

Low Level Activities for Adult ESL

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Speaking

Interview five people

This is an interview technique to allow students time to practice target structures:

1. Start off by having students copy the questions from the board. For this example, let's use personal information:

What is your first name?
What is your last name?
What is your full name?
What is your address?

2. Show students how to answer the question. I use a different color and answer the questions about myself:

What is your first name? **My first name is** _____.

What is your last name? **My last name is** _____.

What is your full name? **My full name is** _____.

What is your address? **My address is** _____.

3. Help students to fill in the information about themselves. Next show students how to make a table by folding their paper. For this activity they will have four columns and six rows.

First Name	Last name	Full name	Address

4. Model the interviewing process by interviewing five students and writing the information in the table.
5. Have students interview five people and write the answers in the table.

Other topics for the interview technique

Topic: Food
What is your favorite fruit?
What is your favorite vegetable?
What foods don't you like?

Topic: Telling Time

What time do you wake up?
What time do you eat breakfast?
What time do you eat lunch?
What time do you eat dinner?
What time do you go to bed?

Topic :Health

What exercise do you do?
How often do you exercise?

Topic : Community

What supermarket do you shop in?
Where is your local post office?
Do you like your neighborhood? Why? Why not?

Topic :Housing

Do you live in a house or an apartment?
How many bedrooms do you have?
How many TVs do you have? Where are they?

Topic: Jobs:

What do you do?
When do you work?
Where do you work?
What are your hours?



Scavenger Hunts

Students have to answer the following questions about their classmates. In order to do this they first have to ask the students for the information.

Process:

- 1) First have students answer questions about themselves. Next using the information gathered from students write the questions for the hunt on the board.

For example:

Is Maria's last name Gomez?

Does Jose live in Garden Grove?

Have students write the questions. Next have them write the answers.

Model how to ask another student for information by writing conversation starters on the board:

Personal Information Conversation Starters

What is your last name?

Where do you live?

How do you spell _____?

Excuse me?

Other topics for the scavenger hunt technique

Jobs and Work

Is Loan a manicurist?

Is Jose a carpenter?

What does Ana Maria do?

Housing and the community

Does Van live in a noisy neighborhood?

Does Pedro have a two bedroom apartment?

Is there a post office near Rob's house?

Oral Presentation Practice

Drawings

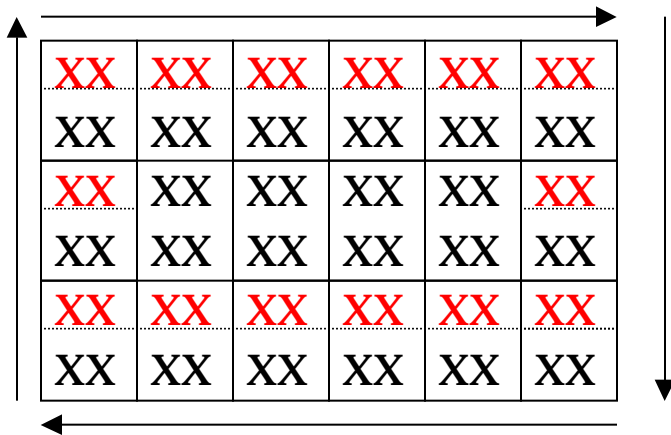
floor plans of houses.

pictures of food in their refrigerator

pictures of their families

maps of their community

After drawing is completed, put students into groups of four. Each person in the group describes their drawing to the others. Next two people from each group move to another group. Now you have a new group of four. Again the drawings are shared. Continue rotating through the groups until the two people have visited each group in the room.



Reading and Writing

Flash cards—Have students make flash cards for new words

Students are given directions on how to make flash cards with vocabulary words from the text.

Example:

Materials for each group:

8 file cards per person

2 pair of scissors

One color marker per person

Fold each file card in half.

Cut the file card.

Write the word on the file card
(these instructions vary depending on the activity)

What you can do with flash cards (idea was gleaned from Grace Tanaka)?

One of my favorite flash card activities is go fish. First I put on the board:

A. What are you looking for?
B. I am looking for _____? Do you have any?
A. Yes, here it is. I have a pair.
OR
A. No, go fish.
B. It's your turn. (to C)

First have students practice the dialogue. Divide students into small groups. Model the activity with one group while the whole class observes. Have students put their name on each flash card. Mix all groups flash cards together. Deal four cards to each member of the group. Show how to play the game using the language from the dialogue.

The Writing Process

Student Stories

Have students develop stories about themselves and write them. Examples of stories for low level ESL would be:

About Me
My Family
My house
My job

Prewriting

Students read a model as a reading activity

Dictate a series of questions for students to answer

Students answer the questions .

