Technique no. 6.1	**Create a gapped text**

Task description

1. Choose a text that you can understand.

2. Make a photocopy of it.

3. Tip-ex the words on which you want to work (see *Uses* below in order to decide which words you should delete). Before you delete them, it is a good idea to copy these words in random order on a separate sheet.

4. Leave the text and the word list aside for a few days (until you have forgotten the original version).

5. After a few days, try to fill in the gaps that you created in the text.

Uses

- *To learn new vocabulary:* simply delete all the words that are related to a particular topic in the text (e.g. if the general topic on which you are working is 'football', take an article about a football match and delete the words for team, player, score, goal, etc).

- *To practise specific grammar points:* you could for instance choose a news story narrating a recent event, and delete all verbs that are in a past tense. If your problems are with gender/number agreement, you could delete all articles and adjectives. You could delete all verb endings (for work on conjugations) or just every tenth word at random (for work on syntax and sentence meaning). If you are studying a language that uses declensions, you could delete the endings of all words belonging to a particular group.

How to assess results

1. Compare your version to the original text and count the percentage of words that you got right. If you are not sure about alternative answers, try to ask a teacher or somebody who knows a little bit more than you.

2. Repeat the task a couple of weeks later and see if you performance has improved.

Tips

- If you want to make the task easier, use the word list as a clue the first time round, then repeat the exercise without using the word list.

- You can, work with a partner and swap your gapped texts. Talking about language questions is an excellent way to fix new knowledge in your long-term memory. This procedure also means you don't have to wait until you have forgotten the original text before you can do the gap-filling exercise.

- writing a transcript;

- creating, performing, recording and improving a role play;

- reading aloud within a set time limit;

- creating and recording your own pronunciation drill;

- shadowing (repeating while an audio recording is being played);