

FACDIS 2016 Unit Lesson Plans
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Title: Meeting New Guangzhou Friends

Subject: Special Education

Grade: K-5

Topic: Letter Recognition, Pragmatics, Handwriting, Composition

Content: Practical Grammar Application to Everyday Letter Writing

Learning Goal:

~The student will dictate, copy and/or compose and write a personal letter while developing a beginning understanding of Chinese culture.

Objectives:

~ Given prompts, examples, and/or a word bank the student will dictate and/or write at least one grammatically correct, socially acceptable letter to a partnered pen pal student.

Materials:

~ Pencils, Lined Writing Paper

~ iPad, MacBook, or Computer; Internet Access; YouTube Access

Supplementary Resources/Ideas:

~ Many Mandarin children's songs are available on YouTube for background ambiance. Often music in the background can help children focus. Be cautious, however, about sensory issues with some special needs children. Example - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZOZyYQkYyQ 爱我你就抱抱我 Love Me Hug Me

~ Mooncakes will be fabricated from a simple salt dough recipe, with a different color for the filling. Especially good for students with fine motor and inside/outside spatial difficulties.

~ Paper Lanterns will be constructed with the help of the children able to do so and will be hung in the room.

~ Gourds will be painted (see Calabash Brothers cartoon description below) and hung in the room.

Preparation:

~ The teacher will locate and communicate with a teacher in China that is willing to collaborate in a Pen Pal arrangement. I am fortunate to have a colleague in Guangzhou, and will be collaborating with her. She has offered to share her contact info and put

other teachers in touch with ESL teachers in China and Korea to facilitate this lesson plan.

~ Pictures of students is likely a security concern, but hand drawn self-portraits could be substituted.

Introduction:

Students across grade levels will be introduced to China through the animated series of folk tales, Calabash Brothers (available with English subtitles here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oliV4nBWRfg>). A brief discussion about the cartoons the students regularly watch will follow. Drawing comparisons, students will recognize that Calabash Brothers is written in characters “葫芦兄弟” in Madarin, leading to a discussion about language appropriate to the grade/ability level of the specific student(s). The discussion will lead to uses for writing, including texting, email and letter writing.

Essential Questions:

- ~ How can we communicate with children from China in a meaningful way?
- ~ How are the stories and songs in another language about me?

Development:

The parts of a letter will be reviewed, and a blank example will be provided to students as a guide.

Practice:

Students will be paired with a student from Guangzhou. Depending on the student's individual ability, one of the following activities will be completed:

- ~ the teacher/aide will transcribe the student's letter with correct capitalization and punctuation, which the student will then copy in their own handwriting;
- ~ the student will compose their own letter, focusing specifically on pragmatics, which they will then review with the teacher/aide and make appropriate corrections for grammar. The student will then re-write the letter.
- ~ the student will compose a topic-specific letter, focusing on sharing and asking specific geographical attributes of their respective homes. Students will self-correct their draft for grammar mistakes and will rewrite until no errors remain.

Assessment:

~ Students will be assessed according to their ability to successfully complete at least one letter to another student. Because it is a Special Education classroom no one rubric or scale is appropriate for all students at their personal level of success.

Follow-up/Continuing Study:

~ Frequent discussions will center around similarities between our communities to foster understanding and reduce the US/THEM division.

~ Students will correspond for the entire school year with their international penpals. Letters and other correspondence will be sent via email (scanned) and through the mail.

Next Generation Content Standards and Objectives:

Kindergarten

ELA.K.L.C15.1

demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- print many upper- and lowercase letters.
- use frequently occurring nouns and verbs.
- form regular plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., *dog, dogs; wish, wishes*).
- understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., *who, what, where, when, why, how*).
- use the most frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., *to, from, in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with*).
- produce and expand complete sentences in shared language activities.

First Grade

ELA.1.L.C15.2

demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- capitalize dates and names of people.
- use end punctuation for sentences.
- use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series.
- use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words. Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions.

Second Grade

ELA.2.L.C16.1

use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- compare formal and informal uses of English.

Third Grade

ELA.3.L.C16.1

use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- choose words and phrases for effect.
- recognize and observe differences between the conventions of spoken and written standard English.

Fourth Grade

ELA.4.L.C16.1

use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
- choose punctuation for effect.
- differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

Fifth Grade

ELA.5.L.C16.1

use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.