After students write the answers on their paper, have different students answer different questions on the board. Go over any problems in language structure, vocabulary, etc.

Finally, have students interview a partner. Encourage students to ask questions about information they want to know more about.

Writing

Students put sentences together using the model reading as a sample.

Post Writing

Group students and have them read their stories to each other. Have students answer the following about each of their group member stories.

Ask your partner a question about the story. What is something you don't understand? What more would you like to know?)

Do you see any spelling mistakes?

Do you see any other mistakes?

Students rewrite stories and give them to the teacher. Teacher reads and comments. I normally comment differently for each student based on his or her level. For example, for a literacy student I would just expect a few sentences. I would not comment at all on structure or spelling and perhaps ask them a question to get more information. However, for a low beginning student, I might pick one grammatical point for each student, circle their errors in that one point. Show them how to correct that one point.

Continue advising, rewriting, advising, rewriting until the student feels the work is finished.

Publish all student work by either making a class book. or posting it on the wall or on the Internet.



Models of many student stories can be found at:

<http://www.otan.dni.us/webfarm/emailproject/stories.htm>

Question Prompts:

Family stories

I divide the students up into two groups; those with children and those without children.

Questions for those with no children:

What is your name? How many brothers and sisters do you have?
Where are you from? Where do your brother and sisters live?
Where do you live? How do you feel about your family?
What is your mother's name?
What is your father's name?
Where do your parents live?

Questions for those with children:

What is your name? How old are your children?
Where are you from? How do you feel about your family?
Are you married? What is your husband's name?
How many children do you have?
What are your children's names?

Describe your house

Where is your house?
Is it big or small?
How many rooms does it have?
How many bathrooms?
How many bedrooms?

What furniture is in your bedrooms?
What furniture is in your living room?
Does your house have a yard?

Do you like your house?
Why or why not?

Your Job

What is your name? Where are you from? When did you come here?
What is your job?

What are your hours? What do you do at work? Do you like your job?
Why or why not?

Charts and Graphs

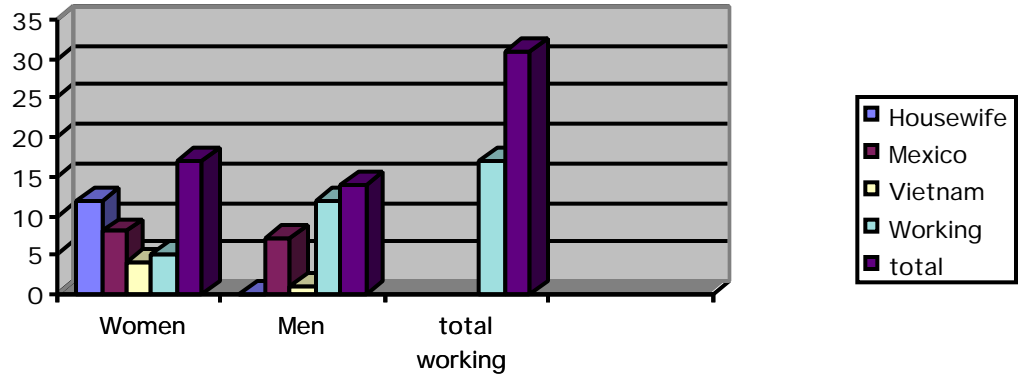
Favorite fruits Favorite vegetables Favorite colors Favorite
hobbies Favorite food

Name	Country	Occupation
Teresa	Mexico	housewife
Enrique	Mexico	masseuse
Leticia	Mexico	housewife
Elena	Mexico	housewife
Imelda	Mexico	housewife/baker
Ignacio	Mexico	assembler
Rossy	Mexico	unemployed and looking
Long	Vietnam	cashier
Oralia	Columbia	secretary
Miguel	Honduras	busperson
Nguyet	Vietnam	housewife
Minh	Vietnam	retired
Adalberto	Mexico	retired
Jose	Mexico	driver
Hector	El Salvador	assembler
Phong Tran	Vietnam	sewer
Phong Pham	Vietnam	sewer
Isabel	Mexico	housewife/baker
Orlando	Honduras	machine operator
Efrain	Mexico	delivery driver
Margarita	Mexico	housewife
Fabby	Mexico	housewife
Jose	Mexico	kitchen supervisor
Veronica	Mexico	housewife
Trinh	Vietnam	manicurist
Elena	Mexico	housewife

How many are housewives?

How many women?

How many men?



Writing Checklist for Beginning Level

Y N There is a title.

Y N The writer's first and last name is under the title.

Y N Every sentence begins with a capital letter.

Y N Every sentence ends with a period.

Y N Spelling is correct.

I have checked this story. Sign your name.

1.

2.
