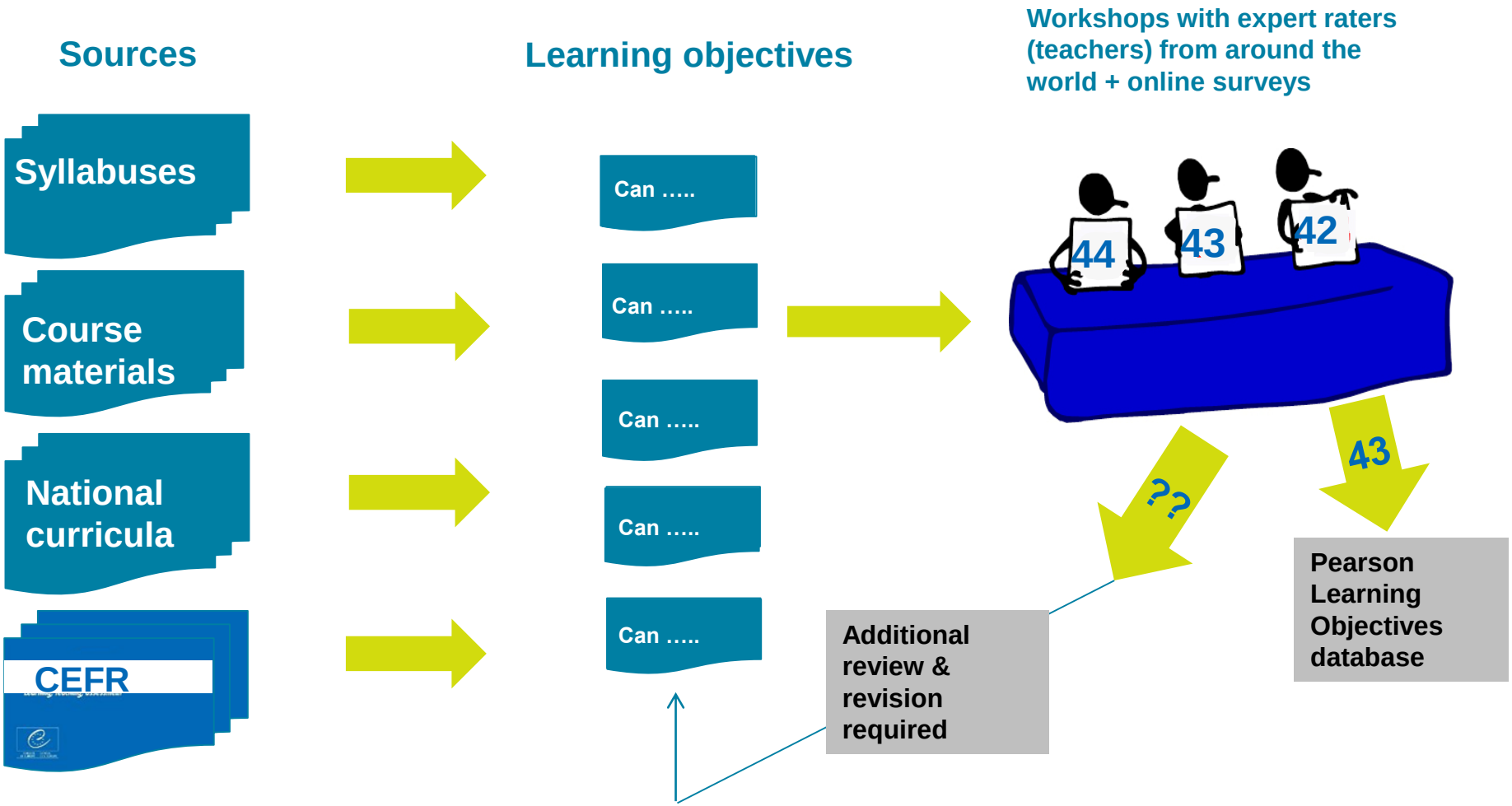
Extending the CEFR Can Do statements

Creating Learning Objectives

Defining what a learner “can do” at specific levels of the Global Scale of English



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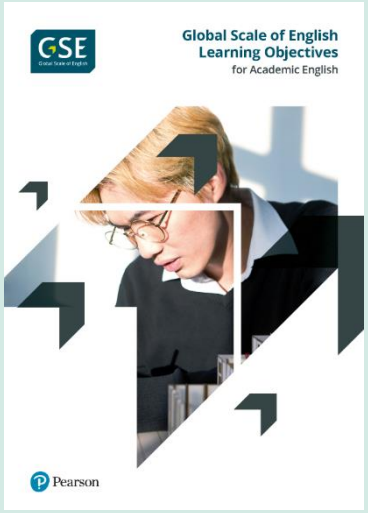
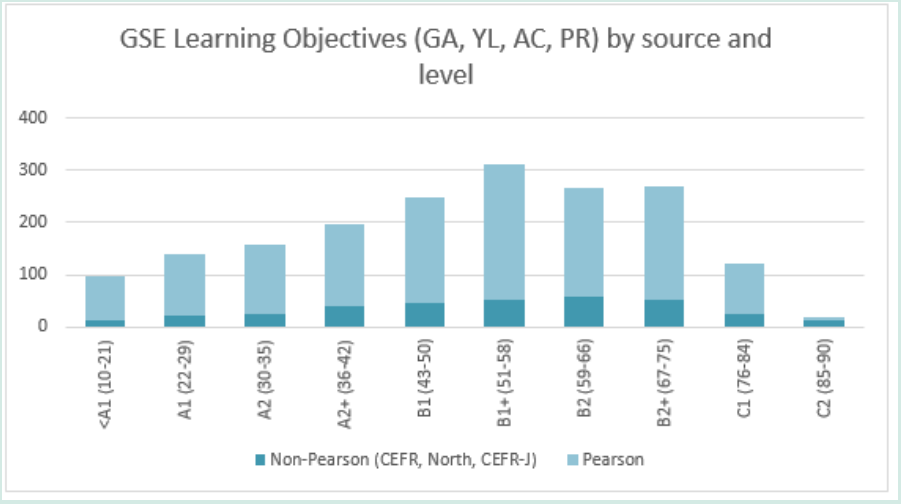
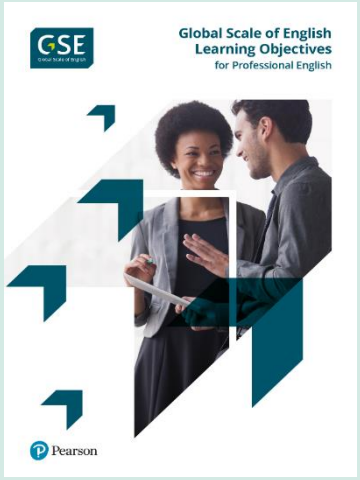
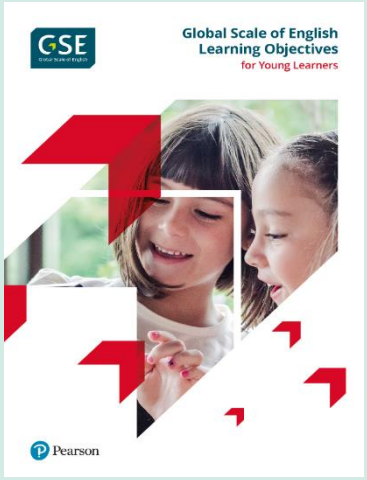
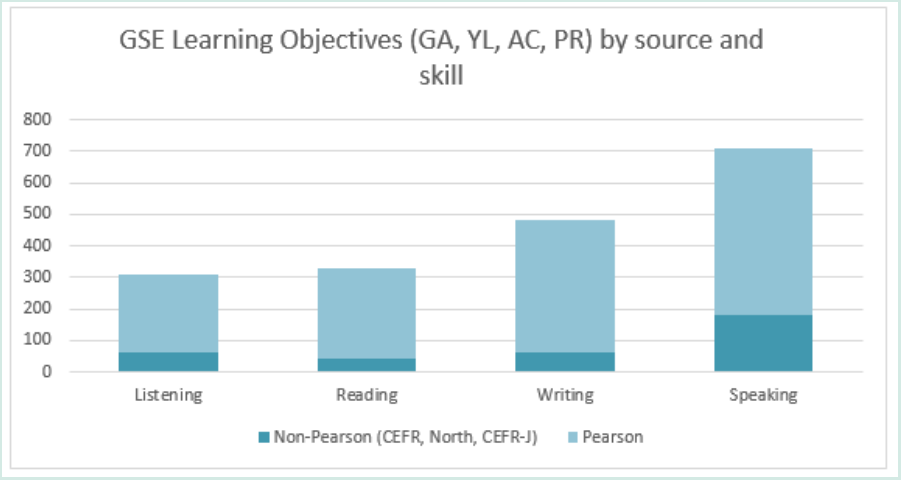
GSE Learning Objectives











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Reading

	Descriptor
1	Can distinguish between fact and opinion in a simple academic text.
2	Can infer meaning in a linguistically complex academic text.
3	Can skim a simple academic text to identify specific information.
4	Can critically evaluate the effectiveness of a simple problem-solution essay.
5	Can distinguish between the main idea and related ideas in a linguistically complex academic text.

