

Teachers Helping Teachers:

Peer Observation for Professional Development



Heather Benucci

September 10, 2014

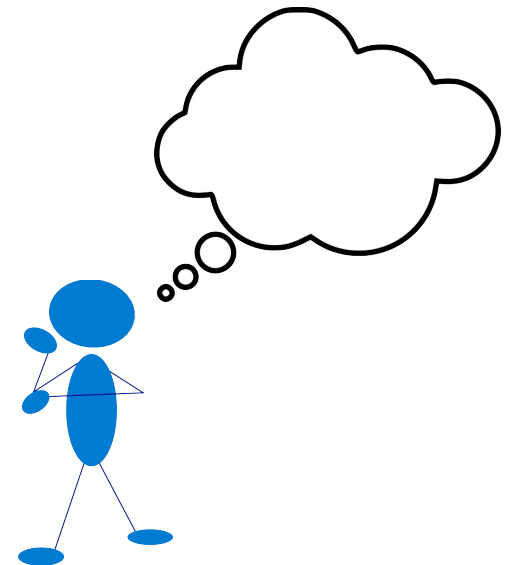
Shaping the Way We Teach English Webinars – Course 14



+ Close your eyes....



- Imagine the last time your teaching was observed
- What words and short phrases come to mind?



+ Word association – Observation

Performance Evaluation

Nervous

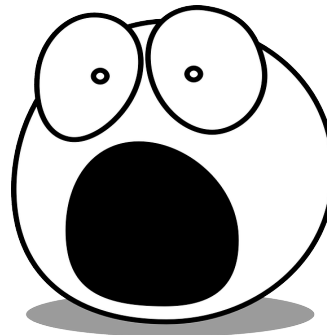
Intruded upon

Mandatory

Power difference

Artificial

Uncomfortable



Developmental

Collaborative

Reflection

Supportive

Improved Learning

Mutual Respect

Team-building

+ Our mission today!



- Examine types of classroom observation
- Explore peer observation
 - Goals
 - Challenges
 - Process
- Explore a resource that can enhance observation skills
 - *Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action*

+ Observation types



- **Evaluative** - performance, accreditation
- **Performance management** - in response to complaints or performance issue
- **Teacher training** - instructive
- **Peer** - cooperative, developmental
- **Self** - using video or audio data
- **Recorded** - videos of other teachers

+ Observation types



- **Evaluative** - performance, accreditation
- **Performance management** - in response to complaints or performance issue
- **Teacher training** - instructive
- **Peer** - cooperative, developmental
- **Self** - using video or audio data
- **Recorded** - videos of other teachers

+ Peer Observation

- Teachers observing other teachers for professional development
- Both the observer and observed examine their beliefs, attitudes, and practices
- Usually
 - Confidential
 - Voluntary





Peer Observation: Goals



■ Designed to

- Spark collaboration
- Encourage self-reflection and self-awareness
- Challenge assumptions
- Foster experimentation
- Stimulate curiosity
- **Improve learning outcomes**



■ Not to

- Judge others
- Evaluate or review for advancement





Peer Observation Challenges



■ Observer

- Relationship management
- Setting aside own biases and beliefs
- Finding an observation focus

■ Observed

- Threat to identity and experience
- “Intrusion” in space
- Making observation process relevant to daily teaching

