

IATEFL VOICES review

Study Skills Success

Clarity Language Consultants Ltd
www.clarityenglish.com

“Effective, easy to use, enjoyable” is how Clarity explains their online programs and I couldn’t agree more. Study Skills Success is an online academic study skills course that is organized in a clear and fun-looking manner. There are ten sections: Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking, Research, Critical Thinking, Vocabulary, Grammar, Describing Visuals and Independent Learning. Each section or chapter is broken down into approximately fourteen lessons with a clearly spoken “What will I learn?” video to prepare students before they begin. The syllabus also provides a learning focus for each section.

There are icons neatly lined up on each page. The recorder is particularly beneficial in the Speaking section. One discussion topic asks students to describe a book they like, how it affected their life, when they read it, etc. Students record their discussion and also listen to two speakers discussing the same topic.

Each section is thoroughly interactive. I admit I was a bit apprehensive about reviewing an online program because of the complexity of many other similar sites, and I like to have a book in my hand. However, I was happily surprised by the efficient ease of using Study Skills Success. It was non-fussy, highly effective, included current topics and pictures and support for students. The blue and black text was particularly beneficial for visual learners, with important words or sections, such as modal verbs, highlighted in the blue.

Because students are techno savvy, many prefer online interactive activities to textbooks, and this is an excellent supplement to any academic English course. By the time students reach the level of English necessary for Study Skills Success, they already know what modal verbs are. However, the modal verb lesson (in the Grammar unit) is a reminder of how modal verbs are used in academic texts.

If I were grading Study Skills Success, I’d give it an A+, and would recommend its use as an integral part of any mid to upper level academic English class assigning sections for students’ self study.

Study Skills Success is pedagogically sound and, yes, online English lessons can be “effective, easy to use and enjoyable”.

Colleen Swinemar