Reading

	Descriptor	CEFR	GSE
3	Can skim a simple academic text to identify specific information.	B1	49
1	Can distinguish between fact and opinion in a simple academic text.	B1+	54
4	Can critically evaluate the effectiveness of a simple problem-solution essay.	B2	61
5	Can distinguish between the main idea and related ideas in a linguistically complex academic text.	B2+	70
2	Can infer meaning in a linguistically complex academic text.	C1	78

Listening

	Descriptor
1	Can follow the main points in a panel discussion in their field of specialisation.
2	Can follow lines of argument in a linguistically complex presentation or lecture.
3	Can identify a speaker's point of view in a simple presentation or lecture aimed at a general audience.
4	Can identify a speaker's bias in a presentation or discussion.
5	Can follow the main points in a simple audio recording, if provided with written supporting material.

Listening

	Descriptor	CEFR	GSE
5	Can follow the main points in a simple audio recording, if provided with written supporting material.	A2+	37
3	Can identify a speaker's point of view in a simple presentation or lecture aimed at a general audience.	B1	48
1	Can follow the main points in a panel discussion in their field of specialisation.	B2	64
4	Can identify a speaker's bias in a presentation or discussion.	B2+	73
2	Can follow lines of argument in a linguistically complex presentation or lecture.	B2+	75

“Simply tell students what they will be learning before the lesson begins and you can raise student achievement as much as 27 percent”

John Hattie (2013)

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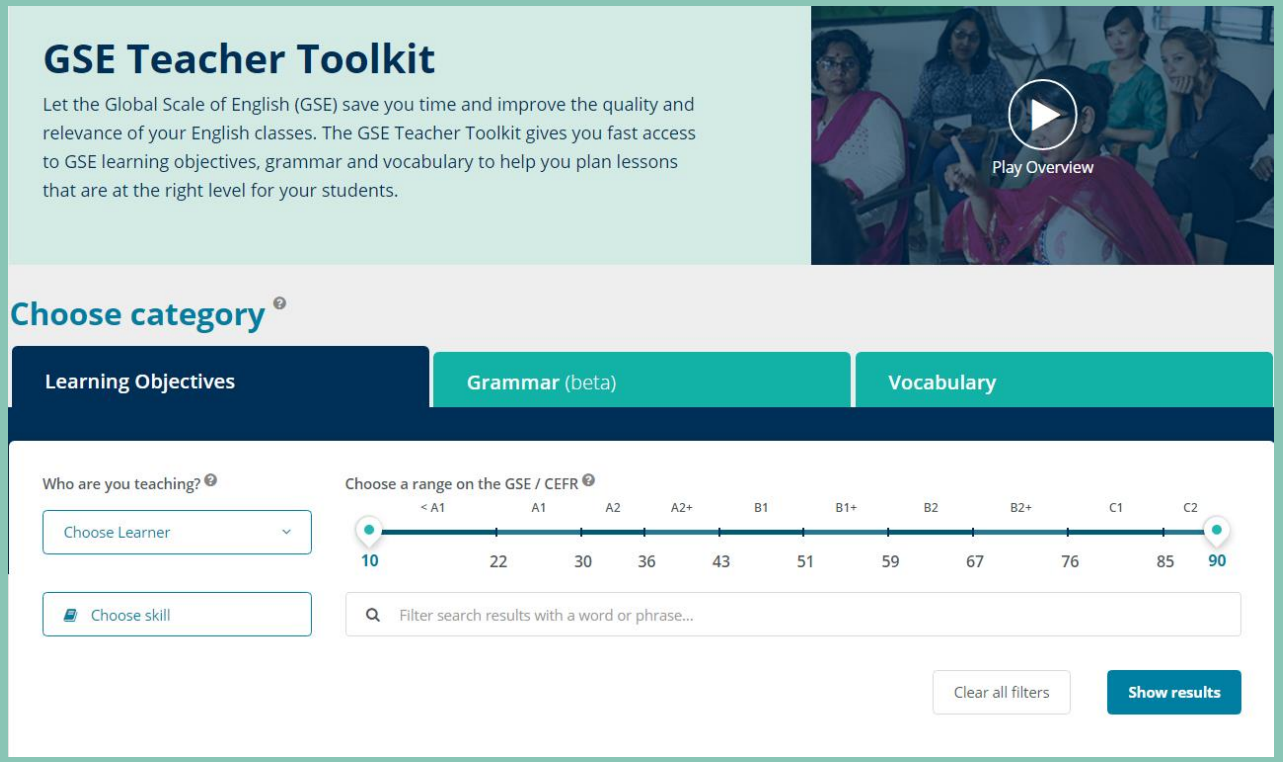

Introducing the GSE Teacher Toolkit

Identifying appropriate learning objectives

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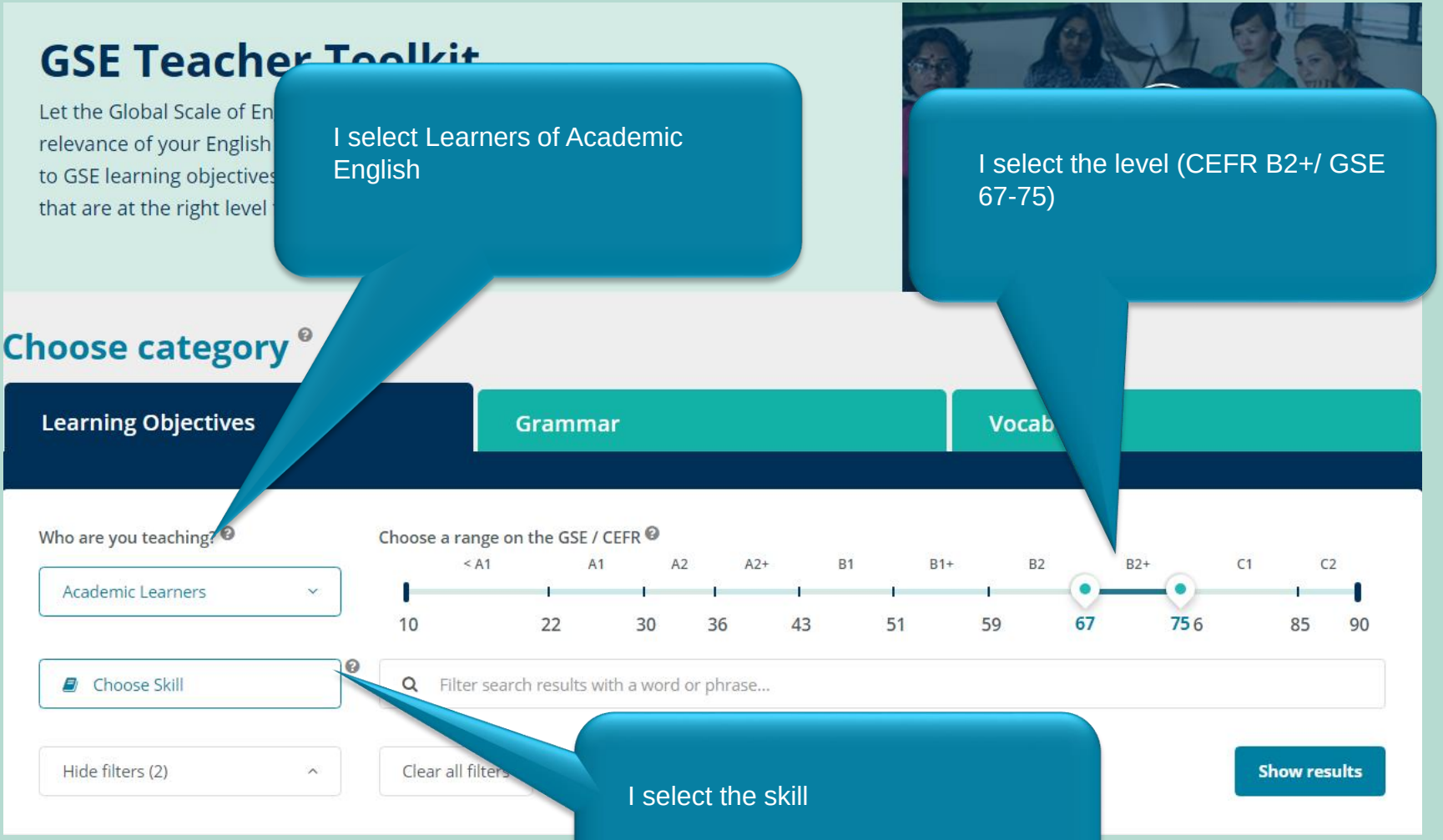
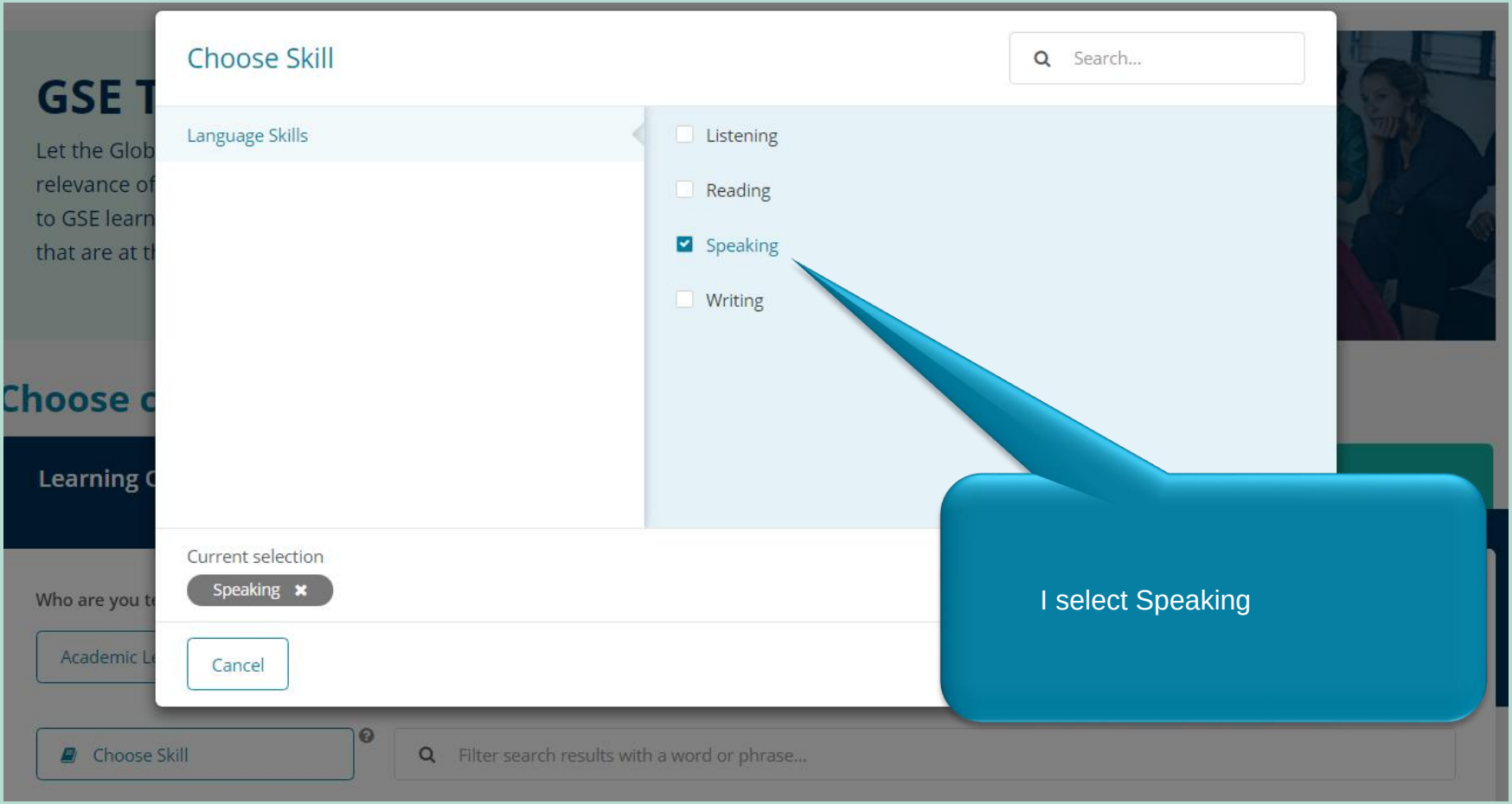
Identifying appropriate learning objectives