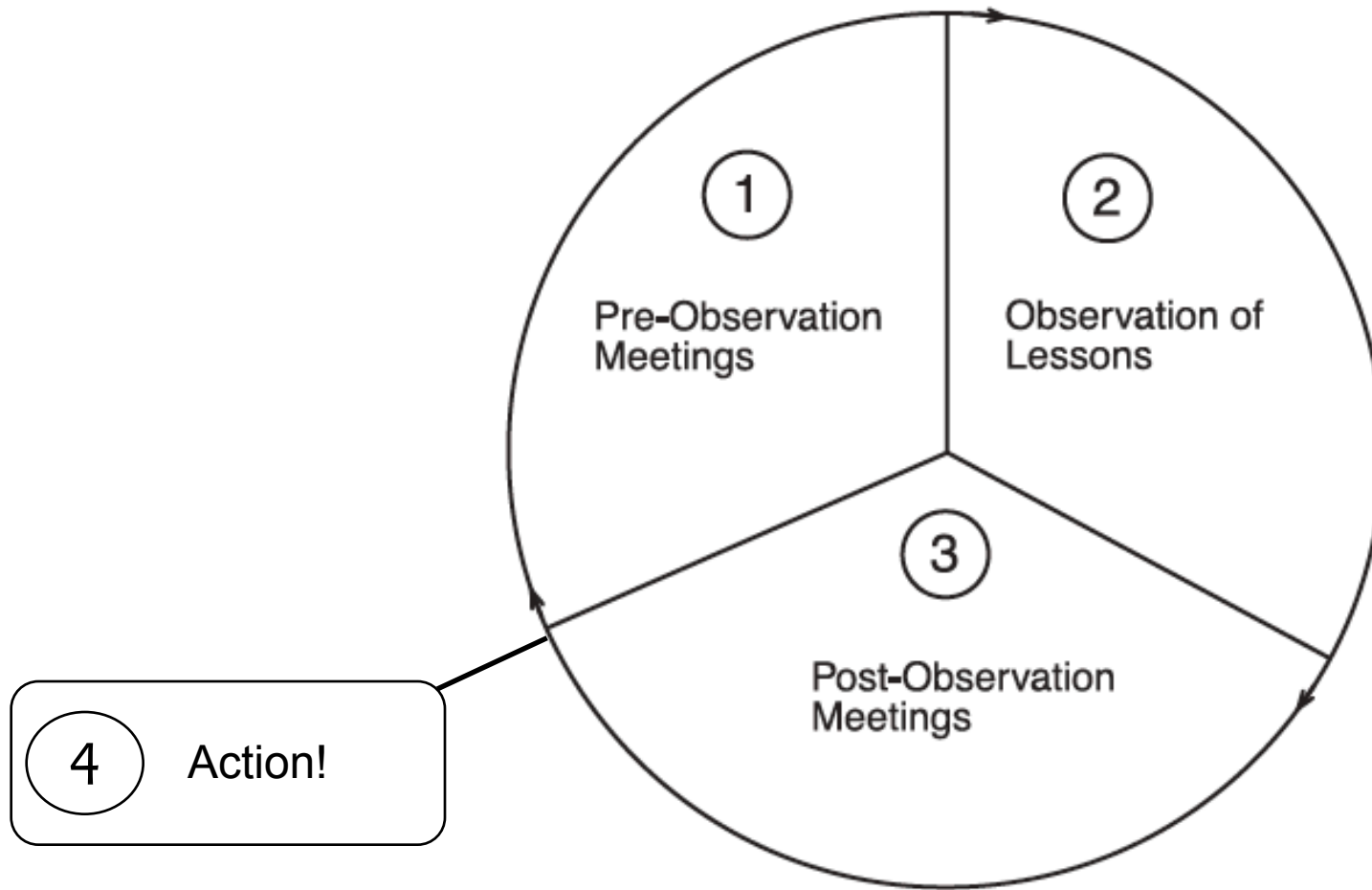
■ Both

- Time
- Experience observing and giving feedback





The Peer Observation Process



+ Pre-observation meeting

- Teacher and observer meet before the class
- Teacher informs observer about class level and lesson objectives
- Observed teacher sets the observation focus
- Discuss observation etiquette
- Agree on when the post-meeting will take place



+ Etiquette – What do you see?



+ Observation Etiquette



- Be discreet!
 - Sit in the back of the room or to the side
 - Calm, pleasant demeanor
- Focus solely on the observation
- Observe the entire lesson or agreed upon segment
- In general, do not participate in the lesson
- Take thorough notes for the post-observation meeting

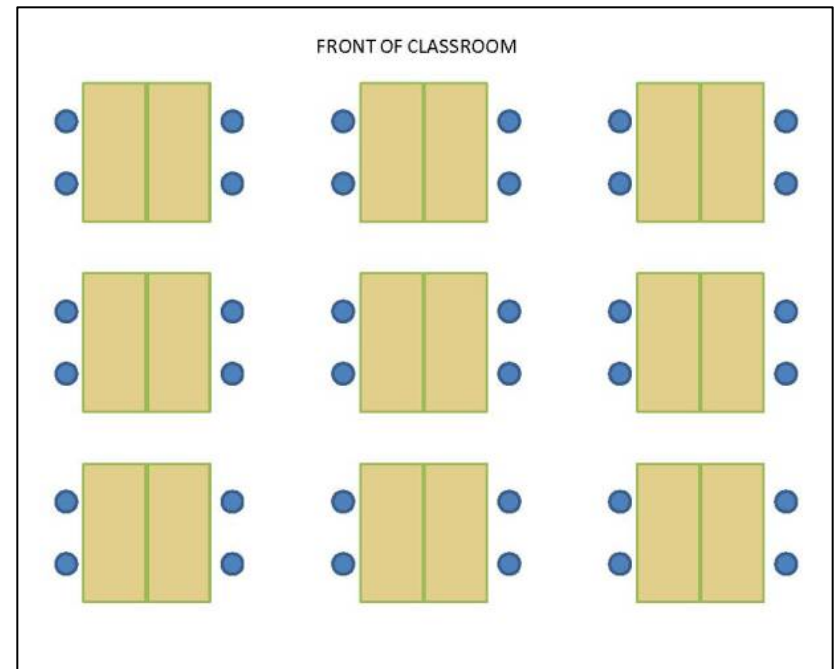
+ What to observe?

- Number and type of student questions
- Teacher display and referential questions
- Interaction patterns ($T \rightarrow S$, $S \rightarrow T$, $S \leftrightarrow S$)
- Wait time
- On-task time in group work
- Teacher use of praise
- Error treatment
- ... or whatever the observed teacher asks for



+ Data collection tools

- Forms
- Tallies and checklists
- Classroom maps / diagrams
- Audio*
- Video*
- Photo*





Teacher: _____

Observer: _____

Date _____ Time _____ Class/Level _____

Lesson focus / objectives _____

Observation focus areas _____

Time	Stage / Activity	What I saw – Interactions, classroom environment	Questions, comments, reflections, suggestions

Overall Comments:

Reflection notes:



Add to this column at end of lesson and before post-observation meeting

Time	Stage / Activity	What I saw – interactions, classroom environment	Questions, comments, reflections, suggestions
8:00-8:05	Warm-up	Ss were out of their chairs and there was lots of STT	Great job. Fun & interactive!
8:05-8:16	Pre-Reading	T asks schema-building question, Ss are silent. T answers question	Perhaps more wait time needed?
8:16-8:40	Reading Jigsaw Activity	<p>T told Ss to get into groups, Ss didn't move. T repeated more loudly, Ss moved</p> <p>T circulated during group work</p> <p>T told Ss to get into second groups, Ss did better this time</p>	<p>Voice too low? Need to speak up or model directions and activity</p> <p>Great monitoring! Is this something I could do more of?</p> <p>Why do you think Ss followed instructions better this time?</p>
8:40-8:50	Check Jigsaw Answers	One S from each group reports their answers. T asks other groups to raise their hands if they agree	Great job – S-centered activity! 😊
8:50-end of class	Wrap-up	T writes free writing prompt based on the reading on board. Some Ss stared out the window; others seemed engaged.	Do Ss understand the task?



