

Equipped for the Future

Sharing What We've Learned from Community Role Models

Project writer
Connie Gaskill

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Project Based Lesson Plan VI - 70

Project Title: Seeking Wisdom Sharing What We've Learned	ESOL Language Focus: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Speaking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listening Level(s): C, D +
Florida Adult ESOL Course Competencies: 83.02 Demonstrate ability to paraphrase words or ideas in a conversation 83.04 Apply oral communication skills to simple interviews and presentations 91.01 Take accurate written notes & give complete verbal reports from recorded messages. 100.14 Use prewriting strategies 100.15 Write two or more paragraphs that are focused and organized 100.17 Edit for spelling, punctuation and grammar	EFF Standards and Roles: Organize and present written and oral information to serve the purpose, context and audience. Pay attention to conventions of English language usage. Seek feedback and revise. Observe critically--monitor comprehension and adjust strategies. Analyze the accuracy, bias, and usefulness of the information
<p style="text-align: center;">(See explanations, assorted handouts, and tips on attachment pages)</p>	
Classroom Activities/Procedures Having completed the interview process (described in "Interviews with Inspiring Community Role Models") students continue to work on the same interview committees with the purpose of: 1) writing a description of the personality and physical characteristics of the speaker. 2) preparing a 3-5 minute oral report on the highlights of the interview. 3) isolating a short recorded clip from the interview. 4) writing comprehension questions posed by the reporting group. Students will share these summary presentation reports with their peers.	Vocabulary: to impact to handle a project to draw lots to transcribe peers essence recorded clip summary dull
Out of Class Assignment(s): This will depend on the teacher and students. Due to my students' busy schedules, I preferred to have them do most the work in class. Some outside typing was necessary.	Resources: Student handouts Sample unit Interviewing Committees Who can best do it? Managing Interviews Final Preparations Checklist
Out of Class Assignment(s): This will depend on the teacher and students. Due to my students' busy schedules, I preferred to have them do most the work in class. Some outside typing was necessary.	Materials Needed: Cassettes of earlier interviews Playback unit for each group Computers (if typing is done in class)

Summary

Dear Teacher:

In the attachments you will view instructions to guide your small groups in making their presentations, followed by samples of two groups' work.

The entire project took twelve hours of class time. Students were given three hours to work in pairs on their parts of the project. On presentation day, I gave them an extra thirty minutes to review. We then spent the rest of the class period (about 60 minutes) and a good part of the next day's class on the reports.

Everyone was interested in the others' information, although they were somewhat nervous about making a presentation. If I have more time the next time I teach this unit, I plan to coach them on how to present...writing main ideas on the board, making overhead transparencies, a poster, use of body language, the idea of telling one's information, rather than reading it. These are skills that don't come easily for most people in their first or second languages.

I was fairly happy with their writing. They found assembling the reports quite difficult. We talked about the good that comes from facing a challenge! I helped them extrapolate ideas and showed them how to link them together. Most students typed their reports at home. (While perusing the reports, you'll noticed I limited students' and speakers' surnames to an initial to protect their privacy. I also have left misspellings and grammatical errors intact, to give you a better idea of student work.)

Creating the reports was demanding. All the same, we enjoyed two rewarding days of presentations. Students loved listening to the clips of the speakers. They had many questions and a lot of good information was exchanged after students moved from the formal portion of their reports into an open session. When we finished, I again heard comments like, "Wow, teacher, I didn't know I could do that!" or "Teacher, I worked so hard on this report last night. But it was worth it. I could see people liked it!"

One outcome of the project was all the students agreed they would like to listen to the entirety of each tape. We're doing that bit by bit, enjoying the wealth of personal experience and wisdom each interviewee shared.

I hope you'll try a similar process and enjoy it was much as we did.

Sincerely,

Connie Gaskill

ESOL Teacher

Clearwater Adult Education Center, Clearwater, Florida

Time Line

Activity Approx. Time Required

Introduce the project

1) Review the roles of committee members (Student Handout #1) 10-20 min.

2) Students choose their roles. 10 min.

Begin work on Speaker Summaries

1) Review Student Handout #2 with class to provide framework
for the project 20-30 min.

2) Students work in groups and pairs to prepare speaker
descriptions, summaries and listening clips as teacher
circulates to help with editing. 3 hours*

Student presentations followed by class questions/discussion 90-120 min.

Estimated Class Time: 6 + hours

* Depending on the students' skill in writing, the teacher may want to allot more time here. The teacher might also wish to have students keyboard compositions in class.

Preparing Speaker Summaries (Students received this handout before the interviews.)