Identifying appropriate learning objectives



Identifying appropriate learning objectives

I have 58 learning objectives to chose from

Ordered by GSE level

Search results 58

Download results as PDF

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	SKILL	GSE ▲	CEFR
Can give detailed technical instructions in their field of specialisation. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can give a presentation or lecture in their field of specialisation. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can make a verbal summary to confirm their understanding of a linguistically complex discourse. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can put forward a smoothly flowing and logical structured argument, highlighting significant points. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can suggest alternatives to hypothetical proposals in a general discussion. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can negotiate a solution to a dispute (e.g. an undeserved traffic ticket, blame for an accident). ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can use circumlocution and paraphrase to cover gaps in vocabulary and structure. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)

Identifying appropriate learning objectives

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	SKILL	GSE ▲	CEFR
Can give detailed technical instructions in their field of specialisation. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can give a presentation or lecture in their field of specialisation. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
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Can put forward a smoothly flowing and logical structured argument, highlighting significant points. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)
Can suggest alternatives to hypothetical proposals in a general discussion. ©	Speaking	73	B2+ (67-75)

RELATED GRAMMAR

Can describe hypothetical (counterfactual) results of a current action or situation using the second conditional.

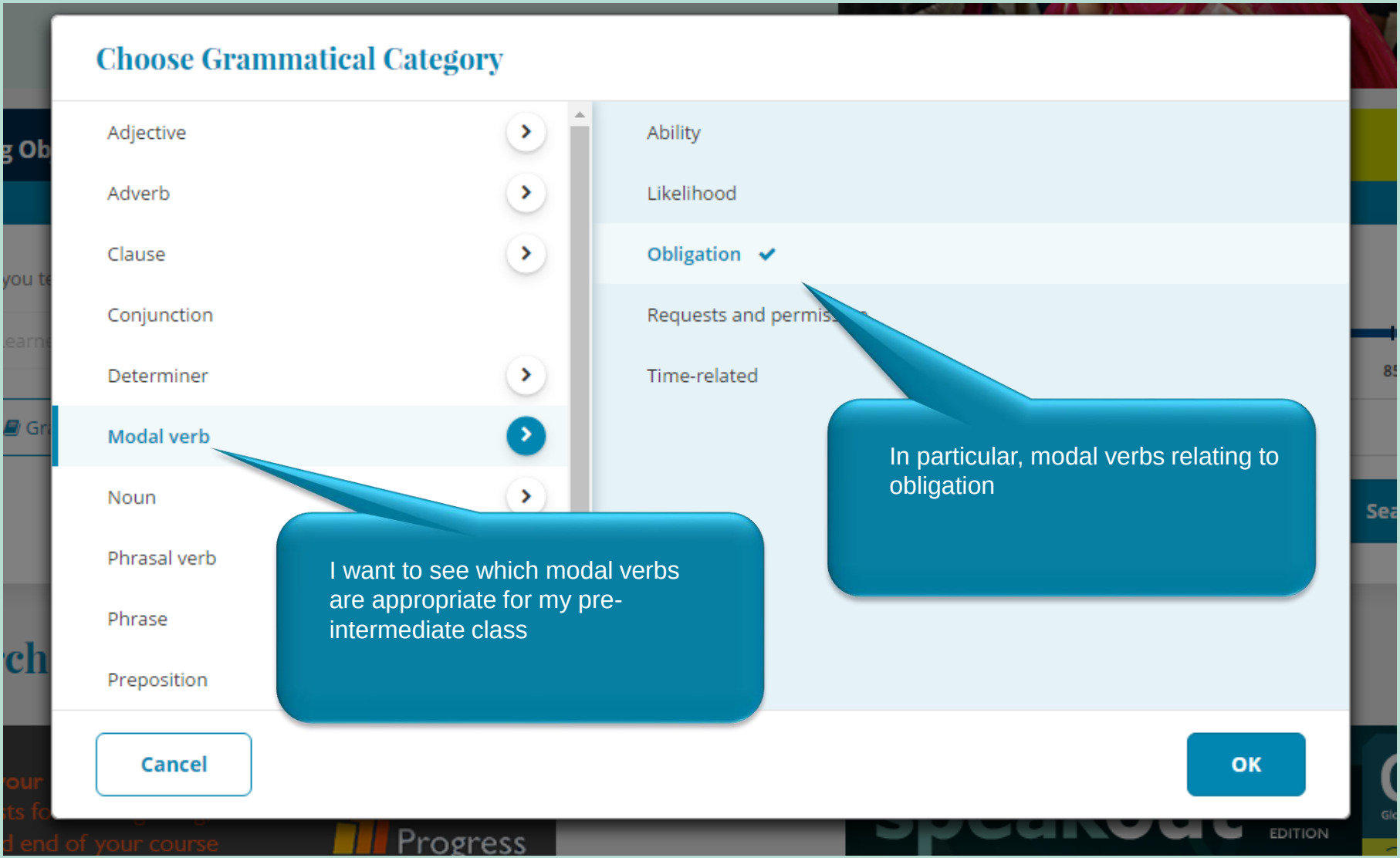
Can describe hypothetical (counterfactual) results of an action or situation using the second or third conditional in the passive.