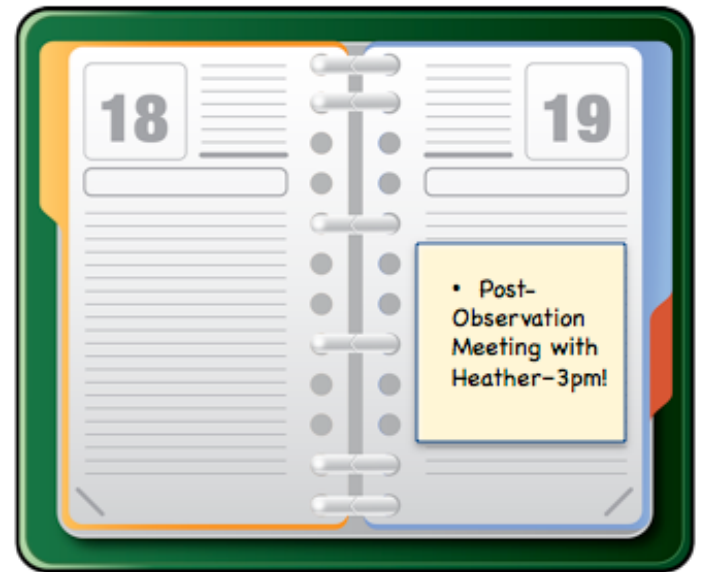
Post-Observation Meeting



- Most teacher learning takes place during this stage
- Both teachers...
 - are respectful
 - offer opinions in a kind and constructive way
 - should feel like they have learned something new about themselves
 - can develop action plans and goals

+ Post-Observation Meeting Prep

- Feedback should be prompt
- Observer
 - Review notes
 - List questions and comments
 - Reflect on own practice
- Observed Teacher
 - Reflect on lesson
 - What went well?
 - What might you change?



+ Giving feedback

- Be clear and use specific examples
- Use “I” and “me” statements
 - *I felt you were speaking a little quickly at the end.*
 - *It seemed to me that students were unsure what to do after you gave the instructions.*
- Ask questions
 - *I noticed the students always worked in the same pairs. Can you tell me about your strategies for grouping students?*
- Suggestion Sandwich
 - Give a **compliment**, a **suggestion**, and end with a **compliment**



+ Giving feedback

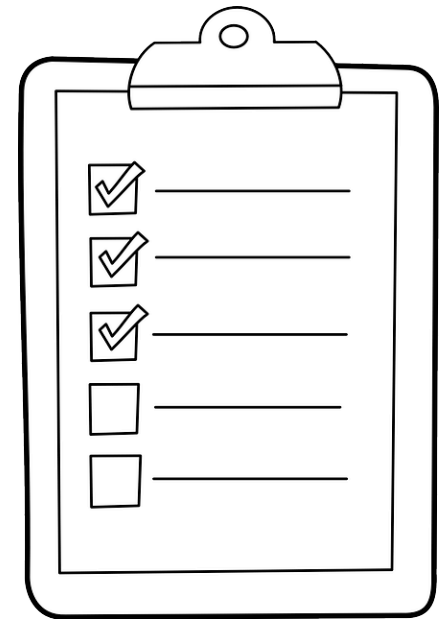
Don't Say	Do Say
You talk too quietly.	I noticed some of the students didn't seem to hear your instructions. Perhaps you could speak up?
You don't give the students enough time to answer your questions.	Did you notice how many students answered your questions? Do you think they might need more time?



Action



- Make the time you invest count
- Set concrete goals and follow up
- Consider
 - Adjusting lesson plans
 - Trying a new technique
 - Sharing lessons learned at a training event
 - Conducting an action research project

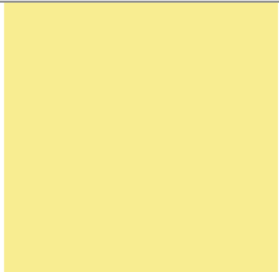
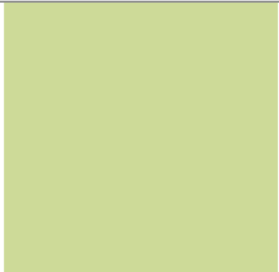




Get Involved with Peer Observation

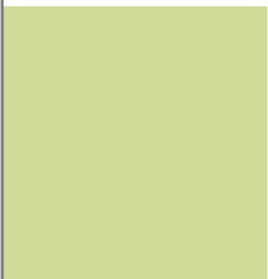


- Give a presentation to administrators and colleagues on peer observations
- Form a peer observation community of practice
- Coordinate peer observation schedules
- Cover a class to support another's observation
- Start a collection of observation worksheets and tools
- Watch “Peer Observation” in *Shaping the Way We Teach English: Successful Practices From Around the World* – Unit 13

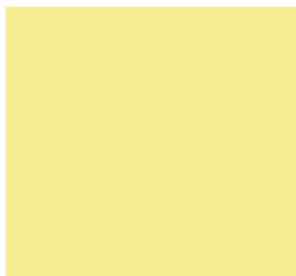
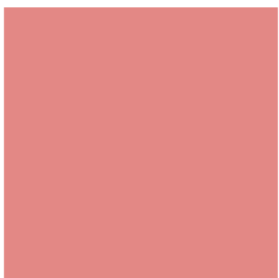


Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action

A video-based professional development resource for teachers of English as a Foreign Language



**A new, FREE resource
from the
American English team!**

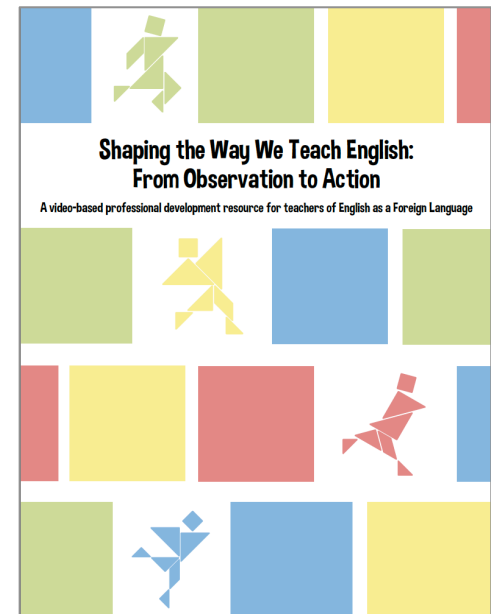


+ *Shaping: From Observation to Action*



13-unit EFL professional development tool

- 11 full-length class videos + 2 shorter videos
- Viewing guide for each video
- Practical supplemental resources
- Glossary
- Sample responses
- Video transcripts





