

PLANNING QUESTIONS FOR: LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

1. What type of language experience will you do?

- a picture story
- a project/experience-based story
(e.g., making a fruit salad, designing the perfect classroom)

2. How will the Language Experience activity move students towards the lesson objective? (Check as many as apply)

It will...

- a. establish prior knowledge
- b. review previous lesson info
- c. provide vocabulary practice
- d. provide writing practice
- e. provide grammar practice
- f. provide reading practice
- other: _____

3. Who will record the language experience story?

- teacher
- teacher's aide
- higher-level learner

4. If a higher-level learner records the story will it be...

- for the whole class
- in small groups

5. Once students have completed the language experience story, what will they do?

- read the story to a partner
- edit the story
- write questions about the story
- circle letters and words in the story
- cut the story into sentence strips, scramble and sequence
- write additional sentences or paragraphs related to the story
- other _____

Directions for completing the Language Experience worksheet

Paste or draw a picture in the box in the template on pages 13, 14 and/or 15. Make a class set of the worksheet (black line drawings work best for photocopying). If you'd rather show students a color photo or illustration, put that photo up on the overhead or Smartboard™ and have students work with a piece of notebook paper instead of the worksheet.

STEPS FOR CONDUCTING A LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE

1. Set up the purpose of the language experience activity (see Planning Questions #2 on p.11).
2. Show the class the picture and elicit the story from students using questions and prompts pitched at learners' specific levels? E.g., (Level A) *Tell me what you see.* (Level B) *What's the woman doing?* (Level C) *Why is the woman laughing?* Write the story exactly as learners dictate it to you. (Learners may make suggestions on ways to make a sentence more accurate that you can incorporate, but try to refrain from making your own corrections at this stage of the activity.)
3. Once students agree that the story is complete, give them the opportunity to edit their work. (This is a great opportunity for learners to heighten their awareness of form.)
4. Have students read the story silently and then aloud to a partner.
5. Select a follow-up activity. (See Planning Question #5 on p.11 for suggested follow-up activities.)

Notes and Variations:

- It's possible to do this activity in small mixed-level groups with a higher-level learner recording the students' story. The difficulty sometimes comes in the higher-level learner facilitating rather than dictating the story him or herself. In order for the small group version of the language experience to work well, provide higher-level students with a list of eliciting questions and have them practice them within their same-level groups before joining a mixed-level group.
- It's possible to use this language experience worksheet with small same-level groups by giving the worksheet to B and C level groups and having them work on writing sentences about the picture (B) and writing a story about the picture (C) while you conduct a teacher-led language experience activity with the level A group. Grouping students this way will mean that you have to give a different set of directions to the B and C Groups. And you'll want to use the B and C templates shown below.