Show more

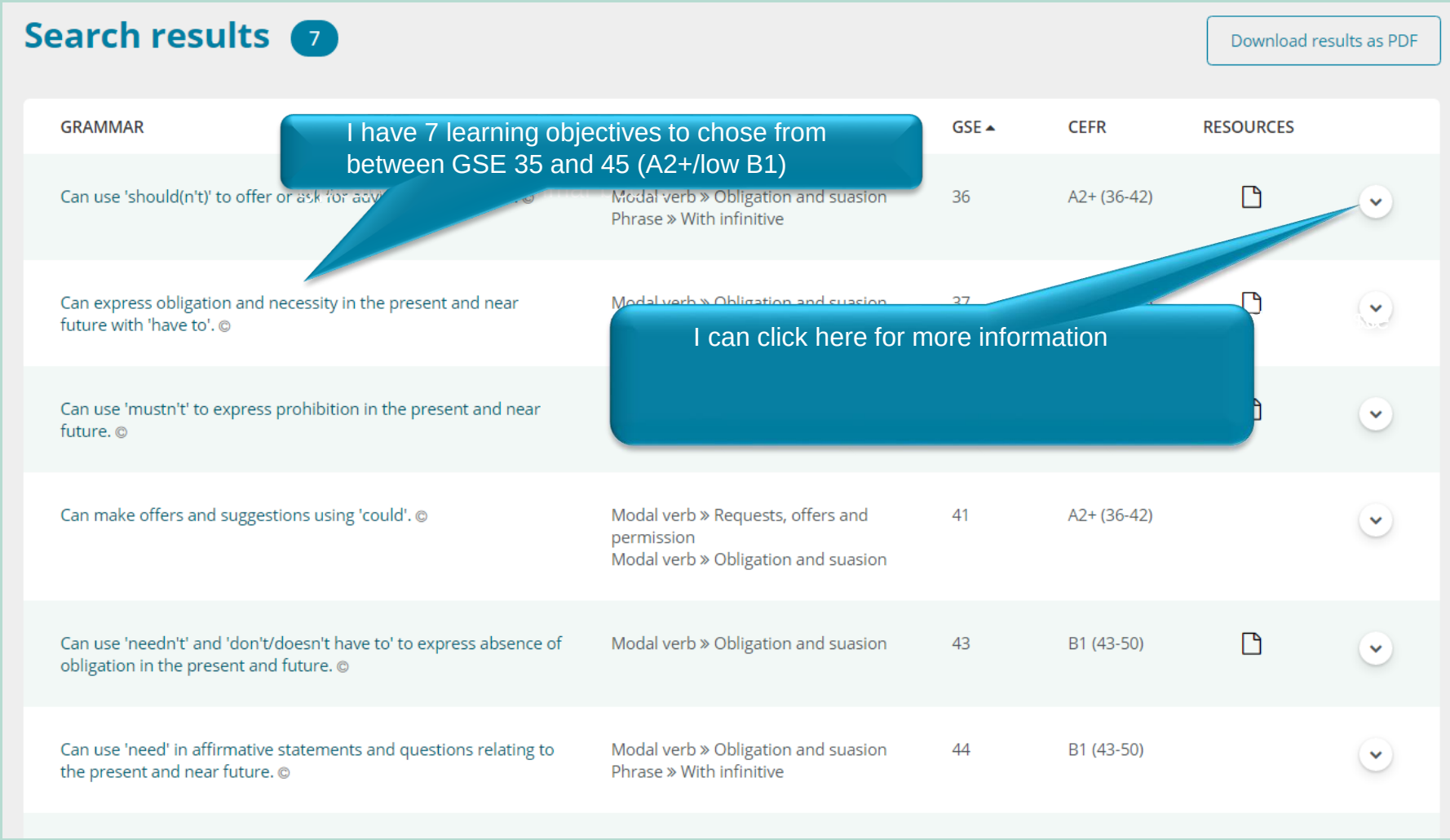
I can see links to grammar that might be needed for this Learning Objective

