

NOTE: Schedule the computer lab for the 7th, 19th and 20th, 23rd, 30th, and 37th (optional 43rd and 44th) days of class TODAY!! Also: Please read technology note for Lesson 19 and be sure to read the technology lessons, (Lessons 19 and 20) at least a week before you actually have to teach the class as it requires prep time and the purchase of floppy disks.

TITLE OF LESSON

English 1 Unit 1 Lesson 1 – Freshman Year Language Arts – Welcome/Introduction

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 9-10: R1.0-3; W2.1a-e; W/O1.0-3

MATERIALS

English 1 Unit 1 Introduction – Teacher Page

Sample English 1 Unit 1 Syllabus – Teacher Page (you will need to create your own version of a class syllabus)

Questions for Writing Prompt – Teacher Page

A freshman level book (e.g., *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* or *Thousand Pieces of Gold*) with a selected passage bookmarked

Index cards to use as information cards

Folders

Pens

Paper

Markers, colored pencils

Rulers

CD/tape player (Computer with CD drive)

Video player if you'll be showing one

A Note about music:

Some ideas about background music: Our experience has been that students like to hear music in the classroom, even if it's "old people's" music. We have yet to find anything the students would rather **not** hear. You know your students so go with whatever you think will work. We don't recommend specific music for each lesson, but we do recommend that you have music on in the classroom whenever possible. The musical learner is not always the student who sings or plays an instrument. Sometimes it's as simple as a student who learns better – significantly better – when there is music or some form of rhythm or beat in the background.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Your three objectives – for you! not the students – for this lesson are:

- To establish a classroom atmosphere that makes students feel comfortable about learning here;
 - To assess the reading and writing levels of each of the students; and
 - To begin to look for learning styles.
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EXPLANATION OF LESSON

The first day of class you can do your normal first day routine or use the following plan. Either way, be sure to take the time to do the reading and writing assessment described below, or a more formal method if you choose (see the appendix for a list of formal assessment measures). You'll need this information for the second day's lesson and for planning for individual student needs. It's important to set the tone today that this is a class where all skills are valued.

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) **Agenda** – Post an agenda of the class activities for the day on the front board. Have students take out a sheet of paper and write out the agenda. Tell them they will keep the agenda at the front of their folders from now on. Every day, they should sit down and write out the agenda as soon as they come into the class.
 - 2) **Writing** – As students come in, have a photograph or picture, a video or song that will evoke strong reactions and have prepared a series of questions in advance (Use the **Questions for Writing Prompt** found in the Teacher Pages as a guide if you choose). Show the picture or video or play the song and have students respond freely or in direct response to the questions. The questions can be on a handout or on the board. Make sure to have something all students will be able to understand. If you know you will have a student who is blind, use music instead of or in addition to a photograph.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Individual Reading Assessment** – As they start to write, explain that you're going to be walking around asking them to take a quick break and read, individually. Tell them they're not being tested; you're just getting a sense of where everyone is. Also, let them know before you begin that you'll be asking them after they read to tell you a little about what they've read. (You might want to do this a few times in the first week for the students you're not sure about. Some students just get very nervous when they have to read out loud so they don't pay attention to what they're reading.) If, by the time you reach a student, he has enough of his own questions answered (or has finished the questions as a journal) to give you a fair idea, have him read from his own writing. This has advantages and disadvantages. Most people feel more comfortable reading their own words, so you'll get a better sense of the fluidity and intonation he's capable of, but you can't check his comprehension or the breadth of his sight vocabulary. You can also get a pretty good sense of how well his writing reflects what he's actually trying to say, though, when he tells you about what he's just read.
2. **Books to Use** – If the student doesn't have enough of his own essay written, carry a freshman level book, along the lines of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* or *Thousand Pieces of Gold* with you and have him read a paragraph or so from that. Help out with names and difficult words *if necessary*.
3. As the students read, listen for:
 - ⇒ Decoding skills (can they sound out words?)
 - ⇒ Fluency (Do they read individual or groups of words and do they acknowledge punctuation?)
 - ⇒ Intonation (Do they take question marks, exclamation points into account? Does their reading sound monotone, or as though they're telling you a story?)
 - ⇒ Sight vocabulary (Do more words seem familiar to them or unfamiliar?)
4. **Student Information Cards** – As they start to finish, hand out information cards and write, on the board, that you'd like them to give you the following information:

Name
Address
Home phone
Parents'/Guardians' names
Birthday

Hobbies
Instruments they play
Sports they like
Any other information you'd like from them

5. **Portfolios** and **Classroom Folders** – Once you've finished the assessments and they've finished their writing and their information cards, explain that you'll be using the portfolio method of evaluation. For this class, they'll be responsible for keeping two: one they'll use to collect their finest achievements in each area (this is the one they will eventually post on the Internet), and one for them to monitor their growth. The first will be their actual portfolio, what's known as a portfolio. The second, will be their classroom folder. This year, their first, they'll begin to learn the responsibility of keeping track of their work, but they will keep it in the classroom. Beginning their sophomore year, they will keep a binder that they take home with them. But for their freshman year, while they learn responsibility for their own work, they'll put their papers into their classroom folders at the end of each class (unless they're turning something in), and be responsible for not losing or misplacing anything.

NOTE: They will have access to any missed work or worksheets from home via the Internet. (Students will also be using group folders for all of their group work. These are separate and they are responsible for keeping their work in the appropriate folder.)

6. Personalize Folders – Hand out the folders they'll use as their classroom folders, with markers, colored pencils, etc. and have them personalize their folders. This will give you an idea of who likes to draw, who's got artistic skills, graffiti skills, etc.
7. The work they do today will be part of their classroom folder.
8. Course Syllabus – Pass out your course syllabus and class expectations (see **Sample English 1 Unit 1 Syllabus**). Briefly review it with your students. Ask if there are any questions. Explain that they must sign it and their parent/guardian must sign it. Their signature indicates they understand your class rules, policies, and expectations. That's all.
9. Review Homework – Review the homework assignment with students. Explain they will be sharing a small part of themselves with the rest of the class tomorrow. You can let any extremely shy or anti-social students know that, because this is the first day of class, they can try to think of a creative way to express themselves without having to actually stand in front of the class and speak. If their creation isn't self-explanatory enough, though, they'd better be prepared to talk!
10. After class, use their writing to gauge:

Spelling

Punctuation

Capitalization

Verb tense

Verb tense consistency

Is there always a subject (ESL)

Preposition use (ESL)

HOMEWORK

- 1) Create a one-minute method of telling the class who you are. This can be a list, a poem, a song, a drawing, a symbol, a treasured possession, etc.
 - 2) Get course syllabus signed. Due tomorrow.
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GROUP ROLES

Students will be working individually during this class period, unless a student needs help.

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

None

NOTE: Students will only be placing their formal pieces of writing in their portfolio (those are the pieces of writing they take through the whole writing process to turn in for a letter grade) their formal projects, and their final exams, all of which should be a demonstration of their mastery of the skills you have been teaching them. Their portfolio is cumulative, that is all of their formal assignments should be kept in their portfolio for the rest of the school year. They should never be thrown away and portfolios should never leave the room. From now on, you will note there is a running list of what should be in their portfolios so that you can help students to keep track of what is being placed in them.