Very Young Learners – Primary
Part 1 (3 videos)



Young Learners – Primary
Part 2 (4 videos)

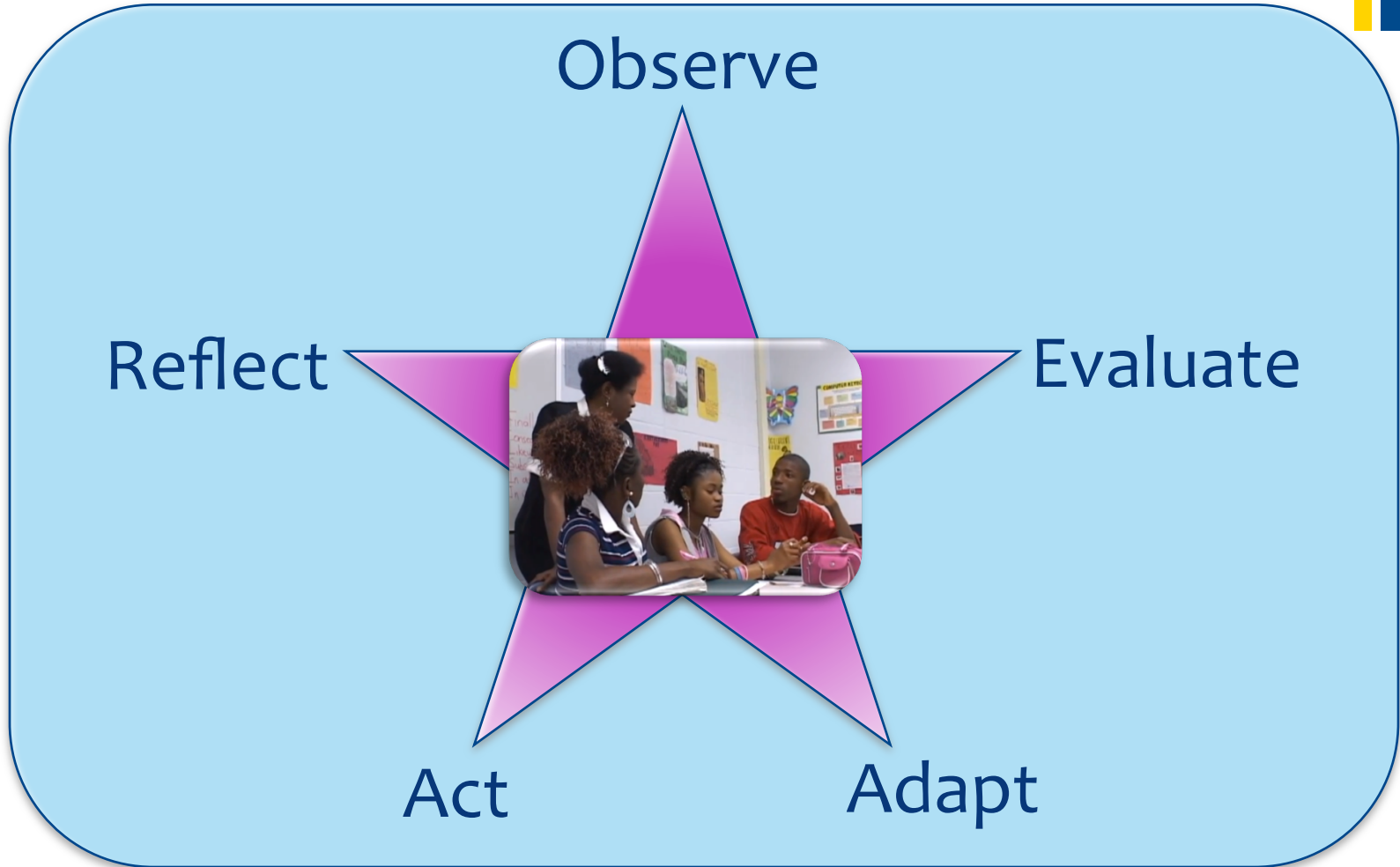


Teens – Secondary
Part 3 (3 videos)



Young Adults & Adults
Part 4 (3 videos)

+ The *Observation to Action* Approach





Using *From Observation to Action*



- Use in groups with a facilitator or trainer for multiple perspectives
- Be courteous during discussions
- Keep an open mind
- Be creative
 - Complete units in any sequence
 - Use all or parts of units to meet your objectives
 - View videos as many times as needed, all or in part

americanenglish.state.gov[MY RESOURCE LIST](#)[CALENDAR](#)[SUGGESTIONS](#)

AE AMERICAN ENGLISH

A Website for Teachers and Learners of English as a Foreign Language Abroad

[ABOUT US](#)[AE COMMUNITY](#)[RESOURCES](#)[ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM](#)[TRACE EFFECTS GAME](#)

College Writing 2.1x

Principles of Written English, Part I

Principles of Written English

College Writing 2.1x MOOC

Are you or someone you know an English language learner looking to become better at academic writing? If so, the MOOC "Principles of Written English" is a great place to start. This 5-week online course begins September 17th and is open to anyone interested in participating.

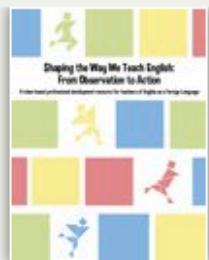
[Learn more](#)

Teach →

We offer resources for students of all levels

Learn →

Improve your English and learn about culture



Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action

Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action is a series of video-based training materials for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators.

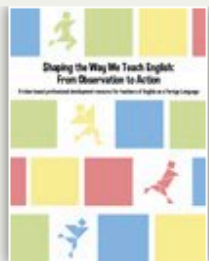
Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action is a series of video-based training materials for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators. These materials provide the opportunity for teachers to observe 13 full-length videos of real classes and guide them to evaluate the teaching practices, adapt the materials and techniques to suit their own teaching needs, act upon the insights gained by implementing new ideas, and reflect on these ideas to develop a variety of pedagogical skills.

