

Lesson Plan

“Experts, Liars, and Skimmers”

Instructor: Matthew Barbee
 Class: University Academic Reading
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Main Language Skill: Reading – skimming and scanning texts/reading fluency

Secondary Language Skill: Writing – writing fluency

Time: ~ 60 min.

Student Learning Objectives:

Materials:

Students will . . .

1. Use skimming and scanning skills to more efficiently understand and locate specific pieces of information while reading a text.
2. Write an informative paragraph that gives specific information on a specific topic.

- 1 topic card per student
- Scissors
- Tape

TIME	ACTIVITY	PROCEDURE
3	Introduction	Tell the students that each of them is a reporter who is writing a special feature about a rather obscure topic for their respective newspaper. In order to write their features, tell them that, in a few minutes, they are going to meet an expert in the field of their chosen topics.
10	Topic Cards: (Develop questions on a specific topic)	Give each student a “topic card” with space for 5 questions (see attached). Once the students have their topics, ask them to write six related questions based on what they think the readers of their newspapers might like to know about their topic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No yes/no questions. • Make sure students avoid using pronouns in their questions. For example: ‘When was sliced bread invented?’ as opposed to ‘When was <i>it</i> invented?’
2	TRANSITION	When the students have finished writing their questions, collect the papers and redistribute them at random.
20	Fake Experts: (Write an informative paragraph on a specific topic)	Tell the students that they are now the ‘experts’ on the topic that their new set of questions are based on. Their job is to make up the answers to the questions (lie if you have to), making them sound as convincing as possible. Give the students a few minutes to read through the questions to make sure they understand them. On a separate piece of paper, the students now write out a short paragraph that answers the six questions. They can be as creative and as far-fetched as they like, but remind them that since they are ‘experts’, their writing should be quite formal and technical. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor as the students write, checking for language problems and dealing with any questions. • Make sure that they do not write the topic as a title this time. In addition to answering the questions, the experts should also include three extra pieces of information.

5	TRANSITION	<p>When the paragraphs are ready (it is a good idea to set a time limit for the writing part so that everybody finishes at roughly the same time), hand out scissors and ask the students to cut the questions they've just answered up so that each question is on an individual slip of paper.</p> <p>Collect the questions and redistribute them so that each student gets a set of six questions based on six different topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that nobody gets a question that they have just answered in their role of 'expert'.
15	Skimming Race: (skim the student generated articles to find specific information)	<p>Tell students to read through the questions and underline what they believe to be the keywords. While they do this, collect the paragraphs and tack them to the board where they can be read without having to be moved.</p> <p>Tell the students that they now have to find the answers to their questions as quickly as they can. They must do this by leaving the questions on their desk and, starting from the first one, race over to the board to find the answer. This involves skimming each paragraph until they find the appropriate one, then scanning the text in order to find the answer. Having located the correct answer, they return to their desk and write the short answer on the slip before moving on to the next question and repeating until all six answers are found.</p> <p>The first student to finish should inform the teacher.</p>
5	Closing/Reflection	<p>Point out the necessity of scanning and skimming and inform the students that it only took them ____ minutes to read through all the paragraphs to find the information they needed. Ask the students if they had to read everything to find answers to their questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback and Corrections

Variations

Lower Level Variation: The teacher can use found articles and have the questions already written for the students. Also, students could work in groups of two or three depending on class size. This would also be a good pre- or post-activity.

Higher Level Variation: In addition to this activity, the teacher can ask students to research the topics on the Internet in order to get the real story and then write up a report.

Alternative: This lesson can alternatively be used to practice Listening and Speaking skills... Instead of writing full paragraphs, tell the students to write points to prepare a speech on the topic. Each student then gives a speech as the others listen for the answers to their questions.

<p>TOPIC: Monkeys</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: History of Bread</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Canada</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>
<p>TOPIC: Sandwiches</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Peanut Butter</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: New York City</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>

<p>TOPIC: Tokyo Fashion</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Traveling Abroad</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Homestay in France</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>
<p>TOPIC: Living in Space</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Holidays in Japan</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Robots</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>

<p>TOPIC: History of Toothpaste</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Action Movies</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Firework Festivals</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>
<p>TOPIC: Okonomiyaki</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: American Fashion</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Sports and Fitness</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>

<p>TOPIC: History of Soy Sauce</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Snakes</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Living in Hokkaido</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>
<p>TOPIC: Onsens</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: K-pop</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>	<p>TOPIC: Foreigners in Japan</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p>