The day after the interviews, we'll begin preparing for class presentations. We'll want to make presentations to share the highlights of our fascinating conversations with other classmates who were happily focused on their own interviews. With your group, you will consider what you heard yesterday. What ideas most impacted you? Did any certain idea particularly touch your heart or captivate your imagination? What comments and ideas might help your peers? We will spend two class periods (three hours of class time) preparing for our presentations. On the third day, we will draw lots and present in that order.

But, first, these are the roles we will function in. Over the next day or two, consider what role you would like to take in this interesting project.

Summary Writers --Two students will compile the highlights of the interview. They will also make a short presentation to the class, sharing their summary and their reactions to the speaker.

Listening Lesson Writers-- Two students will choose their favorite 60-second clip from the recorded interview (in conjunction with the summary writers) and prepare a listening lesson for the entire class. This way, everyone gets to experience a little bit of the interview...what the speaker sounded like, the kind of vocabulary he used, his tone, his level of education, whether or not he or she had an accent, etc.

After isolating the clip, they will then prepare a series of interesting listening questions for their classmates. A variety of question formats may be used. These will be discussed later.

Administrative Assistant--(if there are five people in the group) This person will type up the lesson, or help with anything else the summary and listening lesson writers need (including the presentation).

Speaker Summaries

We had such a nice time conducting interviews. What a shame that we couldn't talk to each speaker. By preparing a summary, you can help others enjoy information you learned. Earlier we discussed the kind of information we might like to include in our reports, as well as the responsibilities of summary writers, listening lesson writers and the administrative assistant (if five people are in a group). Each report will consist of three parts: 1) a description of your speaker

2) a summary of information from the interview and 3) a listening lesson. All students will initially collaborate on all three parts, in terms of choosing the information to be presented. Then, summary writers will prepare the content for Parts One and Two. Listening lesson writers are responsible for Part Three, including comprehension questions for the entire report.

You will have two classes--three hours--to prepare your work.

Considerations for Summary Writers

Part One: Describing your speaker

1. What did your speaker look like?
2. How was your speaker dressed?
3. What ten adjectives would best describe your speaker's personality? Use your dictionaries for this answer so you can be really original and specific.
4. Was your speaker a good communicator? Listed below are some ideas to consider:
 - A) Body language--eye contact, gestures and open posture
 - B) Intonation
 - C) Speed of speech
 - D) Attitude
 - E) Diplomacy
 - F) Anything else
5. What is/was the speaker's job or career?

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Part Two: Sharing Information from the Interview

As a group, you now need to select four fascinating things about the interview that you want to share with your classmates. Remember, you want to convey the *essence* of the speaker's personality, not just a few details about him. You will be making a three- to five-minute talk to the class about this material. There are several ways to approach choosing what you want to

share. You can do this from the speaker's perspective (What questions was he most excited about answering?) or from your perspective (What answers most excited you?). You can also make the choice based on your classmate's needs (What ideas would be the most helpful for them to know?).

However, I would like you to include **either** the answer to Question 7 or Question 10 (or *both* if you thought they were *really* interesting) in your presentation. That means you can choose up to three other questions.

I would like you to write summaries for the questions you select. Summary writing will help you organize your ideas for the presentation. When you make your presentation, you may refer to your summaries, or other notes if you prefer, but **please do not read your summaries**. Your classmates would find that dull!

Considerations for Listening Lesson Writers

Part Three: Preparing Your Clip

This part will fascinate your peers . Here's your chance to let them experience your speaker's communication style. Choose a 40-60 second clip from the interview. Your clip should contain information related to one of the questions you selected in Part Two. Please type up a list of 10-15 good questions that you will share with classmates. Which of the following question words can help others understand the content: *who, what, where, when, why, how long, how much?* You will need to play your teacher your clip and show her your questions so she can help you a bit in your preparations.

There are interesting ways to prepare questions. For example, for a very important idea, you might have students take dictation for a sentence or two. Or you could prepare a paragraph with some spaces for students to write in missing words and play the tape a number of times until they complete it. You might choose to make some multiple choice questions (this could act as a 'test' to check students' comprehension of an idea presented earlier during the speaker summaries.) If we have time, it'd be great to transcribe the clip, so students could read it after completing the listening questions.

This project is a creative endeavor to be handled it any way you choose. Choose your approach and please work quickly. Your allotted three hours will vanish as you become happily involved in your projects! Please type up comprehension questions to hand out to your peers. Thank you.

Speaker Summary:

An Interview with

Mr. Bob B.

Prepared by
Group Six

December 3, 2002

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Appendix--Sample Lesson

Describing Our Speaker

Mr. B. is a 70 years (sic) old man. He is in great shape and very healthy. He is a happy person and very handsome. He was dressed very nicely. He was wearing a dark blue jacket with a (sic) light-colored pants and a red striped tie. His is a very neat person. We were impressed with Mr. B. He is friendly, pleasant, outgoing, polite, careful in his speech, gracious, thoughtful,

confident, strong to succeed, and diplomatic in his management of people. He was very careful not to offend anyone who asked him questions.