Format: Text

[Downloads](#)[Hard Copy](#)[Online](#)

Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action

Text (PDF)



Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action

Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action is a series of video-based training materials for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators.

Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action is a series of video-based training materials for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators. These materials provide the opportunity for teachers to observe 13 full-length videos of real classes and guide them to evaluate the teaching practices, adapt the materials and techniques to suit their own teaching needs, act upon the insights gained by implementing new ideas, and reflect on these ideas to develop a variety of pedagogical skills.

[Downloads](#)[Hard Copy](#)[Online](#)










Watch the Full Length Videos Online




Format: Text

<http://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/shaping-way-we-teach-english-observation-action>

BEST OF YOUTUBE

-  Popular on YouTube
-  Music
-  Sports
-  Gaming
-  Education
-  Movies
-  TV Shows
-  News
-  Spotlight

 Browse channels

Sign in now to see your channels and recommendations!

[Sign In](#)




AMERICAN ENGLISH

 Facebook
 


 2,719

American English

[Home](#)
[Videos](#)
[Playlists](#)
[Channels](#)
[Discussion](#)
[About](#)













Shaping The Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action

by American English • 14 videos • 9,096 views • 6 hours

"Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action" is a teacher training resource that contains 13 units that explore 11 full-length class videos and two shorter videos about alternative assessment. The units provide hands-on... more

[▶ Play all](#)
[◀ Share](#)
[+ Save](#)

1		Unit 1: Primary: Very Young Learners	American English	36:17
2		Unit 2: Primary: Very Young Learners	American English	30:24
3		Unit 3: Primary: Very Young Learners	American English	18:44
4		Unit 4: Primary: Young Learners	American English	35:56
5		Unit 5: Primary: Young Learners	American English	34:47
6		Unit 6: Primary: Young Learners	American English	23:28
7		Unit 7: Primary: Young Learners	American English	31:25
8		Unit 8: Secondary: Teens	American English	36:22
9		Unit 9: Secondary: Teens	American English	35:33

+ Video Viewing Guides

- Provide a structure for conducting observations
- Emphasize local applications and adaptation
- Encourage reflection and action

Beginning

1. **Warm-up** [0:08-2:32]: Describe the first activity in the lesson. What are the students wearing? What are the students and teachers outside of the “boat” doing? Why are they doing that?
2. **Teacher’s Role** [0:08-2:32]: What does the teacher do during the role-play (drama)?
3. **Role-playing** [0:08-2:32]: The class is studying about the Pilgrims’ journey to a new land. How does this role-play make the topic more meaningful for students? Why do you think the teachers use this activity to introduce the project?
4. **Learning Styles**: What kinds of learners do you think would like this kind of role-playing activity the most? Why? What do you imagine they may be thinking as they participate in the role-play (see the picture below)?



5. **Content-based Instruction**: What kinds of language are the students learning while studying the content material (the story of the Pilgrims)? How do they learn the language if they are not studying grammar rules?

Middle

6. **Question and Answer** [2:55-8:28]: List examples of the questions the teacher uses during the Question and Answer activity that comes after the role-play. Where are the students sitting during this activity? How does this location relate to the lesson's theme?
7. **Critical Thinking** [2:55-8:28]: During the Question and Answer activity, the teacher asks students to compare their journey to the United States to the Pilgrims' journey. How do these **open-ended questions** compare to comprehension questions with yes/no answers? Which type of questions encourages **critical thinking**?
8. **Personalization** [2:55-8:28]: It can be difficult for young learners to relate to the content in history lessons. How do the teachers **personalize** the discussion to make it more relevant for the children?
9. **Feedback** [2:55-8:28]: During the Question and Answer session, how does the teacher provide feedback after a student answers a question?

Ending

10. **PBL and Group Work** [9:25-34:36]: After the Question and Answer session, the class completes a Project-Based Learning task. The project's basic steps are listed in the left-hand column of the chart below. Add more details about what the students and teachers do in the middle column. In the Rationale column on the right, add a possible reason for doing this step (that is, what is the value of this step?). (Hint: You may want to think back to the “Video Focus” items and/or Glossary Spotlight terms listed on the first page of this unit). You can record your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

Unit 7 — Video Viewing Guide

Profile

School level:	Primary: Young Learners
Ages:	9–10 years old
Language level:	Intermediate
Setting:	United States, bilingual classroom (English and Spanish)

Pedagogical Content

Video focus:	Integrated language skills Managing group work Classroom management techniques Giving effective instructions Making effective transitions Using visual aids to support grammar and vocabulary
--------------	--

Lesson Overview

Summary:	This class is one in a series of several lessons on the topic (content area) of sockeye salmon. The teacher has organized the room and the integrated skills activity to encourage collaboration between the students. The students respond to questions and tasks, while the teacher deals with error correction in a variety of ways. She fills in a brightly colored chart with the information they discuss. Students move to another part of the room to chant as a group using material from the lesson.
----------	--

Video length:	31 minutes
---------------	------------

Key Terms In this Unit

Glossary spotlight:	<i>Glossary spotlight terms appear in bold the first time they are used in this unit.</i> Chant Classroom management Collaborate, collaborative learning Elicit, elicitation Integrated language skills Transition, transition techniques Visual aid
---------------------	--



