Reflect:

1. Think about how and when you explain the concept of register to a language learner. Do you think about register mainly in terms of grammar, vocabulary, or functional language?

2. What is the effect of learners using forms or features from an inappropriate register when they write or speak in English? To what degree might this affect their ability to communicate effectively?

3. Which registers do you most commonly need to use? Which other registers do you think it is useful to be aware of?

4. Do you think the inappropriate use of register (e.g. a grammatical form typical of informal speech used in a written essay) should be marked as an error? How should a teacher deal with it in a student’s work?

Discuss:

If you have someone to discuss with, compare your answers. If any are different, think about why.

Explore:

1. List three ways in which spoken and written grammar are different.

2. Give examples of at least one grammatical feature typical of each of the following registers:
   a. an informal conversation:
   b. more formal writing:
   c. literary language:
   d. technical writing:
   e. academic writing:
3. Do you agree with either of the following comments? Why? / Why not?

‘Concepts like ‘spoken grammar’ are too confusing for most students. It’s easier to teach them one set of grammatical rules that will be ‘correct’ in any context.’

‘It’s important to teach students about the differences between spoken and written or formal and informal language right from the start.’

4a. Match the examples to the registers which seem most appropriate. More than one choice might be possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>academic</th>
<th>formal</th>
<th>informal spoken</th>
<th>literary</th>
<th>old-fashioned</th>
<th>technical</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. We met this really interesting couple on holiday.</td>
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<td>ii. There are many formulae for calculating price indices using basic price data.</td>
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<td>iii. It is her cousin in whom Rachel eventually confides.</td>
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<td>iv. In the centre of the garden, there stands a magnificent yew tree.</td>
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<td>v. This work was seen as making an important contribution to the transformation of the Swedish energy sector into what is described as an ecologically and economically sustainable system.</td>
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<td>vi. At least no one got hurt.</td>
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<td>vii. She was very sad, for she knew not whether her son would live or die.</td>
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<td>viii. The region experiences two seasons, a wet season and a dry season, the latter being the longer of the two.</td>
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4b. For each example above, underline the grammatical features that are typical of the register.

5. Rewrite the following informal, spoken comments so that they would be appropriate for a more formal, written register.

i. There's way too much information on each page.

ii. You cover the lentils in cold water and leave them to soak for at least an hour.

iii. So we showed it to Mrs Foster and she was like 'No, do it again'.

Suggested answers:

i. We met this really interesting couple on holiday. – informal conversation; this before a noun when something is mentioned for the first time
ii. There are many formulae for calculating price indices using basic price data. – technical (or academic); more formal, Latin plural forms
iii. It is her cousin in whom Rachel eventually confides. – formal; use of whom with a preposition
iv. In the centre of the garden, there stands a magnificent yew tree. – literary; there + verb after a preposition phrase describing place
v. This work was seen as making an important contribution to the transformation of the Swedish energy sector into what is described as an ecologically and economically sustainable system. – academic; a long, complex noun phrase
vi. At least no one got hurt. – informal conversation (or informal writing); get passive
vii. She was very sad, for she knew not whether her son would live or die. – old-fashioned or literary; for she knew not instead of because she didn't know
viii. The region experiences two seasons, a wet season and a dry season, the latter being the longer of the two. – formal or academic; the latter, the + comparative adj + of the two

Ex 5

i. There is far too much information on each page. (informal: way too + adj)
ii. You cover the lentils in cold water and leave them to soak for at least an hour. (informal: you for instructions)
iii. We showed it to Mrs Foster and she told us to do it again. (informal: like to introduce reported speech)