

Exploring Michigan

The feature article in this issue focuses on the state of Michigan. The activities in this lesson plan provide additional information about attractions (things to see and do) in Michigan and give students extensive practice using expressions of preference and persuasion as they plan things to do on a trip to Michigan. This lesson has three parts: (I) a warm-up, which sets the context and introduces vocabulary; (II) the main activities, which provide integrated reading, writing, listening, and speaking practice; and (III) a follow-up extension of the main activities. Based on the available time, you may choose which of the activities in Parts II and III to do with your class. However, it is recommended that Part I be completed first (since that introduces the context) and that the activities within Parts II and III be done in the order they appear in the lesson plan.

Objectives: Students will be able to create and present an itinerary for a trip to Michigan and for a visit to their home country, state preferences about what they would like to do, justify their decisions, and persuade others to adopt their itinerary.

Part I: Your Home Country

Goals: To introduce the topic of planning trip activities, and to familiarize students with the vocabulary and language structures needed to complete the activities

1. Tell students to imagine that a friend from the United States will be visiting their home country for the first time. Ask students these questions:

- Where should the friend go?
- What should the friend see or do?
- Which specific events/festivals/celebrations should the friend see?
- Is there a preferred time of year to visit? Why? Because of the weather? Because of the schedule for special events?

2. Based on these questions, elicit from students ideas about things to see and do in their home country. When eliciting these activities from the students, encourage the students to use persuasive language and justify the reasons for the suggestions.

Examples: He *should* see the mountains.

She *should* visit in the summer because the weather is beautiful.

3. Write the student-generated suggestions on the board, grouping them in columns by types of activities (history and art museums, music, sports, and nature and outdoor activities). Some activities may be included in more than one column. When all the ideas have been shared and written on the board, elicit labels for the types of activities in each column. The headings for the resulting chart will look like this:

History and Art Museums	Music	Sports	Nature and Outdoor Activities

Be sure to elicit at least one activity for each column of the chart. If no one volunteers an activity for one of the columns, use guiding questions to elicit an example. For instance, if no one has said “go to the museum,” you might ask students, “Where do you go if you want to learn about the history of your city?” or “Where can a visitor see some artwork from your country?”

Part II: Trip to Michigan

There are four activities in Part II. Depending on the available time, you can choose to complete all of them or only some of them. However, the activities build on each other, so you are encouraged to complete them in order. These activities could also be completed across multiple class periods.

Activity 1: Contextualizing the Activity (20 minutes)

Goal: To familiarize students with the context of the activity by presenting them with the information they will need (in either spoken or written form) and concept checking to ensure the students’ understanding

Activity 1 can be done as either a reading activity (see Option A) or a listening activity (see Option B); decide in advance which skill you want students to practice. A listening activity may be more appropriate for more advanced students; less advanced students may benefit more from a reading activity. The “pre-” activities would be the same for both listening and reading.

Pre-reading and Pre-listening (5 minutes)

Goal: To set the context for the information students will receive and use for the rest of the activities in Part II

1. Tell students that they have won a two-day trip to travel to the state of Michigan in the United States. In Michigan they will stay with an American student, a new friend.
2. Tell students they have received a letter from their friend in Michigan. The letter tells them about many activities that they could experience on their trip to Michigan. Ask students to imagine what some of these activities might be. Elicit some responses.

Option A: Reading (15 minutes)

Goal: To practice reading for general ideas and skimming for specific information

(Note: If you choose this option, you will need to prepare photocopies of “A Letter from a Friend in Michigan” found at the end of the lesson plan.)

1. Write the following questions on the board:
 - Who is the letter from? (Who wrote the letter?)
 - Where is this person from?
 - Why did this person write the letter?
 - What does this letter tell you?
2. Pass out copies of the letter. Tell students to read the letter silently once, paying attention to the main ideas in the letter. Consider giving a time limit.
3. Once the students have finished reading, to ensure that the students have understood the general ideas in the letter, ask them to share with a partner their answers to the questions on the board. After the students have had a chance to compare their answers, elicit the answers from students, as a class, and write the answers on the board.

4. Divide students into groups or pairs based on the number of students. Assign each group or pair one of the activity categories used in the chart for Part I (history and art museums, music, sports, and nature and outdoor activities). Ask the students to read the letter again within their groups and to underline the activities that are related to their assigned categories.

5. Draw a new chart on the board, using the same categories as in Part I. Elicit from each pair or group the activities in the letter that belong in their assigned category. Ensure that all activities in the letter are included in the chart. As needed, help students with unfamiliar vocabulary. The completed chart will look like this:

History and Art Museums	Music	Sports	Nature and Outdoor Activities
Greenfield Village Henry Ford Museum Ford Rouge Factory Detroit Institute of Arts	Detroit Symphony Motown Records Local music festivals	Football game Baseball game University of Michigan or Michigan State University college sports	Camping Hiking Water sports (sailing, water skiing, canoeing, swimming) Viewing dunes and lighthouses Enjoying the scenery

Option B: Listening (15 minutes)

Goal: To practice listening for general ideas and for specific information

1. Write the following questions on the board:

- Who is the letter from? (Who wrote the letter?)
- Where is this person from?
- Why did this person write the letter?
- What does this letter tell you?