1. Activate! Warm-up Activity



2. Pre-viewing Questions



3. Facts-based Observation



4. Focus Questions: A Closer Look



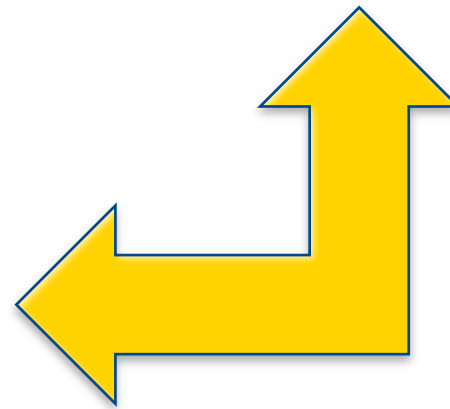
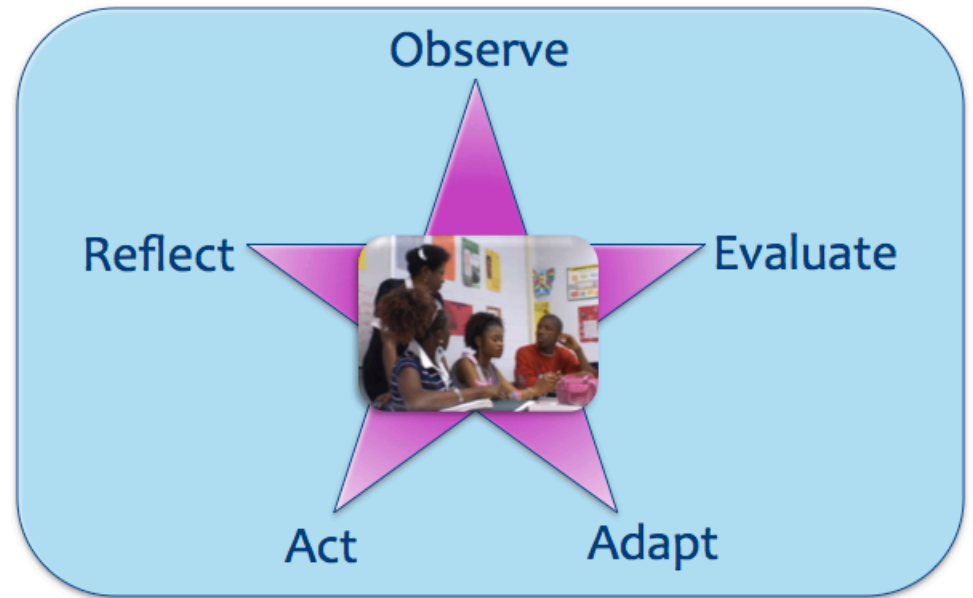
5. Discussing Alternatives



6. Reflecting and Adapting



7. Action Plan and Further Reflection





1. Activate! Warm-up Activity



- Relates to the video focus areas
- Asks viewers to use previous knowledge and experience
 - Brainstorming
 - Visualization or drawing
 - Activity or game simulation and analysis

- Get into groups of 3-4.
- Choose a topic/theme from your curriculum.
- Brainstorm as many types as realia as you can – you must be able to bring these items to class!
- When your group is done, done discuss how your realia examples could be used in vocabulary instruction.

(Unit 2)



2. Pre-viewing Questions



- Small-group or whole-group discussions linked to video focus areas
- Individual reflection

- What **classroom management** challenges do you experience in the classroom? If you do not teach young learners, what classroom management challenges might a primary teacher experience?
- What kinds of classroom management techniques can teachers of young learners use?

(Unit 7)

+ 3. Facts-based Observation

- Viewers make notes on
 - Steps / stages
 - Interactions
 - Environment
- Record facts, avoid making judgments



Abbreviated note-taking language:

- T tells Ss that each group has a “salmon expert”
- T points to yellow chart at front – animals already on chart (bear, vole), salmon is next

(Unit 7)

+ 3. Facts-based Observation

■ Your turn! Prepare to observe:

Time	Stage/ Activity	What I saw – interactions, classroom environment	Questions, comments, reflections, suggestions

Focus: Classroom management

(Unit 7)



4. Focus Questions: A Closer Look



- Viewers answer observation-based questions
 - Beginning
 - Middle
 - End
 - Objectives

Managing Group Work (0:19-11:24): The teacher poses one question at a time to the class. What phrase does she use to get everyone discussing and answering each question? How does she get their attention to bring the class back together?

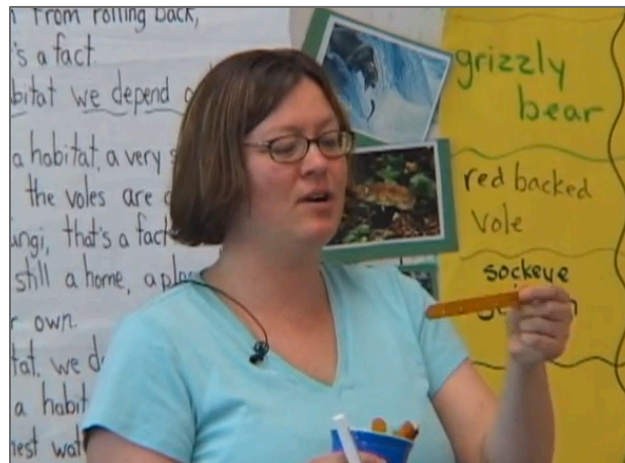
Classroom Management-Calling on Students (1:03-1:06, 1:48-1:52, 2:02-2:05, and other times): What system does the teacher use to call on students to answer questions?

(Unit 7)



5. Discussing Alternatives

- More than one way to approach any situation
- What alternatives can you come up with?



Calling on Students: What are other ways to get different students to answer questions?

(Unit 7)



6. Reflecting and Adapting



- What did you learn from the observation?
- What could you adopt or adapt?

Classroom Management and Transitions: This teacher uses a variety of classroom management techniques to make smooth transitions, to draw the students' attention, and to manage student behavior.

- Have you tried any of these techniques in your classroom?
- If so, which ones?
- If not, which might you like to try?
- How could you incorporate or adapt these classroom management techniques in your own classes?