Identifying appropriate grammar

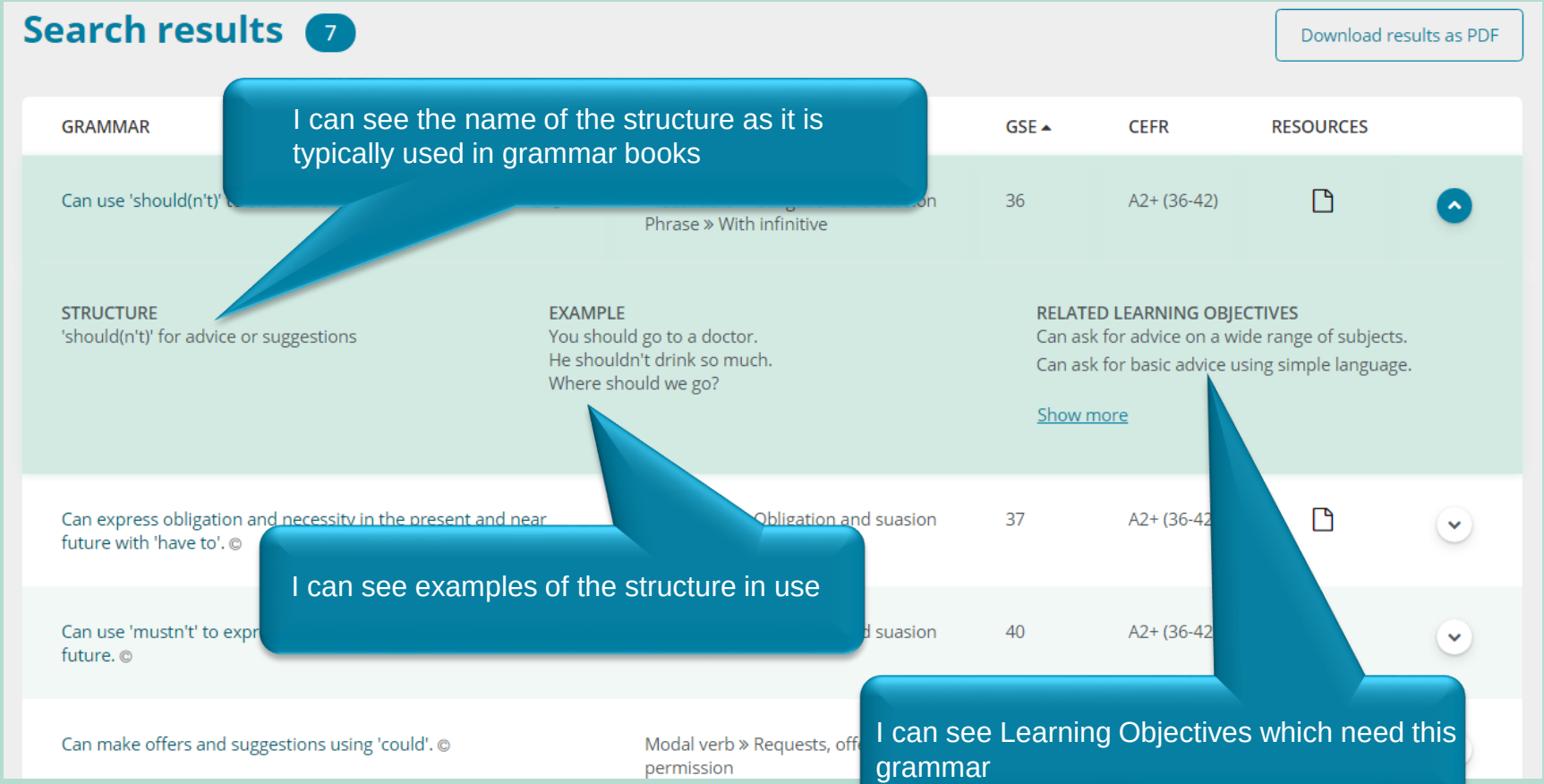
Identifying appropriate grammar



Identifying appropriate grammar



Identifying appropriate grammar



Identifying appropriate grammar

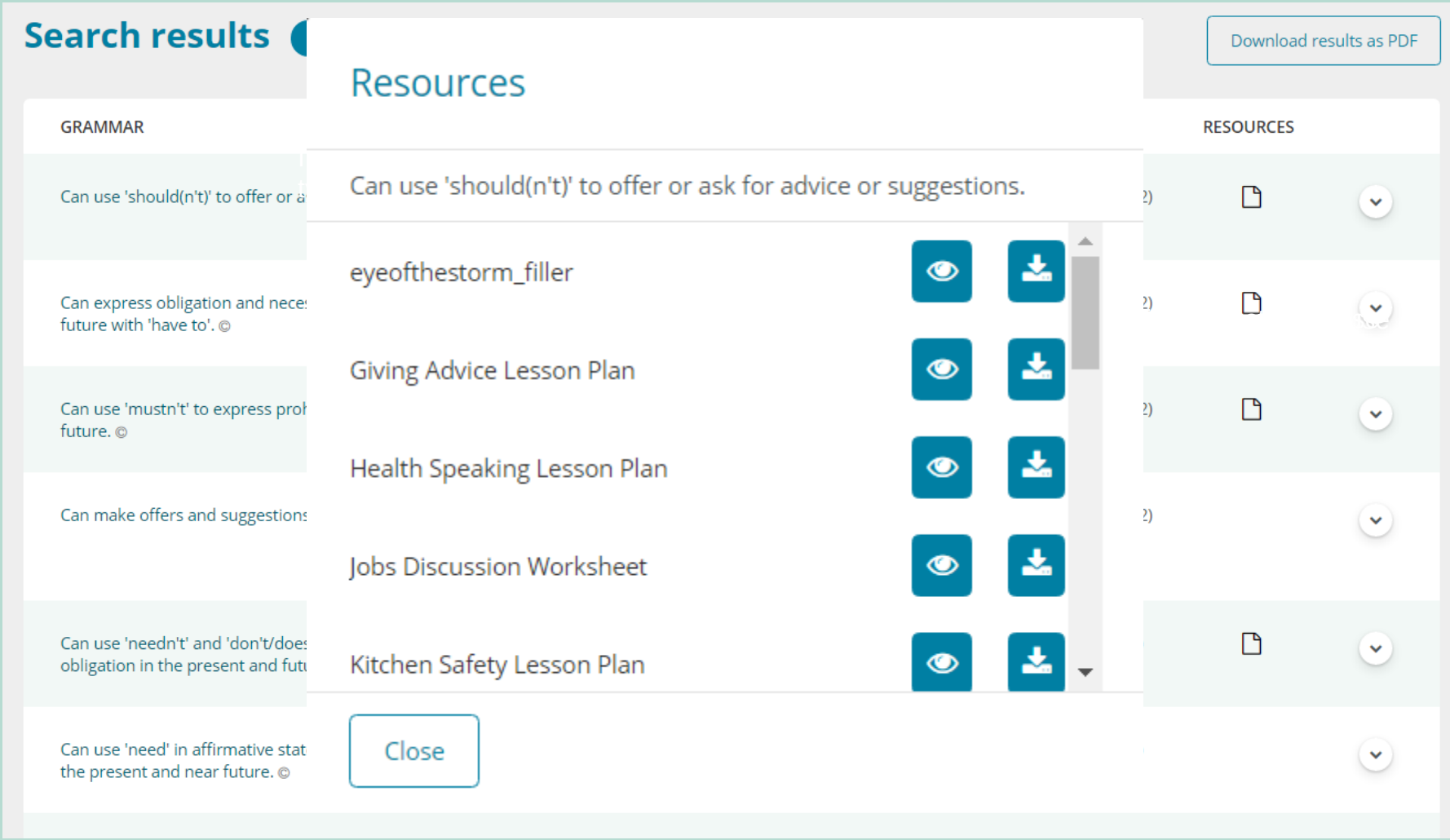
Search results 7

Download results as PDF

GRAMMAR	GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY	GSE ▲	CEFR	RESOURCES
Can use 'should(n't)' to offer or ask for advice or suggestions. ©	Modal verb » Obligation and suasion Phrase » With infinitive	36	A2+ (36-42)	
Can express obligation and necessity in the present and near future with 'have to'. ©	Modal verb » Obligation and suasion	37		
Can use 'mustn't' to express prohibition in the present and near future. ©				
Can make offers and suggestions using 'could'. ©	Modal verb » Requests, offers and permission Modal verb » Obligation and suasion	41	A2+ (36-42)	
Can use 'needn't' and 'don't/doesn't have to' to express absence of obligation in the present and future. ©	Modal verb » Obligation and suasion	43	B1 (43-50)	
Can use 'need' in affirmative statements and questions relating to the present and near future. ©	Modal verb » Obligation and suasion Phrase » With infinitive	44	B1 (43-50)	

I can click here for free resources

Identifying appropriate grammar



Linking to free resources

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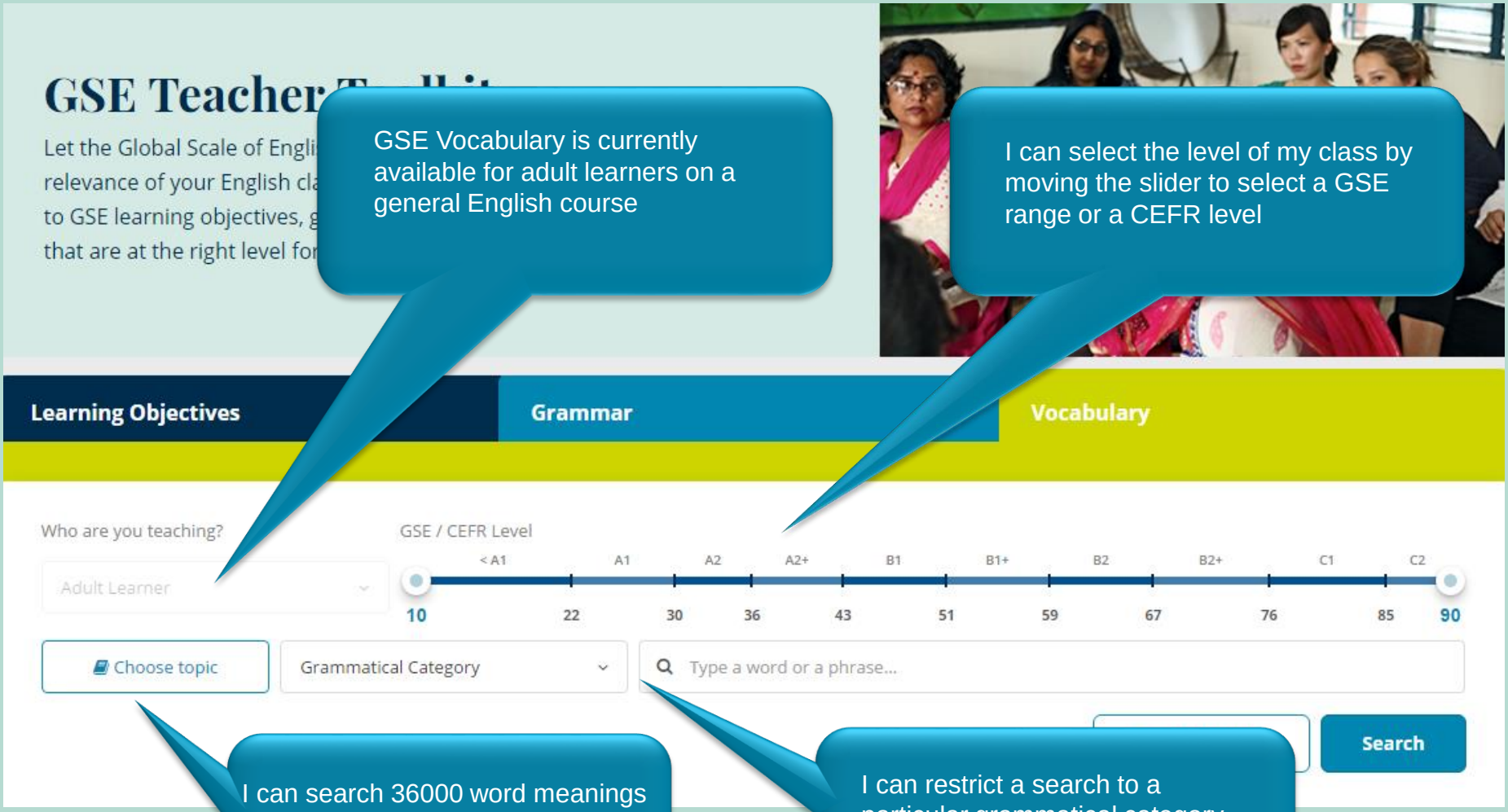
What should I do?

A. Match the problems to the advice.

__1 I didn't sleep last night. I'm very tired.	a Maybe you should buy a used one.
__2 I have a very bad cold.	b How about joining a gym?
__3 I'm late for work every day. My boss is angry.	c Maybe you should go to bed early.
__4 I forgot my wife's/husband's birthday.	d If I were you, I'd see a doctor.
__5 I'm too busy. I have no free time.	e How about taking a class?
__6 I'm not very healthy. I want to lose weight.	f You should apologize and buy him/her a nice gift.
__7 I need a new car, but I don't have	g If I were you, I'd work less.

