

Presentation Describing a Process

Explaining How Something Works, Step by Step

Name: _____ Date: _____

Lesson aims

- Describe the stages of a process in a clear order using sequence words
- Use the present simple passive to explain who does what (the form is submitted)
- Explain purpose, time and conditions (in order to, so that, within, unless)
- Talk about problems in a process (bottleneck, delay, turnaround time)

Warm-up: talk about it

- Think of a process you know well at work, for example ordering supplies or answering a complaint. How many stages does it have?
- What is the slowest part of that process? Why?
- Why is it important to explain a process in the right order?

1. Key vocabulary

Sequence

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
first of all	at the very beginning	First of all, the employee fills in a form.
next	the stage after this one	Next, the manager checks the budget.
after that	following the previous step	After that, the order is sent to the supplier.
once	when one thing has finished, the next begins	Once the form is approved, it goes to finance.
as soon as	immediately when something happens	As soon as the goods arrive, we check them.
finally	as the last step	Finally, the invoice is paid.

Purpose and reason

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
in order to	used before a verb to give the purpose	We check the budget in order to avoid mistakes.
so that	used before a clause to give the purpose	We keep a copy so that we can check it later.
to + verb	a short way to give the purpose	I send a reminder to avoid delays.
this ensures that	this makes sure that something happens	This ensures that every order is correct.
the purpose of this step	the reason for one stage	The purpose of this step is to control costs.
to avoid	to prevent something bad	We sign every form to avoid confusion.

Process verbs

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
submit	send something officially for a decision	The employee submits a request form.
review	check something carefully	The manager reviews the request.
approve	officially accept something	The director approves orders over 500 euros.
reject	refuse something officially	If the budget is too low, the request is rejected.
forward	send something on to another person	The manager forwards the form to finance.
update	add new information to something	We update the system after each delivery.

Stages and flow

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
stage	one part of a longer process	The process has four stages.
step	one action within a stage	The first step is to fill in the form.
procedure	the official way of doing something, with set steps	Please follow the standard procedure.
workflow	the order in which work moves from person to person	Our workflow is simple and clear.
bottleneck	the slowest point, where work waits	The biggest bottleneck is the approval stage.
turnaround time	the total time from start to finish	The turnaround time is five working days.

Passive phrases

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
is submitted	someone sends it officially	The request is submitted online.
is reviewed by	someone checks it	The form is reviewed by the manager.
is approved by	someone accepts it	Orders are approved by the department head.
is sent to	it goes to a person or place	The order is sent to the supplier.
is paid	money is given for it	The invoice is paid within thirty days.
is stored	it is kept in a place	A copy is stored in the system.

Time and conditions

Word / phrase	Meaning	Example
within	inside a period of time	The supplier replies within two days.
takes about	lasts approximately	The whole process takes about five days.
if	used for a condition	If the amount is over 500 euros, the director must approve it.
unless	if not	Nothing happens unless the manager signs the form.
depending on	changing according to something	The time varies depending on the supplier.
until	up to the moment when	The order waits until the budget is approved.

Useful patterns for describing a process

Pattern	Use
First, + passive	First, the form is submitted.
is approved BY + person	The form is approved by the manager.
Once + present simple, ...	Once it is approved, it is sent to the supplier.
As soon as + present simple, ...	As soon as the goods arrive, we check them.
in order TO + verb	We check the budget in order to avoid mistakes.
so THAT + clause	We keep a copy so that we can check it later.
WITHIN + time	The invoice is paid within thirty days.
UNLESS + clause	Nothing happens unless the manager signs.

2. Useful phrases for describing a process

Purpose	Useful phrases
Starting	I'll walk you through the process. The process has four stages. It all starts when... The first step is to...
Moving through the steps	Once that is done, ... After that, ... As soon as it is approved, ... The next stage is...
Reasons and conditions	This is done in order to... This ensures that... If the amount is over 500 euros, ... Unless the manager approves it, ...
Finishing and problems	Finally, ... The whole process takes about five days. The biggest bottleneck is... At this point, the process is complete.