(Unit 7)



7. Action Plan and Further Reflection

- Plan a lesson that incorporates the video focus items
- Try all or part of your lesson and reflect again

Lesson Plan Template		
Class Date:		
Background Information:		
Course Name/Description:	Institution:	Lesson Length:
Description of Students:	Level:	Number of Students:
Lesson Information:		
Lesson Objectives — Students will be able to:		
Specific skills/content focus:		
How does this lesson fit in with the previous and next lessons?		
Lesson Plan:		
Time	Procedure	Materials and Rationale
		Materials:
		Materials:
		Materials:
		Materials:
Assessment:		
Notes:		
Pre-class preparation:		
Lesson Evaluation:		
1. What do you think the students actually learned? How do you know?		
2. What parts were most successful/least successful? Why?		
3. Did you finish the lesson on time? If not, why?		
4. What changes (if any) will you make in your teaching and why (or why not)?		

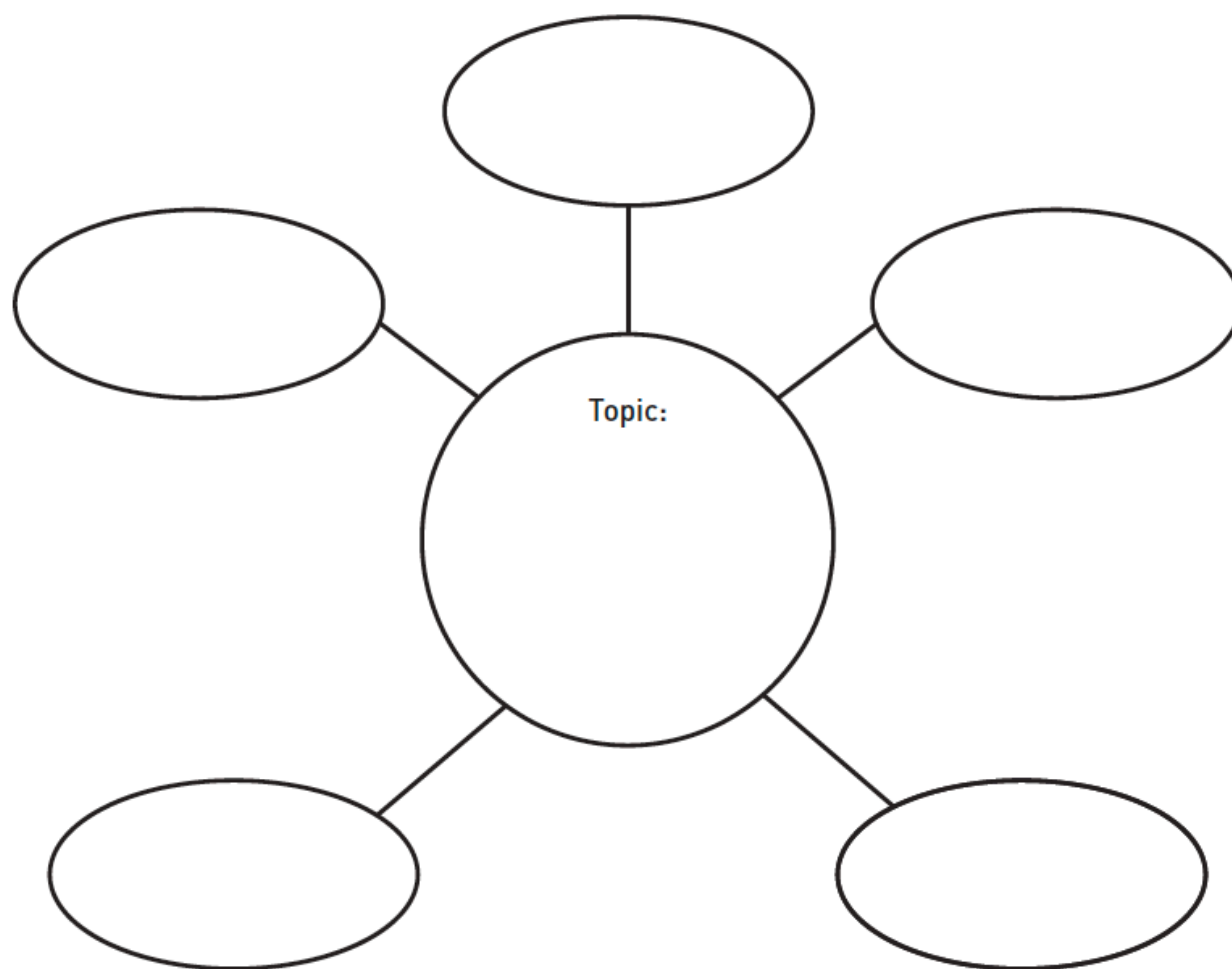
+ Supplemental Materials

Unit 7	Graphic Organizer: Brainstorming	This blank graphic organizer also can be used to support brainstorming in the classroom. Teachers can provide copies of this graphic organizer or reproduce it on the chalkboard during class. Participants will use this graphic organizer in the <i>Activate! Warm-Up Activity</i> section in Unit 7.
	Sockeye Salmon: Reading Expert Worksheet	This worksheet includes the reading passage used in the Unit 7 video; it also includes space where “reading experts” or other students can draw pictures or make notes to remember unfamiliar words. Participants may choose to use or adapt this resource when creating a lesson plan in the <i>Action Plan and Further Reflection</i> section in Unit 7.
	“Habitat” Chant	This is one of the chants used in the Unit 7 video. The chant handout includes space where students can draw pictures to illustrate the verses of the chant. Participants may choose to use or adapt this resource when creating a lesson plan in the <i>Action Plan and Further Reflection</i> section in Unit 7.
	“I Can Spell” Chant	This handout includes an illustrated version of one of the chants used in the Unit 7 video. Participants may choose to use or adapt this resource when creating a lesson plan in the <i>Action Plan and Further Reflection</i> section in Unit 7.

... plus a collection of online *English Teaching Forum* articles!

Graphic Organizer: Brainstorming

Instructions: Write the main topic in the center circle below. Record all of your related ideas in the circles around the topic. Make more idea “branches” by adding circles and lines as needed. You can use text, drawings, or other symbols to represent your ideas.



Sockeye Salmon: Reading Expert Worksheet

[Students highlight or circle new vocabulary in the text.]