Identifying appropriate vocabulary



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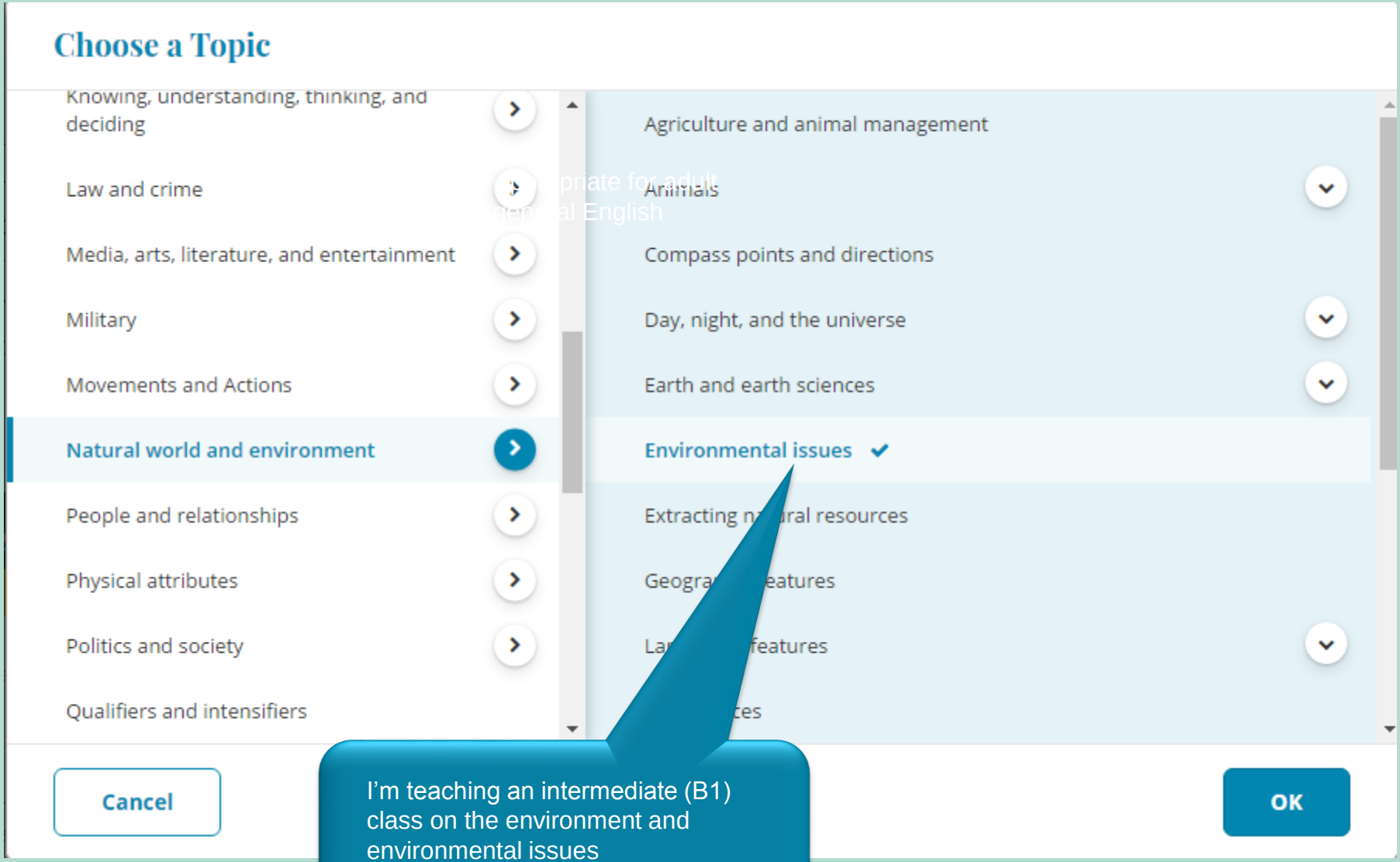
Identifying appropriate vocabulary



Identifying appropriate vocabulary

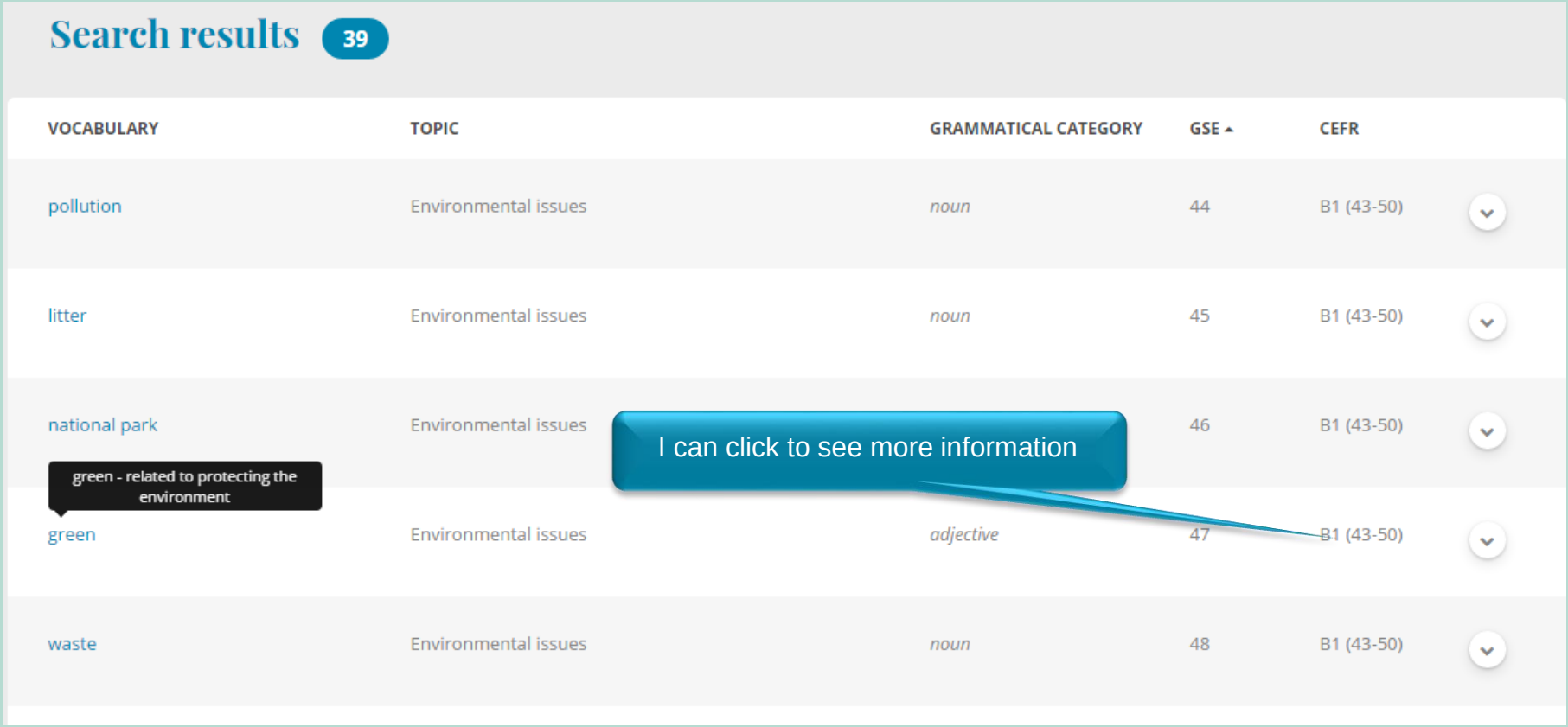
I find 39 words between GSE 43 and 58 (B1)

Search results 39

VOCABULARY	TOPIC	GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY	GSE ▲	CEFR
pollution	Environmental issues	*noun*	44	B1 (43-50)
litter	Environmental issues	*noun*	45	B1 (43-50)
national park	Environmental issues	*noun*	46	B1 (43-50)
green		*ctive*	47	B1 (43-50)
waste	Environmental issues	*noun*	48	B1 (43-50)
nuclear	Environmental issues	*adjective*	50	B1 (43-50)
pure	Environmental issues	*adjective*	51	B1+ (51-58)

I can hover over a word to see the definition

Identifying appropriate vocabulary



Identifying appropriate vocabulary

VOCABULARY	TOPIC	GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY	GSE ▲	CEFR
pollution	Environmental issues	*noun*	44	B1 (43-50)
litter	Environmental issues	*noun*	45	B1 (43-50)
national park	Environmental issues	*noun*		
green		*adjective*	47	B1 (43-50)
waste	Environmental issues	*noun*	48	B1 (43-50)
nuclear	Environmental issues	*adjective*	50	B1 (43-50)

