

The Yellow Pages

THEME:	CULTURAL CONTEXTS (GOODS)					
LANGUAGE:	ANY (SPANISH)					
STANDARDS:	COMMUNICATION	CULTURES	CONNECTIONS	COMPARISONS		
	1.2	1.3	2.2	3.2	4.1	4.2

Time Frame:

One 55-minute class session

Materials needed:

- Copies of yellow pages from target culture phone books (provided in Spanish)
- Overhead transparency of yellow pages
- Copies of U.S. yellow pages (optional)
- Rubric for assessing questions (provided)

Description of task:

Pre-reading/writing:

The teacher displays a page from the yellow pages advertisement section of the target culture phone book on the overhead and asks students the following questions in English:

- What kind of text is this? How do you know? What clues do you have? [follow-up prompts may include: Which words look familiar to you? Are there any pictures/graphics which help you to understand the meaning of the text?]
- In which type of book might you find this page?
- What do you think is the purpose of this text? Why do you think so?
- Who is the target audience for this page?

A review lesson on question formation should follow. Students review ways to formulate questions: ¿Cómo se llama.....? ¿Cuál.....? ¿Dónde.....?

Level:

Intermediate-Low

Purpose:

To scan for information and to create questions

Communicative

Function(s):

Referential: Scanning for information; requesting facts about a text

Language Structure(s):

Question formation

Cultural Aspects:

Comparing goods/services in target culture and U.S. based on yellow page ads; presentation of addresses/phone numbers

Modalities:

Reading

Writing

NOTES

¿Qué es...? ¿Cuántos...? etc. Using the overhead transparency of the yellow pages ads, the teacher elicits from the whole class a variety of questions that could be posed about the ads on the page and records them, being sure to have the class attend to errors. This process will model grammatically accurate formation of questions. Examples of the types of questions the teacher should elicit follow:

1. How many of the restaurants on the page provide wedding banquet facilities? What are their names?
2. What is the name of the restaurant that offers fixed-price meals?
3. Where is Restaurante San Lucas located?
4. What is the specialty at Restaurante Tino?
5. If you are allergic to seafood, which restaurants should you avoid?
6. Which restaurant is located in the Plaza Mayor?

Reading/Writing:

The teacher selects ten different pages from the yellow pages (sample pages provided) and divides the class into ten groups of two or three students each. Each group needs to elect a “question recorder” and an “answer recorder.” Each group receives one of the photocopied pages from the yellow pages. (Alternatively, students can be assigned an entire section; i.e., all the pages having restaurant ads.) As a group, they are instructed to write five questions about the advertisements appearing on their page. Their goal is to try and stump another group by writing challenging questions. They must use at least three different types of interrogative words/phrases, and they must make every attempt to create grammatically correct questions. They must also create (on a different sheet of paper) an answer key to the questions they created. The names of group members should appear on both the question sheet and the answer sheet.

Once all of the groups have written their questions and answers, they submit the question and answer sheets, and the photocopy of the yellow page(s) to the teacher. The teacher re-distributes the questions and photocopied yellow page(s) so that each group receives a new page of advertisements and a set of questions to answer.

Again, the groups assign a recorder (preferably a student who did not act as recorder during the question formation activity) and they work together to answer the questions they were assigned. They must also put their names on the sheet and submit the final sheet to the teacher.

After finding the answers to their questions, the groups are instructed to discuss (in English) several questions the teacher will have put on the board (also in English). They should elect a reporter, who will report the group's answers/ideas to the class. (It may be useful to have U.S. yellow page directories available for students to make comparisons.) The questions should focus students' attention on cultural aspects related to the ads. Sample questions include:

- In what ways are the phone numbers similar to/different from phone numbers in the U.S.?
- How are addresses presented?
- What types of words/phrases are used in the ads to try to attract customers? (Jot some down.) How are these different from/similar to the techniques used to attract customers in U.S. yellow page ads?
- What words/phrases are you having difficulty understanding? Jot these down.

Post-reading/writing:

The teacher engages the class in a discussion (in English) about the questions related to cultural aspects. A list of words/phrases used to attract customers is created (two lists can be created; one of words/phrases represented in the target culture ads and the other of words/phrases represented in U.S. ads).

The teacher gives the responses to the questions back to the original groups that created the questions. The groups, using their answer keys, assess their peers' performance on the task by checking their responses with the responses on the answer key. All responses are again submitted to the teacher.

Assessment:

The teacher can assess students' performance on the scanning tasks by checking the answers both groups created in response to the questions. The quality of the questions can be assessed with a simple rubric (provided). Students' comprehension of the cultural issues can be assessed informally during the class discussion.

Extensions:

Suggestions for adapting the task to various levels:

For beginning levels: Beginning students can formulate their questions in English.

For advanced levels: All groups can be provided with yellow pages that correspond to the same category (i.e., all restaurants). All discussions can occur in the target language.

Other extensions:

- In addition to questions, students can be asked to create longer “scenarios.” For example, “Your parents are visiting from the U.S. and they are picky eaters! At the same time, you want them to try some authentic cuisine and refuse to take them to McDonald’s or Pizza Hut. You also have a limited budget. Which of the restaurants are your best options?”
- Students can create ads for a class newsletter.

Cultural extensions:

- Students can be presented with photocopies of yellow pages representing various target cultures (e.g., Guatemala, Puerto Rico, and Spain) and be asked to compare/contrast the ads. [Note that the sample ads accompanying this task are from Spain, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala.]
- Students can examine entire phone books and discuss similarities and differences between the target culture and the U.S. in terms of the types of sections and number of ads in each section, etc. What sections exist in the target culture phone book that don’t exist in the U.S. phone book and vice versa? What might account for the differences?

References and Resources:

This lesson makes use of the following authentic material:

McWilliams, S., & Iafocano, J. *Mexican Phone Phun Exercises*. Teacher's Discovery.

Teacher's Discovery

2741 Paldan Drive

Auburn Hills, MI 48326

Phone: 1-800-TEACHER

Website: <http://www.teachersdiscovery.com>

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Reflections:

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