2. Tell the students that you are going to read the letter out loud to them and that they should pay attention to the main ideas in the letter so that they will be able to answer the questions on the board.

3. Read “A Letter from a Friend in Michigan” (found at the end of the lesson plan) out loud to the students. (The students should not have copies of the letter.) After students have listened to the letter and answered the questions by themselves, ask the students to share their answers with a partner. Once pairs of students have had a chance to compare their answers, elicit the answers from the students, as a class, and write them on the board.

4. Divide the students into groups or pairs, based on the number of students. Assign each group or pair one of the activity categories used in the chart for Part I (history and art museums, music, sports, and nature and outdoor activities). Ask the students to listen to the letter again as you read it aloud, and to take notes on the activities that relate to their assigned categories.

5. Draw a new chart on the board, using the same categories as in Part I. Elicit from each pair or group the activities in the letter that belong in their assigned category. Ensure that all activities

in the letter are included in the chart. As needed, help students with unfamiliar vocabulary. The completed chart will look like the completed chart shown at the end of the Reading activity.

Activity 2: Brainstorming an Itinerary (5 minutes)

Goals: To familiarize students with the possible activities and to have students decide what they would or would not like to see and do on their trip

1. Ask students to use the completed chart from Activity 1 to decide what they would like to do and see on their trip to Michigan. Remind students that they will be in Michigan for only two days, so they will have to make choices—there won't be enough time to do everything.

This activity can be adapted for the level of the students. For instance, lower-level students can choose *what* activities they would like to do on their trip. You might present students with examples such as these:

- On my trip I would like to visit the art museum.
- I would not like to go to a baseball game.

On the other hand, more advanced students can focus on preference and why they would like to do the chosen activities, using *because*, *rather*, and *prefer*. Encourage students to also think of reasons why they would choose some activities and not others. You might present examples such as these:

- I'd prefer to visit Greenfield Village because I would like to learn more about the history of that area.
- I'd rather visit the Detroit Art Museum than the Henry Ford Museum because I'm interested in art.

2. Ask students to write what they would and would not like to do in Michigan, using the appropriate example sentences as guides.

Activity 3: Negotiating the Itinerary (25–30 minutes)

Speaking: Pair or Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Goal: To practice persuading a partner or group member using *like*, *prefer*, *rather*, and *because*

1. Divide students into pairs or small groups. Tell students that the pairs or groups will be travel companions/partners, and they need to agree on their itinerary for the two-day trip to Michigan. Using the written plans developed in Activity 2, students will negotiate and persuade their partners or group members to agree on an itinerary. Students should be encouraged to negotiate a plan together and not just create a shortened combination of their individual itineraries from Activity 2.

This activity can be adapted for the level of the students. Lower-level students can focus on *what* activities they would like to do on their trip. To begin the discussion, you might present example patterns such as the following:

- What would you like to do?
- I would like to _____.
- I would not like to _____.
- Would you like to _____?
- Would you prefer to _____ or _____?

Meanwhile, more advanced students can focus on why they would like to do their chosen activities, using *because*, *like*, *rather*, and *prefer*. You can write the following phrases on the board to help students begin their discussion:

- We should _____ because _____.
- I would rather _____ than _____ because _____.
- I would prefer to see _____ because _____.
- If we go to _____ and _____, we won't have time to go to _____.

2. Have students complete these models with their own information and then discuss the activities and create a common itinerary for their pair or group.

Writing (5 minutes)

Goal: To practice using the forms *like*, *rather*, *prefer*, and *because* in writing to present and justify an itinerary

Tell each group or pair to write their agreed-upon itinerary, using the forms *like*, *rather*, and *prefer*. More advanced students should also include the reasoning behind their choices, using *because*.

Speaking and Listening: Presentation (10–15 minutes)

Goal: To practice using the forms *like*, *rather*, *prefer*, and *because* in an oral presentation

Tell each pair or group to orally share their itinerary with another pair or group. Depending on the number of groups and the amount of time available, you may choose to have each pair or group share with more than one other pair or group. More advanced students should also include why some activities are included, and why others are not.

Activity 4: Renegotiating the Itinerary (65–90 minutes)

Speaking: Pair or Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Goal: To practice persuading a partner or group member using the forms *like*, *prefer*, *rather*, and *because*

1. Tell students that their travel plans have unexpectedly changed. Students will now have only one day in Michigan.
2. Have students get back in their pairs or groups from Activity 3. Then ask them to create a shortened one-day itinerary from the two-day itinerary they prepared in Activity 3. Tell students to negotiate which of the activities will remain in their itinerary and which will be removed. This activity can be adapted according to the level of students, in the same way as was presented in Activity 3.

Writing (5 minutes)

Goal: To practice using the forms *like*, *rather*, *prefer*, and *because* in writing to present and justify an itinerary

Tell each group or pair to write their new itinerary, using the forms *like*, *rather*, and *prefer*. More advanced students should also include the reasoning behind their choices, using *because*.

