
Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative)

Unit overview: The purpose of this unit is to provide the teacher a model of research-based strategies that will enable the English Language Learner to study and comprehend the genre of narratives.

Objectives: The objectives for the unit will provide students the experience of using cross-curricular expository material to comprehend narrative text, complete research related to topic, and understand forms of writing a narrative.

Skills attained: Students can apply information and strategies used in other curriculum areas to understand text, complete research related to the topic and understand the implications of research upon comprehension of text.

Topics:

Research Links to Text

Poetic Forms

Summarization

Drawing Conclusions

Building Imagery

Predictions

Vocabulary: In any book students will find many words that are unknown to them. This is due to cultural differences, language levels, and technical use of words. For the ELL student this can be frustrating especially if the word is used in a highly technical manner and the student is on the Basic Interpersonal Communication Level of language. (BICS) Therefore, it is important for the teacher to follow the research-based model when choosing vocabulary words for a specific genre. (J. Allen, 199)

1. Choose the words that most important to understanding the text. Choose no more than 10 for the ELL. Choose the vocabulary words by the language level of the students in your room. Example: If most of your students are on Level 1 on the Language Proficiency Chart then the words will be different than if your students are on Level 3 of the Language Proficiency Chart. Make the student's vocabulary comprehensible to them through visuals, charts, or graphics.
2. Will the student have prior knowledge about this word? If you feel they do not, then you must make preparations to build that prior knowledge. Have visuals, concrete materials, books, or other materials ready to build that prior knowledge.

Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative) Daily Lesson Plans

3. Will the word appear frequently in this story and others? Make sure that the word will appear frequently in all other areas of school. Many fun words are taught as vocabulary but the student never uses them.
4. Have students skim the assigned pages listing the words or phrases they do not understand. The teacher may collect the list or verbally ask students for the words and add them to the vocabulary list.
5. What strategies can I use to bring the word into the lives of the students? Think of what you can do in your classroom to make the word connect to the students' lives. Will they use it in everyday conversation? Is it connected to their language as in a cognate? Will they see the words in the books at their reading level?
6. How can I make learning the word enjoyable but productive? Learning words can be fun. Use visuals, concrete examples, let the students hear and see the word, allow conversation time for students to use the word.

Lesson 1:4 Day 1 Introduction: Narrative

Objectives: Increase the level of listening comprehension of the students.

Skills Attained: Students become more proficient in listening comprehension.

Motivation: To introduce the book (which for this unit the example is *Out of the Dust*) by Karen Hesse, ask students if they have ever kept a journal. Ask them to explain the reasons for keeping a journal. The responses should be to write down secrets, things they want to remember, or record everyday events. Explain that the story they are going to read is a narrative that is written in journal form with free verse.

Homework: Assign students to practice reading passages orally from the book being used for this unit.

Vocabulary: Refer back to the opening pages of the unit when selecting vocabulary words. If using this book include words narrative, free verse.

Materials List: Student copies of book, Materials from the library such as fiction, non-fiction, magazines and resource books should be available on topics in the book read by the class.

Methods: Oral reading by teacher.

Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative) Daily Lesson Plans

Content Background: Explain to the students that “free verse” is a form where the content is more important than the structure and seldom rhymes. The students can hear the voice of the character and the most effective way of reading this type of narrative is orally which is perfect for the English language learner.

Suggested Teaching Strategies: Read a few lines and ask students to listen to the rhythm of the language. Ask students if any have read other books that were written in journal or diary form. Did they notice something different about the way the language was written? Answers will vary but should include not rhyming, not complete sentences, easy words etc.

During the lesson continue reading a few lines and then asking questions about what you have read concerning the language pattern. Allow time for students to read orally. Record student answers on the overhead or board so the students can see responses written in English. Put them in categories with the help of the class.

Application: Reading orally by the teacher will increase listening comprehension on the part of the student.

Assessment: Teacher listening for punctuation and reading fluency.

Lesson 1:4 Day 2 Research: Historical Context of Story

Objectives: Students will understand how knowing the historical context of a story leads to greater comprehension of text.

Skills Attained: Research Skills

Materials List: Research materials such as technology, resources from library, paper available for illustrating

Methods: Small research groups, teacher modeling, illustrations,

Content Background: The ELL usually will have little experience with American History. It is important to choose a selection that will give students this knowledge but be aware that prior knowledge must be built before reading the selection. Give the students time to explore the geographical area where the selection takes place and the historical time period of the selection.

Suggested Teaching Strategies: The teacher will divide the students into language-level integrated research groups. In each group the teacher will make sure that every student has a task. The tasks could include: the researchers and illustrators. All will take part in the presentation of the material. Each group will be responsible for researching a topic from the time period of the selection. Example: If using the model book, *Out of the Dust*, the topics could be The Dust Bowl, The Great Depression, and World War I. Students will present information found through oral speech and illustrations.

Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative) Daily Lesson Plans

Application: Students will learn research techniques to carry over to other areas of study.

Assessment: Teacher observation of groups

Lesson 1:4 Day 3 Research: Historical Context of Story

Objectives: Students will understand how knowing the historical context of a story leads to greater comprehension of text.

