

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.

Educative Curriculum Materials: A Promising Option for Independent Professional Development (Pages 2–15)

Pre-Reading

- 1.** Have you heard of “Educative Curriculum Materials” before? What do you think the term means?
- 2.** What kinds of professional development have you engaged in during the last year? During the last five years? What results have you noticed?
- 3.** Do you feel motivated to engage in professional development? What motivates you? If you don't feel motivated, why do you think that is? What could happen, or what could you do, to increase your motivation?

Post-Reading

- 1.** In your own words, how would you explain to another teacher (who has not read this article) what Educative Curriculum Materials (ECMs) are?
- 2.** The authors point out that “it is not the materials themselves but rather teachers interacting with the materials that causes professional development.” What does this statement mean to you? Can you give an example of a time you have “interacted” with the materials you use?
- 3.** According to the article, the first step in applying ECMs to the teaching of English as a foreign language is to “Analyze the current teaching

materials for gaps.” As you teach your courses, take notes about any gaps you notice. What is missing? How could the materials be improved or adapted? Encourage your colleagues to do the same. From time to time, meet with colleagues to share the gaps you've identified.

Together, choose one gap and brainstorm ways to adapt or supplement the materials in order to fill the gap. Use the supplementary and adapted materials in your teaching. How do you feel about the results? Continue this process over time, with other materials and other gaps. What changes do you see in student learning? What changes do you experience as a teacher?

- 4.** On page 7, the authors suggest questions that could be used to interview teachers about their teaching. Try answering these questions in a “self-interview.” Then, with a colleague or several colleagues, interview each other. What do the answers reveal about your and your colleagues' attitudes and approaches toward teaching?
- 5.** In Figures 1, 2, and 3, the authors provide suggestions for activities that might fill in gaps that they observed. With colleagues, develop activities similar to these that you can use with the curriculum that you teach.

Teaching Writing Students How to Become Competent Peer Reviewers (Pages 16–23)

Pre-Reading

1. Do you ask your students to peer-review their classmates' writing?
 - A. If so, are you satisfied with the results of the peer-review work? Do you think it makes your students better writers? Does it help them review their own work and their peers' work more effectively? What kind of training or guidance do you give students before they begin to peer-review?
 - B. If not, what are the reasons you don't ask students to peer-review? Write these reasons down and keep them in mind as you read the article.
2. The author says he spent about a week's worth of classes training his students to become effective peer reviewers. Would you be willing to spend this much time on peer-review training in your writing classes? If your answer is "No," would your answer change when you consider the author's point that peer-review training can have long-term benefits for students—benefits that might last much longer than the course they are studying now?
3. The author provides a Peer Review Feedback Sheet in the Appendix, but he points out that "you can modify or reword it to best fit your student population." How useful would this Feedback Sheet be for your students? What changes, if any, would make it most useful for your students?
4. How can you get your students to offer more-helpful feedback than general comments such as "This is good" and "I liked it"? Write down three ideas—and if you are in a discussion group, share and compare your ideas with others.

Post-Reading

1. Now that you have finished the article, what are your feelings about using peer-review training in your classes? Will you do it? Write down the advantages you can think of or that you remember from the article. Then write down disadvantages. Which list is longer? What is a practical plan for overcoming each of the disadvantages on your list?

Using Writing as a Scaffold to Academic Discussions in the Foreign Language Classroom (Pages 24–31)

Pre-Reading

1. Do your students engage in discussions during class time? If so, how do they prepare for their discussions? What tasks or activities do you assign or suggest to help them prepare?
2. Although you haven't read the article yet—what benefits can you think of for having students write in preparation for academic discussions? Can you think of any disadvantages?
3. use of English—compare? Compare your observations to those that the author reports in the article.
2. After your students discuss the topics in #1 above, ask them for their reactions to the two approaches. Which did they prefer—discussing after writing or discussing without writing? Make sure your students give specific reasons to support their responses.

Post-Reading

1. Ask your students to discuss the topics that the author suggests ("Reflect on your carbon footprint" and "Being sick is never good"; see page 28 for the prompts), and use the author's approach of having students discuss the first topic without writing and the second topic after writing about it first. Make notes about what you observe in the discussions. How do the discussions of the two topics—and the students' use of English—compare? Compare your observations to those that the author reports in the article.
3. What other topics could your students discuss?
4. Suppose you are co-teaching a speaking/discussion class, and you want to convince your colleague to incorporate writing activities—such as rush-writing—as a way to prepare students for the discussions. Your colleague feels the writing activities would take too much time away from the discussions. What would you say or do to convince your colleague of the value of writing as a scaffold to discussions?