

READER'S GUIDE

This guide is designed to enrich your reading of the articles in this issue. You may choose to read them on your own, taking notes or jotting down answers to the discussion questions below. Or you may use the guide to explore the articles with colleagues.

For example, many teachers discuss *Forum* at regularly scheduled meetings with department colleagues and members of teachers' groups, or in teacher-training courses and workshops. Often, teachers choose an article for their group to read before the meeting or class, then discuss that article when they meet. Teachers have found it helpful to take notes on articles or write a response to an article and bring that response to share in a discussion group. Another idea is for teachers to try a selected activity or technique described in one of the articles, then report back to the group on their experiences and discuss positives, negatives, and possible adaptations for their teaching context.

Using Nonprofit Commercials to Teach English (Pages 2–15)

Pre-Reading

1. What are nonprofit commercials? What comes to mind when you see *nonprofit commercials* in the article title?
 2. Have you used commercials (profit or nonprofit) in your English teaching? If so, how did you use them? What were the results?
 3. Based on your knowledge of commercials in general, what do you think the advantages of using them to teach English might be? Can you think of any drawbacks?
 4. Think about the title. Then come up with one question that you expect the article to answer. Write or type it so that you can refer to it after you have finished reading the article.
3. Watch a few of the videos/commercials listed in the Appendix. (Most are quite short.) Can you see ways to use them in your teaching? Are any of the listed commercials inappropriate for your classes? If so, why? (Note that it is essential to preview the commercials yourself before showing them in class to make sure they are appropriate for your teaching context.)
 4. Try listening to one of the videos without watching it. Then go back and watch it. What is the experience like? Did the sound(s) of the video prepare you for what you saw? In what ways could this technique—listening only before watching—be useful for your students?

Post-Reading

1. Check the question that you wrote for Pre-Reading question #4. Did the article answer that question? Did you think of other questions as you were reading?
 2. Do you agree with the author that nonprofit commercials can be a rich source of content for teaching language, critical thinking, and other
5. In the section Project-Based Learning, the author presents steps for having students create their own “commercials.” Which of your classes would be the best fit(s) for this project? Try assigning it to your students. Do you notice any benefits that are not mentioned in the article?

Assessing Learners' Productive Vocabulary Knowledge: Formats and Considerations (Pages 16–25)

Pre-Reading

1. How do you assess your learners' vocabulary knowledge? Do you use one method or a variety?
2. Do you use assessments that target vocabulary knowledge? Or do you assess overall English skills, with vocabulary knowledge making up part of the whole?
3. Notice that the title says *productive vocabulary knowledge*. What does the word *productive* suggest about the types of assessment that could be used? What kinds of assessment can you think of that would target productive vocabulary knowledge?
4. What are the benefits of assessing learners' productive vocabulary knowledge?

Post-Reading

1. Did reading this article change your thoughts on assessing learners' productive vocabulary knowledge—or how you can do it?

2. Why might it be important to assess learners' productive vocabulary knowledge as opposed to their receptive vocabulary knowledge? Can you think of situations where receptive vocabulary knowledge might be more important than productive vocabulary knowledge? Are any of your learners in that kind of situation?
3. The authors write, "these test formats are not meant for use in achievement tests or in other forms of high-stakes assessment." Why do you think they make this cautionary remark?
4. The article presents descriptions of five test formats. Which seems like it would best fit your teaching situation? Why?
5. Choose one of the test formats and try it out with colleagues; then have them give you the test. What is the experience like? Does it make you more or less likely to use the assessment with your students? What did you discover by giving and taking the test?