Mr. B. was a serviceman for 27 years. His military career culminated in being selected to attend War College. Only ten percent of all servicemen get to do that. He served in three different wars and he loves this country. When he first joined the Army, he didn't have much education. The Army put him through college. That's how he got his Master's degree. He has had two wonderful careers. His first job was with the Army and now he's the director of city department with an annual budget of \$30-millions (sic) dollars.

Mr. B.'s family members were immigrants. They came here from Germany in 1710. He has had two wonderful careers. His first job was with the Army. Now he's the director of a city department with an annual budget of \$30-millions dollars.

Mr. B. has a good attitude about work. He is not afraid to work to find success. We want to play you a clip about a problem he had after he was hired for the job he has now. A powerful woman supervisor disliked him. He didn't know what to do! She wanted to fire him. She made his life miserable. This was because she didn't like Army colonels. When Mr. B. left the Army, he was a colonel.

Tapescript

What was the most defining most of my career? I was selected to become a department head in Clearwater and given two departments to run...and I still do that. I have 207 employees and a 30-million budget. So that's been the most defining moment in my career. I love what I do. I love the people I work with and we have a lot of fun working together. At least, I think so.

The biggest challenge I have ever faced was when my boss--two levels up--an assistant city manager, did not like me and I didn't know why. She was a lady and didn't like Army colonels. I'm an Army colonel. She just didn't like me because I was an Army colonel. She didn't know me, but she just didn't like me and made it very difficult in my job.

She tried to fire me and the only reason she did not is because I worked hard and had credible (sic) with the city commission and she didn't have any reason to fire me. But she would have, if she could have. It was a type of prejudice I was unfamiliar with and did not know how to respond to.

I went to her and actually said, "If I'm doing something wrong and you will tell me what I'm doing wrong, I will correct it. I don't wish to have a bad relationship. I'd like very much to work along and be friends." VI - 78

She wouldn't answer my question. So I just continued to do my work as best I could. Ten years later, five years later, she came to me and said, "I had you wrong. I've made a mistake and I'm sorry." But she made me miserable for five years for no reason. And that I think is the most difficult thing I've ever faced in my life. I never had it happen in the Army. And it only happened (sic) here because of one particular personality here who was in a position to make my life tough... difficult. That's something you are vulnerable to here as immigrants. Someone not liking you because you're here or you seem different to them ...and it's the dumbest thing in the world. You can never ever judge people in a category. You can only judge people individually based on themselves and their actions.

Comprehension Questions

Directions: Work with a partner, asking and answering the following questions.

1. How many years did Mr. B. serve in the Army?
2. Who sent him to college?
3. What degree did he get from college?
4. What was Mr. B.'s best rank in the military?
5. Why did Mr. B. have a tough time in his job at the city?
6. How long did his problem last?
7. Do you think Mr. B. was a victim of discrimination? Why?
8. Why, in your opinion, did Mr. B. finally succeed with his female boss?
9. What do you think of Mr. B.'s comment, "You can only judge people individually based on themselves and their actions"?
10. Do you think you could succeed in the difficult situation Mr. B. had? Why or why not?
11. Would you like to work for Mr. B.? Why or why not?

Final Teacher Report

EFF Project-Based Classroom Project

Name: Connie Gaskill

Institution: Clearwater Adult Education Center

Topic: Seeking Wisdom: Sharing What We've Learned from Community Role Models

Explain how the project improved your students' English language acquisition? Which activities were most helpful?

Final reports again utilized more committee work. Students worked in pairs to prepare a summary of their speaker's comments and a listening lesson including a short clip from the recorded interview. Six groups then gave presentations on what they had learned from their interviewees.

Again, students clashed sometimes in deciding what content they wished to include in their five-minute presentations. I think these activities were helpful in language acquisition because the students were incredibly interested in what the speakers had shared. The students recognized the relevance of that wisdom. Each was busy justifying why his or her idea was best! Consequently, they were quite intent on wanting to share their information with classmates.

Talking, outlining, writing, and giving the presentations added layer upon layer of meaning as the students worked with the information. They continued to look at each idea, mulling it over, trying to decide the best way to communicate it to others. Each time they did that, language acquisition occurred. They had repeated opportunities to work with certain vocabulary and concepts.

Of course, everyone was again nervous when the day of presentations arrived. But they remembered their sweet successes from the interviews and forged ahead. In most cases, the recorded clips nicely reinforced the speaker summaries, which helped other groups grasp the information.

No doubt this was a somewhat complicated and challenging unit, but it taught all of us just how much we could actually do.