3. Model talk

Listen to (or read) a short talk explaining how a purchase request is approved. Notice the sequence words, the passive verbs and the way reasons are given. Underline the vocabulary from Section 1.

INTRO

Good morning. I'll walk you through our purchase approval process. It has four stages, and the whole process takes about five working days.

STAGE 1

It all starts when an employee needs something, for example a new laptop. First, the request is submitted online, using a standard form.

STAGE 2

Next, the form is reviewed by the department manager. The manager checks the budget in order to avoid mistakes. If the amount is over 500 euros, the director must also approve it.

STAGE 3

Once the request is approved, it is forwarded to the purchasing team. After that, the order is sent to the supplier. We keep a copy of every form so that we can check it later.

STAGE 4

As soon as the goods arrive, we check them against the order. Nothing is paid unless everything is correct.

STAGE 4

Finally, the invoice is paid within thirty days, and the system is updated. At this point, the process is complete.

PROBLEM

The biggest bottleneck is the approval stage, because it can take up to three days, depending on the manager's diary. For this reason, we are testing a new online approval tool.

CLOSING

That is the whole process. Thank you for your attention. I'd be happy to take questions.

Exercise 1: Process language in context

Type the missing word. The first letter is given to help you.

1. The biggest **b**_____ is the approval stage, because it takes three days.
2. Good morning. I'll walk you **t**_____ the process.
3. The invoice is paid **w**_____ thirty days.
4. The request is not processed **u**_____ the manager approves it.
5. Next, the budget is **r**_____ by the manager.
6. Our ordering process has four **s**_____.
7. Our process is simple. **o**_____ the request is approved, it is sent to the supplier.
8. We check the budget **i**_____ order to avoid mistakes.

Exercise 2: Choose the correct word

Choose the correct word or phrase for each sentence.

in order to by until so that within once

1. We keep a copy of every form _____ we can check it later.
2. The order is sent to the supplier _____ the budget has been approved.
3. The request is written _____ the employee.
4. The invoice is paid _____ thirty days.
5. We check the budget _____ avoid mistakes.
6. Nothing happens _____ the manager signs the form.
7. We send an email _____ everyone knows the new date.
8. The form is approved _____ the department manager.

Exercise 3: Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has one mistake in the highlighted part. Type the correct word.

1. The whole process **makes** about five days. Correction: _____
2. Once the form **will be** approved, it goes to the supplier. Correction: _____
3. As soon as the order **will arrive**, we check it. Correction: _____
4. First, the form is **submit** by the employee. Correction: _____
5. We check the budget **for** avoid mistakes. Correction: _____
6. The form is approved **from** the manager. Correction: _____

Exercise 4: Match the definition

Read the definition. Choose the correct word or phrase.

1. To send something on to another person
 - a) forward
 - b) submit
 - c) review
 - d) update
2. The official way of doing something, with set steps
 - a) workflow
 - b) deadline
 - c) bottleneck
 - d) procedure
3. The slowest point in a process, where work waits
 - a) turnaround time
 - b) bottleneck
 - c) stage
 - d) procedure
4. To officially accept something
 - a) approve
 - b) forward
 - c) submit
 - d) reject
5. One part of a longer process
 - a) deadline
 - b) bottleneck
 - c) stage
 - d) workflow
6. The total time from the start to the end of a process
 - a) workflow
 - b) turnaround time
 - c) stage
 - d) deadline

Exercise 5: Sort the phrases

Choose the group that each word or phrase belongs to.

A Stages and flow

B Time and conditions

C Sequence

D Purpose and reason

E Passive phrases

F Process verbs

1. "approve" **Group:** ____
2. "this ensures that" **Group:** ____
3. "unless" **Group:** ____
4. "as soon as" **Group:** ____

5. "bottleneck" **Group:** ____
6. "is sent to" **Group:** ____
7. "after that" **Group:** ____
8. "in order to" **Group:** ____

Exercise 6: Build the sentence

Put the words in the correct order to make a sentence.