I can check the definition

I can check the collocations

DEFINITION

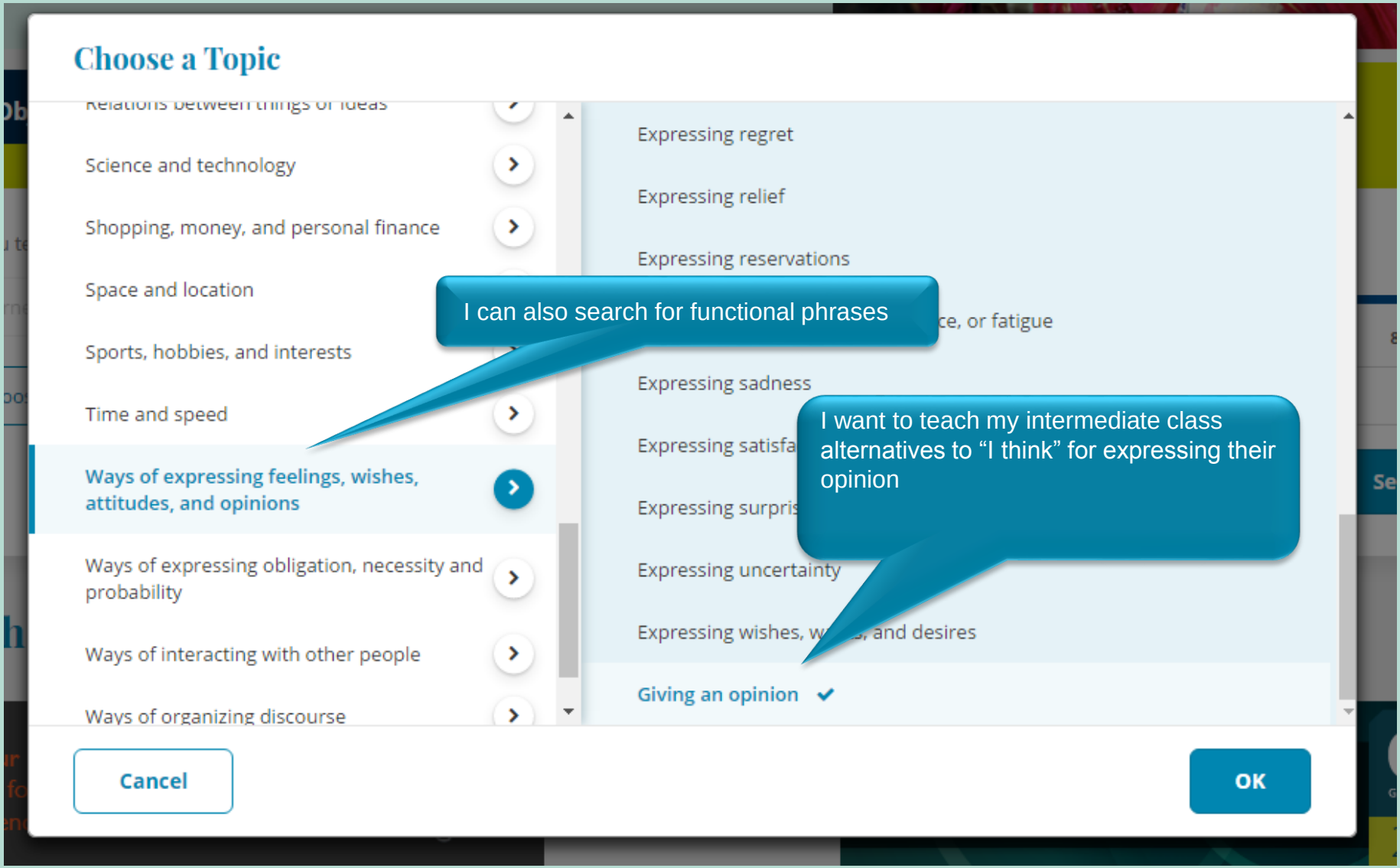
related to protecting the environment

COLLOCATIONS

the Green Party
go green
green issues
green energy

Show more collocations

Identifying appropriate vocabulary



Identifying appropriate vocabulary

Search results 9

VOCABULARY	TOPIC	GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY	GSE ▲	CEFR
I suppose (that)...	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	52	B1+ (51-58)
I expect	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	54	B1+ (51-58)
for me...	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	54	B1+ (51-58)
personally...	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	56	B1+ (51-58)
I reckon (that)...	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	57	B1+ (51-58)
I guess (that)	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	57	B1+ (51-58)
in my opinion...	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	57	B1+ (51-58)
from my point of view,...	Giving an opinion	*phrase*	58	B1+ (51-58)

English and employability

Job tasks & GSE Learning Objectives

O*NET OnLine

Occupation Quick Search:

Help | Find Occupations | Advanced Search | Crosswalks | Share | O*NET Sites

Summary Report for:
29-1141.00 - Registered Nurses

Updated 2017

Bright Outlook

Assess patient health problems and needs, develop and implement nursing care plans, and maintain medical
convalescent, or disabled patients. May advise patients on health maintenance and disease prevention or prc
required.

Sample of reported job titles: Charge Nurse, Director of Nursing (DON), Emergency Department RN (Emer
(Oncology Registered Nurse), Operating Room Registered Nurse (OR RN), Public Health Nurse (PHN), Regi
RN (Staff Registered Nurse)

Also see: Acute Care Nurses, Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses, Critical Care Nurses, Clinical Nurse Spe

View report: Summary | Details | Custom

Tasks | Technology Skills | Tools Used | Knowledge | Skills | Abilities | Work Activities | Detailed Work Activities | Work Context | Job Zor
| Related Occupations | Wages & Employment | Job Openings | Additional Information

Tasks

All 28 displayed

- Maintain accurate, detailed reports and records.
- Administer medications to patients and monitor patients for reactions or side effects.
- Record patients' medical information and vital signs.
- Monitor, record, and report symptoms or changes in patients' conditions.
- Consult and coordinate with healthcare team members to assess, plan, implement, or evaluate patient
- Modify patient treatment plans as indicated by patients' responses and conditions.
- Monitor all aspects of patient care, including diet and physical activity.

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Learning Objectives
for Professional English

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Job tasks: Identifying learning objectives

Monitor, record, and report symptoms or changes in patients' conditions.

Can record the details of project-related actions and results in a log.

Modify patient treatment plans as indicated by patients' responses and conditions

Can ask open-ended questions to better understand the specific details of a problem.

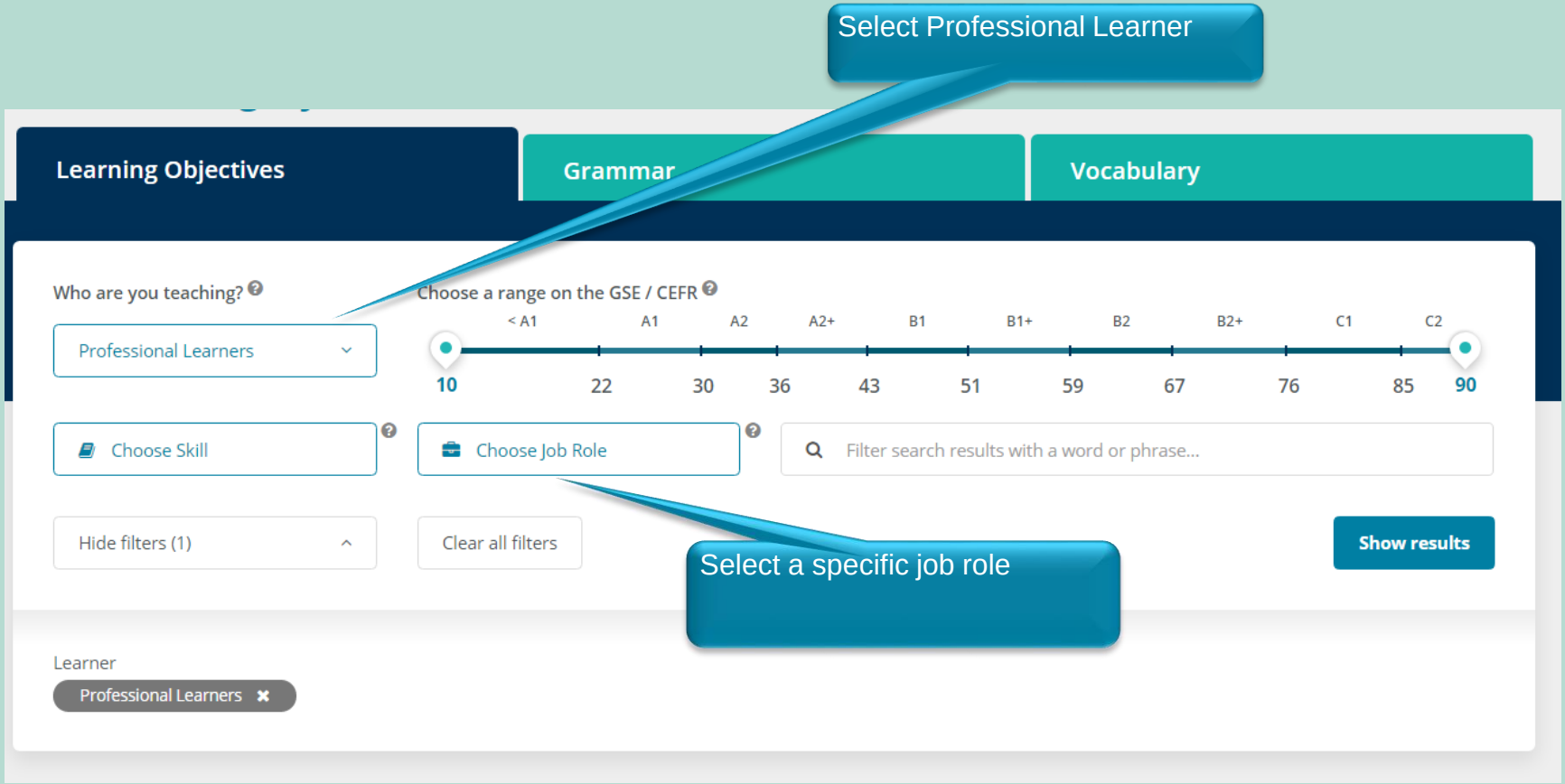
Direct or supervise less-skilled nursing or healthcare personnel or supervise a particular unit.