Speaking and Listening: Presentation (10–15 minutes)

Goal: To practice using the forms *like*, *rather*, *prefer*, and *because* orally to present an itinerary and persuade others to join their group

1. Tell each pair or group to orally share their itinerary with the entire class. More advanced students should also include why these activities are included and why others are not. The students should try to persuade others to join their group and accept their itinerary.
2. Once all the itineraries have been presented, each student should decide which itinerary he/she would like to use for the trip. It could be his or her own group's itinerary, or it could be one created by another group. (If you have a large class, you might want to number the itineraries, or name the itineraries, as they are presented to help students identify the itinerary they choose.)

Group Writing (15 minutes)

Goal: To practice writing a letter presenting the itinerary and asking additional informational questions

1. Divide students into groups or pairs so that students who have chosen the same itinerary are in the same group or pair. Assign one student per pair or group to be the scribe.
2. Tell the students to write a letter to their friend in Michigan. The purpose of the letter is to tell the friend what they would like to see and do in Michigan, based on their chosen itinerary. (More advanced students should also include the reasons for their decisions.) The letter should also ask any follow-up questions that the student might need to know. Some possible questions are:
 - What will the weather be?
 - How much does the Ford Museum cost?
 - How long would it take to tour the Ford Rouge Factory?
 - When are the lighthouses open?
 - Which sport teams will be playing when I'm there?

Reading and Writing (10 minutes)

Goal: To practice reading and peer reviewing

Have the groups or pairs exchange letters. Ask each group to read the letter they receive and to peer review it. Remind students to read the letter from the point of view of the friend in Michigan; ask them to consider such things as:

- Has the writer of the letter clearly stated what he or she wants to do in Michigan? (Does the letter match the chosen itinerary?)
- What additional information is the letter writer asking for? Are the writer's questions clear?
- Are there other things the letter writer might need to know before traveling to Michigan?

Encourage students to focus on the content of the letter they are reviewing, rather than on the mechanics and grammar.

Optional Follow-up: Internet or Library Research (20 minutes)

Goal: To practice answering information questions using available resources

If students have access to the Internet or other library resources, each group or pair can research the answers to the questions in the letter they received. As a group, they can write a reply to the letter, answering the questions.

Optional Individual Writing: Journal Entry (15 minutes)

Goal: To practice informal journal writing

Ask students to imagine that they are at the airport, waiting to travel to Michigan. Tell them to write an informal diary or journal entry about what they expect from the trip, what they hope to learn, and what they are looking forward to.

Part III: Visit from a Friend

Speaking and Listening (30 minutes)

Goal: To practice negotiating and persuading others using the forms *like*, *prefer*, *rather*, and *because*

1. Divide students into pairs or groups. Assign one student in each group or pair to be the notetaker. Tell students to imagine that a friend from Michigan is traveling for business and will be able to visit the students in their home country for one day. Use the information gathered in Part I and tell students to decide what the friend should see and do during the visit. This activity can be adapted for the level of students: as in the earlier activities, less advanced students can focus on what the friend should see and do, while more advanced students can focus on why the friend should do something. As the students agree on what the friend should see and do, the notetaker should write the group's ideas.
2. Once the groups or pairs have created an itinerary for the friend, ask each group to present its itinerary to the whole class. Using class discussion, have students come to a consensus as to what the friend should see and do while visiting. (With very large classes, students can discuss and agree upon an itinerary in large groups rather than a whole-class discussion.)
3. Ask students—as a class, or in large groups—to discuss what additional information the friend should know before the visit. For example, the friend might need to know what to pack or what the weather will be.

Writing (15 minutes)

Goal: To practice writing an informal informational letter to a friend

Divide the class into pairs or groups. Ask each pair or group of students to work together to write a letter to the friend from Michigan who will visit them. The purpose of the letter is to present the suggested itinerary to the friend and to include any information the friend will need to prepare for the visit.

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A Letter from a Friend in Michigan

Dear Friend,

I am so excited that you are going to visit Michigan and stay with me. There are many exciting things to see and do in Michigan, and I look forward to sharing them with you. I don't know what types of things you would like to see or do, but there are so many possibilities! Of course, what we do depends on when you come to visit.

In the summer, many people love to spend time outdoors in Michigan's natural beauty, enjoying activities such as camping and hiking, water sports (sailing, water skiing, canoeing, and swimming), viewing the dunes and lighthouses on the shores of the Great Lakes that border Michigan, or just enjoying the scenery.

If you like sports, we could attend a professional baseball or football game. (I mean American football, not soccer.) Michigan also has some very strong college athletic teams from the University of Michigan and Michigan State University.

Michigan also has a rich musical culture. In Detroit there is the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the original home of Motown Records (known for its soul music and famous singers that include Diana Ross and Aretha Franklin). And Michigan has many local music festivals as well.

Michigan also has many art, science, and history museums. History comes to life in Greenfield Village, where we can also see the Henry Ford Museum and tour the Ford Rouge Factory. The Detroit Institute of Arts is well-known for having one of the largest, most significant art collections in the United States.

I know that you will only visit for two days, so you won't have enough time to see everything. Please let me know what you'd like to do while you're here. I look forward to your visit.

Your friend,

Anna