1. approves / the / the / the / checks / Next, / budget / and / request. / manager
-

2. about / process / whole / working / days. / five / The / takes
-

3. is / the / biggest / stage. / approval / bottleneck / The
-

4. of / can / form / that / a / so / later. / every / We / copy / it / we / keep / check
-

5. to / the / approved, / is / the / sent / it / Once / supplier. / order / is
-

6. by / the / is / employee. / the / submitted / First, / request
-

Exercise 7: Best phrase for the situation

Choose the most suitable thing to say in a professional presentation.

1. You want to finish your description of the process.
 - a) And then it's done, I suppose.
 - b) So, the whole process takes about five working days from start to finish.
 - c) That's the process, I think, maybe.
 - d) It takes long, don't ask.
2. You want to describe the first step.
 - a) The first step is to fill in the request form online.
 - b) The first step is not important.
 - c) Everyone knows the first step.
 - d) First, request, form, online.
3. You are starting to explain a process with four stages.
 - a) Let me just show you slides about stuff.
 - b) You probably know how it works already.
 - c) So, the process is a thing with stages.
 - d) I'll walk you through the process. It has four stages.

4. You want to explain why the budget is checked.
 - a) We check the budget for avoid mistakes.
 - b) We check the budget in order to avoid mistakes.
 - c) We check the budget because avoid mistakes.
 - d) We check the budget to be avoiding mistakes.
5. You want to explain where the delay is.
 - a) The approval stage is a bit boring.
 - b) I don't like the approval stage.
 - c) The biggest bottleneck is the approval stage, because it can take three days.
 - d) Approval stage, three days, whatever.
6. You want to say what happens after a request is approved.
 - a) Once the request is approved, it is sent to the supplier.
 - b) After approving, sent supplier.
 - c) The request is approved and then sends to supplier once.
 - d) Approved the request, the supplier sends.

Exercise 8: Choose the correct form

Choose the correct verb form to complete each sentence.

1. After that, the manager _____ the budget.
 - a) checking
 - b) checks
 - c) is checked
 - d) check
2. First, the form _____ by the employee.
 - a) is completed
 - b) completes
 - c) completed
 - d) is completing
3. The invoice _____ within thirty days.
 - a) paid
 - b) pays
 - c) is paid
 - d) is paying
4. Once the goods _____, we check them.
 - a) arrived
 - b) will arrive
 - c) are arrived
 - d) arrive

Exercise 9: Say it yourself

Write one or two sentences for each situation, as if you were speaking. Use language from this lesson.

1. Explain why a check exists. Use 'in order to' or 'so that'.

2. Describe the first two steps of a process. Use 'first' and 'after that' or 'next'.

3. Say how long the whole process takes and where the biggest delay is.

4. Introduce a process you will explain: say what it is and how many stages it has.

Your turn: describe a process you know

Choose a process from your own work, for example answering a complaint, ordering supplies or preparing a report. Write one or two sentences for each step, using at least eight words or phrases from this lesson. Then explain the process aloud for about two minutes and record yourself if you can.

1. Introduction - Say the name of the process and how many stages it has (I'll walk you through...).

2. Stage 1 - Describe the first step with the passive (First, the form is submitted by...).

3. Stage 2 - Add the next steps with sequence words (Next, Once..., After that, As soon as...).

4. Purpose - Explain why one step exists (in order to, so that, this ensures that).

5. Time and conditions - Say how long a step takes and give one condition (within, takes about, if, unless).

6. Problem and ending - Name the bottleneck, give the total time and invite questions.

Self-check

[] I used at least eight words or phrases from the lesson.

[] I used sequence words in the correct order.

[] I used the present simple passive correctly (is submitted, is approved by).

[] I used 'once' and 'as soon as' with the present simple, not 'will'.

[] I explained one purpose, one condition and one problem.

TEACHER ANSWER KEY - DO NOT DISTRIBUTE**Presentation Describing a Process: Explaining How Something Works, Step by Step (Level B1+)**

The worksheet order is fixed; answers below follow the printed numbering. The interactive HTML version shuffles item order and answer positions each time it is opened.

