



Lesson Plans

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How to conduct an interview

Pages:

14 15



40 minutes

(or an extra class can be added)

Material to be used

Read through the steps outlined in the workbook on pages 14 and 15.:

Optional Activity:

1. Ask the class to compile a list of well-known people from a broad range of backgrounds; sport, fashion, music, politics, film etc.
2. Assign a “persona” to each student in the room (preferably one they are interested in and that they know something about – there can be more than one of each persona...!)
3. If possible allow them to quickly research their well-known person.
4. Divide the class into pairs – one person is A the interviewer and the other is B and they are acting as the “persona” in question. These roles will then be reversed.
5. Both must separately prepare to interview the other following the steps laid out in the workbook.
6. When they are ready A interviews B for 5-10 minutes, then they reverse and B interviews A.

This is intended to be a light-hearted, fun exercise but it should demonstrate the need to prepare well in advance of conducting a real interview..

HOW TO CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

An interview is one of the best sources of news. Talking to someone, asking questions, asking the **right** questions is a great way of eliciting information. Some of the best, most informative and interesting stories have come from interviews.



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1) The more you do your homework in advance, the easier it will be.

Find out as much as possible about the person you are interviewing in advance - your background knowledge will tell you your subject you are really interested in their story.

2) Be ready

Try to anticipate what kind of story you will end up with. You should know what to expect from the interview, but keep an open mind in case there's a different story - a better angle - or a second story.

3) Key questions

- Write down your questions in advance.
- Have an idea of what information you want to get - that should help you frame your questions.
- Make sure you cover all the key areas you want to talk about.
- Be realistic - there's no point asking 50 questions, if you only have time, or room in your article, for 10.
- Work out the timing - how long your questions will take to ask, how long the interviewee will allow you.
- Don't be afraid to ask about the time in advance - nothing worse than turning up only to discover that the person you are interviewing has only 10 minutes to talk.
- Be interesting - if you ask boring questions, you'll get boring answers.

4) Be right

Check and double check every detail. If the answer is not clear, or you don't understand it, don't be afraid to ask it again. Check the spelling of names, addresses and other unusual details - don't presume you know. It would be a pity to get personal or other details wrong because you didn't take time to check.

5) Note taking

Make sure you take down the details correctly. Not much good if you can't read your writing afterwards! If you plan to record (either audio or video) the interview make sure the device is working properly, you have enough storage room and battery power.

6) Listen

You're there to listen, not to talk. Let **them** do the talking and then make sure you gather plenty of quotes.

7) Wrap up

Just before you leave, make sure you've asked all your questions and covered all the topics. Then ask the "bucket question" - "Is there anything else you feel I should know / you would like to tell me"? Get a phone number, in case you need to double check any details later.

8) Read it

Always read what you write. Make sure the transcript of your interview makes sense, reads well, is accurate and a fair reflection of the interview.