Can give a clear, detailed spoken description of how to carry out a procedure.

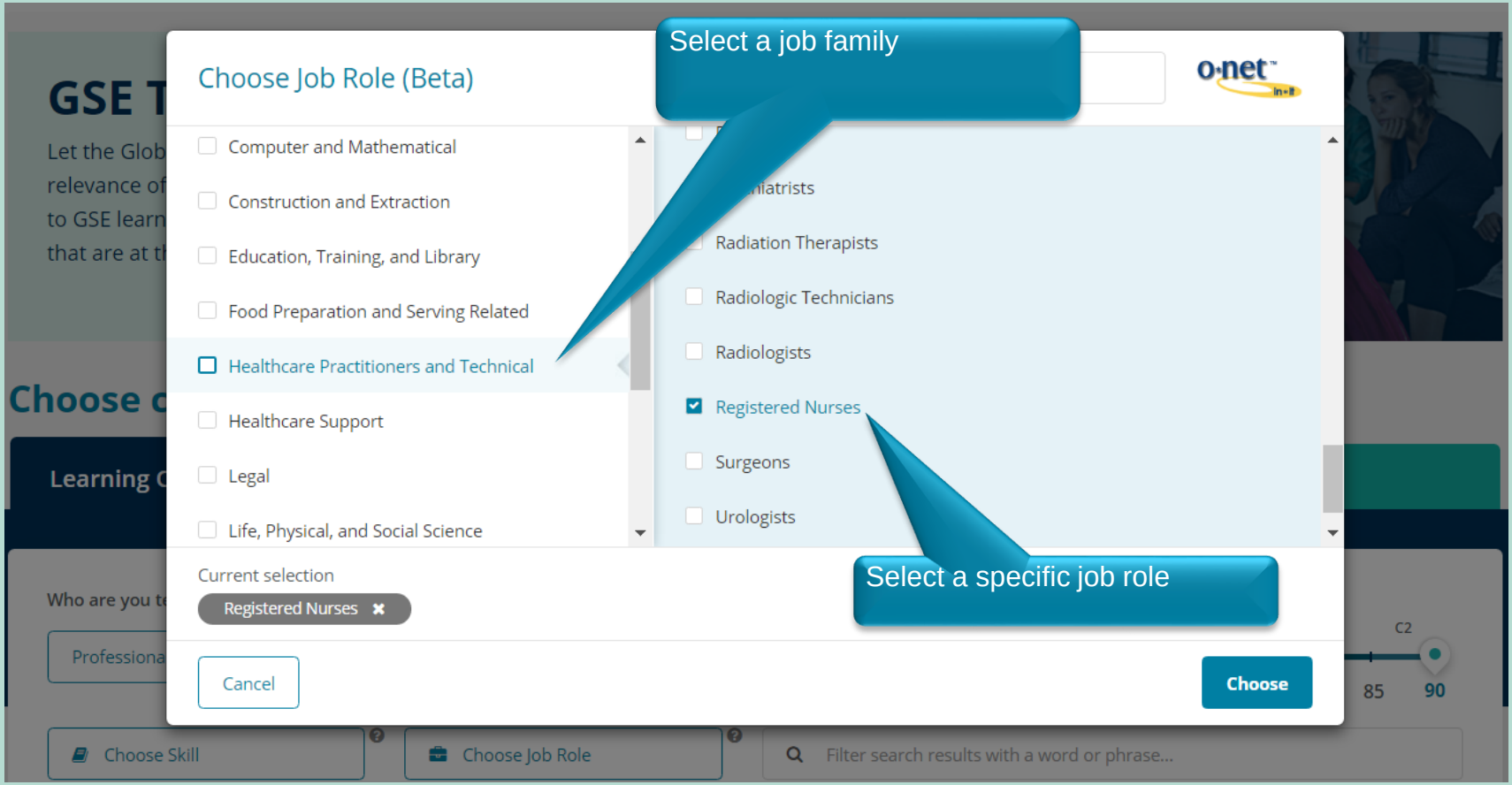
Hand items to surgeons during operations.

Can understand detailed instructions well enough to be able to follow them without making mistakes.

Identifying appropriate learning objectives for specific jobs

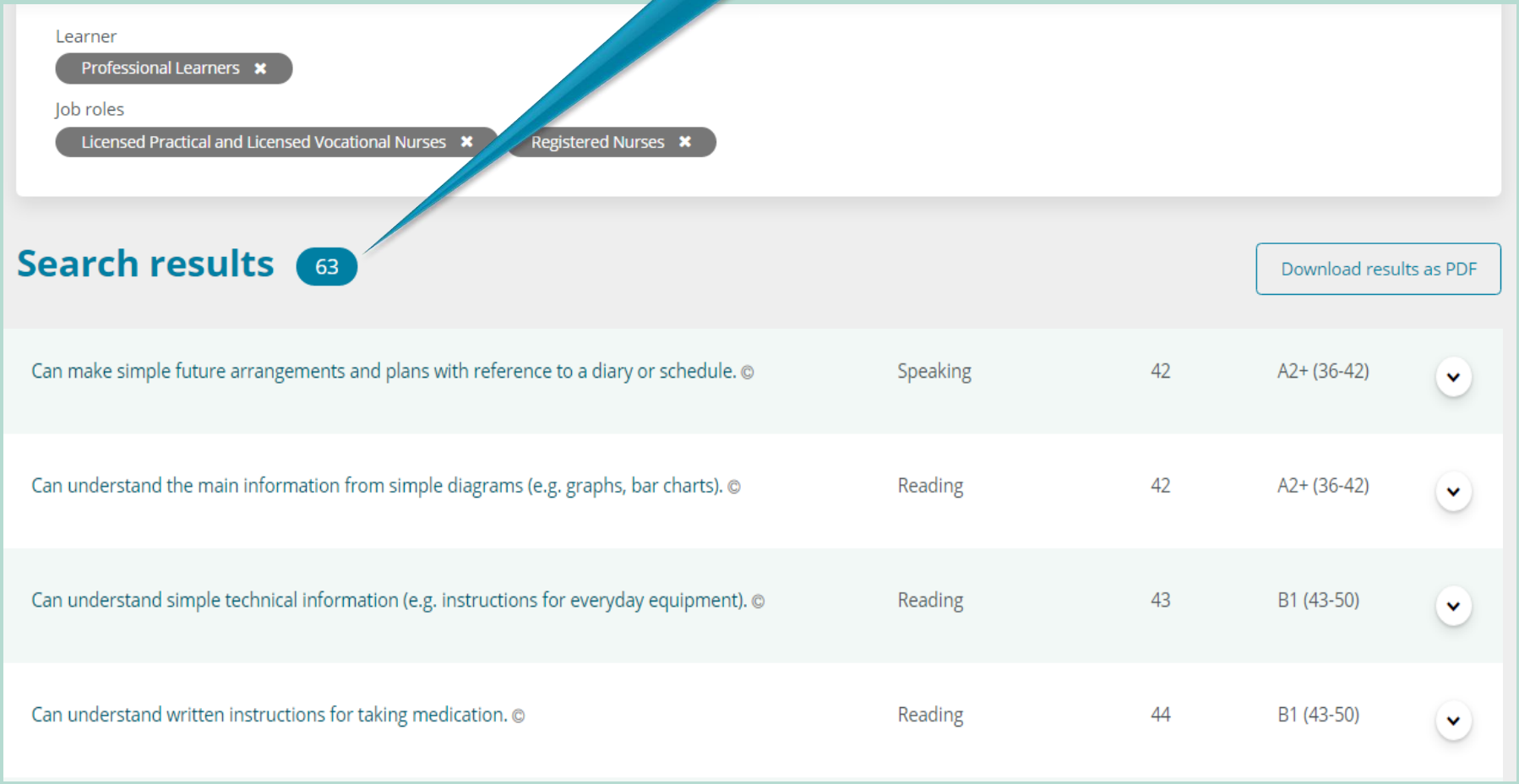


Identifying appropriate learning objectives for specific jobs



Identifying appropriate learning objectives for specific jobs

63 appropriate learning objectives for nurses



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There's so much more to learn

Find out more about us at
English.com/gse

ALWAYS LEARNING