Exercise 1: Process language in context

1. bottleneck (also accept: delay)
2. through
3. within
4. unless (also accept: until)
5. reviewed (also accept: checked)
6. stages (also accept: steps)
7. once (also accept: after, when)
8. in

Exercise 2: Choose the correct word

1. so that; 2. once; 3. by; 4. within; 5. in order to; 6. until; 7. so that; 8. by

Exercise 3: Find and fix the mistake

1. The whole process **takes** about five days. (accept: takes)
2. Once the form **is** approved, it goes to the supplier. (accept: is)
3. As soon as the order **arrives**, we check it. (accept: arrives)
4. First, the form is **submitted** by the employee. (accept: submitted)
5. We check the budget **to** avoid mistakes. (accept: to)
6. The form is approved **by** the manager. (accept: by)

Exercise 4: Match the definition

1. a; 2. d; 3. b; 4. a; 5. c; 6. b
1. Forward means to pass something to the next person.
 2. A procedure is the official method with fixed steps.
 3. A bottleneck slows down the whole process.
 4. Approve means to officially say yes.
 5. A stage is one part of a longer process.
 6. Turnaround time is the full time from start to finish.

Exercise 5: Sort the phrases

1. F (Process verbs); 2. D (Purpose and reason); 3. B (Time and conditions); 4. C (Sequence); 5. A (Stages and flow); 6. E (Passive phrases); 7. C (Sequence); 8. D (Purpose and reason)

Exercise 6: Build the sentence

1. Next, the manager checks the budget and approves the request.
2. The whole process takes about five working days.
3. The biggest bottleneck is the approval stage.
4. We keep a copy of every form so that we can check it later.
5. Once it is approved, the order is sent to the supplier.
6. First, the request is submitted by the employee.

Exercise 7: Best phrase for the situation

1. b; 2. a; 3. d; 4. b; 5. c; 6. a
1. Finish with the total time to give the audience a clear picture.

2. Use a complete sentence with 'The first step is to...'.
3. A clear introduction tells the audience how many stages to expect.
4. Use 'in order to' + base verb for purpose.
5. Name the bottleneck and give a clear reason.
6. 'Once' + present simple passive, then the next action.

Exercise 8: Choose the correct form

1. b; 2. a; 3. c; 4. d

1. The manager does the action, so we use the active present simple with 's'.
2. The form does not act, so we use the present simple passive.
3. The invoice receives the action: present simple passive.
4. 'Arrive' has no passive, and we use the present simple after 'once' for the future.

Exercise 9: Say it yourself

1. Model: We check every order in order to avoid mistakes. (Use 'in order to' + verb, or 'so that' + clause.)
2. Model: First, the customer fills in a form. After that, the form is sent to the manager. (Use a sequence word for each step, and the passive if the doer is not important.)
3. Model: The whole process takes about five days. The biggest bottleneck is the approval stage. (Give the total time, then name the bottleneck.)
4. Model: I'll walk you through our ordering process. It has four stages. (Say what the process is and how many stages it has.)

Accept any accurate, natural sentence that uses suitable language from the lesson.

Teacher notes

- Suggested timing (60 minutes): warm-up 5 min; vocabulary groups 15 min (students sort the phrases into the six groups first); model talk (listen, then read, then underline sequence words and passives) 10 min; exercises 1 to 5 in class 20 min; exercises 6 to 9 for homework or the next lesson; 'Your turn' task as a speaking activity with feedback.
- Grammar focus: present simple passive (is/are + past participle) for describing processes, with 'by + person' only when the doer is important. After once, as soon as, when, until and unless we use the present simple, not 'will'.
- Purpose patterns: 'in order to' + base verb; 'so that' + clause (often with can or will); 'to avoid' + noun or -ing. Contrast 'for' (for + noun or -ing, e.g. for checking) with 'to' + verb.
- Common B1 errors: 'the form is submit'; 'for avoid mistakes'; 'once it will be approved'; 'approved from the manager'; 'the process makes five days' (takes); 'at first' for the first step (first, first of all).
- Pronunciation to check: word stress on proCEEDure (second syllable), apPROVE (second syllable), BOTtleneck (first syllable), and TURNaround. Practise the weak, very short 'to' in 'in order to'.
- Extension: ask the student to draw her process as a simple flowchart, then explain it using only the diagram. Then swap: the student listens to the teacher describe a different process and draws it.