Skills Attained: Research Skills

Materials List: Research materials such as technology, resources from library, paper available for illustrating

Methods: Small research groups, teacher modeling, illustrations,

Content Background: The ELL usually will have little experience with American History. It is important to choose a selection that will give students this knowledge but be aware that prior knowledge must be built before reading the selection. Give the students time to explore the geographical area where the selection takes place and the historical time period of the selection.

Suggested Teaching Strategies: The teacher will divide the students into language-level integrated research groups. In each group the teacher will make sure that every student has a task. The tasks could include: the researchers and illustrators. All will take part in the presentation of the material. Each group will be responsible for researching a topic from the time period of the selection. Example: If using the model book, *Out of the Dust*, the topics could be The Dust Bowl, The Great Depression, and World War I. Students will present information found through oral speech and illustrations.

Application: Students will learn research techniques to carry over to other areas of study.

Assessment: Teacher observation of group work

Lesson 1:4 Day 4 Research: Historical Context of Story

Objectives: Students will understand how knowing the historical context of a story leads to greater comprehension of text.

Skills Attained: Research Skills

Materials List: Research materials such as technology, resources from library, paper available for illustrating

Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative) Daily Lesson Plans

Methods: Small research groups, teacher modeling, illustrations,

Content Background: The ELL usually will have little experience with American History. It is important to choose a selection that will give students this knowledge but be aware that prior knowledge must be built before reading the selection. Give the students time to explore the geographical area where the selection takes place and the historical time period of the selection.

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Application: Students will learn research techniques to carry over to other areas of study.

Assessment: Informal assessment will be used. Go back to the Oral Language Proficiency Chart and use the language level expectations to assign a grade to student work. Remember that an ELL must be graded on progress and language level to have a valid score.

Wrap-up Activity: Students will present their research to other students in the form of a graphic organizer, panel discussion, or circle discussions. Teacher must facilitate to make sure that students understand information correctly.

Lesson 1:4 Day 5 Conducting Interview

Objectives: Students will use oral language skills to conduct interviews.

Skills Attained: Students will become more proficient in oral language skills.

Homework: Students will be assigned to conduct an interview with someone at their home. The questions could be, "Do you remember a difficult economic time in your home country? Did anyone have to move to find another way of taking care of their family? Was the difficult time caused by a famine, revolution, or another economic catastrophe?"

Materials List: Tapes for interviews

Methods: Teacher modeling of how to conduct an interview, students' role play conducting an interview.

Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative) Daily Lesson Plans

Suggested Teaching Strategies: The teacher will model with the students how to conduct an interview followed by the students' role playing an interview. The questions students will ask each other could be "Do you remember a difficult economic time in your home country? Did anyone have to move to find another way of taking care of their country? Was the difficult time caused by a famine, revolution, or another economic catastrophe? Make sure the students understand how to use a tape recorder. Allow time in class for practice speaking into tape recorder! If all students do not have access to a tape recorder then practice with the students how they can write down the interview.

Application: Students have opportunity to use technology, oral speaking skills and listening skills can be applied to any area of school or life connection.

Assessment: Assessment dependent upon language level of student.

Lesson 1:4 Day 6 Results of the interview

Lesson Objective: Presentation of interviews: oral speaking skills and listening comprehension.

Skills Attained: Students understand the values of an interview to gain insight into another person's life as well as gained a greater depth of oral speaking skills and listening comprehension.

Materials List: Student results of interview

Methods: Student presentations, class discussions

Suggested Teaching Activity: Each student will present to the class either in a pairing situation or independently results of their interview. Give the students time to offer their opinions or insights into the interview presented. Remember that for many students this will be the first experience in orally speaking in front of a formal class.

Application: Confidence in oral speaking and gaining greater listening skills in English will apply across curriculum and everyday life.

Assessment: Teacher assessment using the following rubric: First look at the Oral Language Proficiency Chart and give the following scores accordingly.

- 4 Completed assignment as directed and orally presented assignment
- 3 Completed two out of three questions and orally presented assignment
- 2 Completed 1 out of three questions and orally presented assignment
- 1 Did not complete any questions and did not orally present assignment

Unit 4: (Exploring the Narrative) Daily Lesson Plans

Lesson 2:4 Day 7 Author and Story Connection

Objectives: Students will review author and discuss the connectivity between the author and the story.

Skills Attained: Students understand that the author's life is intertwined in a story.

Materials Lists: Access to technology for research, other books by the author,

Methods: Small group research, teacher modeling, large group discussion

Content Background: In order to make the story more interesting and understand why the story was written, the students must know about the author. In this model unit, Out of the Dust, the author is Karen Hesse. She has written in other narrative forms such as a diary and letters. Her interests include history, anthropology, theatre, and English.

Suggested Teaching Strategies: The teacher will model the following author chart: (if using another book, put the information from that book)

Author's Name	Interests	Other Titles by Author
Karen Hesse	Research, theatre, anthropology, psychology	Letters from Rifka The Music of Dolphins Phoenix Rising

Tell students they may find the information in the chart at the front or back of the book, or through technology resources. Guide the students into completing the chart. As they ask questions orally about why an author would write a book with this particular title, why an author would choose "free verse," and if anyone has read any other book by this particular author.

Students will develop a "bubble map" (like the example) to answer the following questions: (Model interactively, draw a new bubble map for each question.) Question 2 group students to complete as a group.

1. How do students think good writers choose their style of writing?
2. From what they know now about the author, why would this style of writing be chosen?