Class: *Sockeye salmon are bony fish.*

Habitat: *The sockeye lives in freshwater rivers and streams for the first part of its life. It then migrates to the ocean, where it lives most of its life. It returns to freshwater at the end of its life to lay eggs.*

Food: *The sockeye salmon feeds mainly upon zooplankton. It also eats insects.*

Why threatened or endangered: *Most populations of sockeye salmon are endangered because of erosion caused by mining and logging in forests. The dirty runoff can pollute the gravel bedding the salmon needs for laying eggs, and can kill the insects it eats.*

Importance to forests: *Salmon are an important part of the food chain, providing food to bears and large birds of prey. They also bring nutrients from the ocean to the streams and rivers.*

Interesting facts: *Salmon travel thousands of kilometers and use their sense of smell to help guide them home when returning from the ocean.*

[Students draw pictures here to help remember vocabulary.]

"Habitat" Chant

Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Have to have a habitat... to carry on!

Well, the **forest** is a habitat, a very special habitat.
It's where the tallest trees are at, it's where a bear can scratch
her back.
It keeps the earth from rolling back, prevents erosion, that's a fact.
The **forest** is a habitat that... we all depend on!

[image goes here]

[image goes here]

Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Have to have a habitat... to carry on!

Well, the **tree** is a habitat, a very special habitat.
The roots are where the mice are at, it's where the birds can sing
and quack.
When it dies it's still a home, a place that insects call their own,
that's a fact.
The **tree** is a habitat that... we all depend on!

Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Have to have a habitat... to carry on!

Well, the **river** is a habitat, a very special habitat.
It's where the freshest water's at, for people, fish, and wild cats.
But if the people dump their waste, so many creatures are
displaced, that's a fact.
The **river** is a habitat that... we all depend on!

[image goes here]

Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Habitat, habitat, have to have a habitat,
Have to have a habitat... to carry on!

But people are different than foxes and rabbits,
Affecting the world with our bad habits.
It's better to love it while we still have it.
Or rat-a-tat-tat... our habitat's gone.

[image goes here]

As seen in the video, adapted from the original "Habitat" by Kathe Goria-Hendrickson and John Hendrickson.

"I Can Spell" Chant, Example

I can spell tree: t-r-e-e.

I can spell home: h-o-m-e.

I can spell live: l-i-v-e.

But I can't spell... interdependence.

I can spell food: f-o-o-d.

I can spell rain: r-a-i-n.

I can spell bird: b-i-r-d.

But I can't spell... interdependence.

I can spell log: l-o-g.

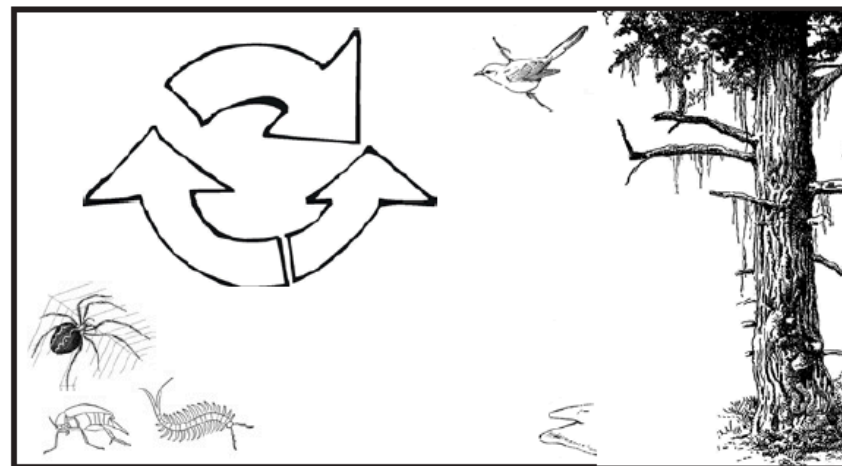
I can spell bug: b-u-g.

I can spell frog: f-r-o-g.

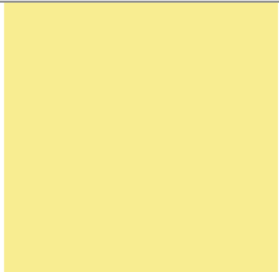
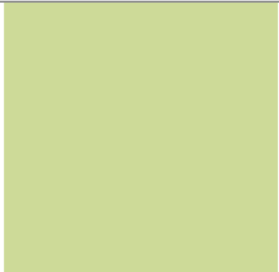
But I can't spell... interdependence.

Yes, I can! Yes, I can!

INTER-DEPEND-ENCE, INTERDEPENDENCE!

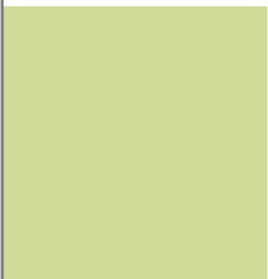


As seen in the video, adapted from "I Can Spell" by Laura Curry.

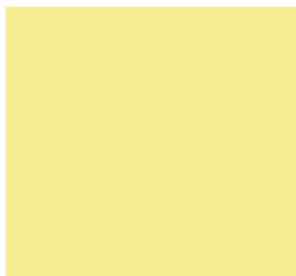
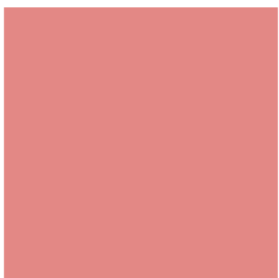


Shaping the Way We Teach English: From Observation to Action

A video-based professional development resource for teachers of English as a Foreign Language



**A new, FREE resource
from the
American English team!**



+ What about peer observation?



- QUICK QUIZ!!!

- What are major phases of the peer observation process?

1. Pre-observation meeting
2. Observation
3. Post-observation meeting
4. Action and further reflection



From Observation to Action and Peer observation



- Unique options for video observations
 - Sound off
 - Image off
- Use *From Observation to Action* to prepare for peer observation
 - Improve your observation skills with support
 - Role play giving constructive feedback
- Both observation systems can...
 - Strengthen bonds
 - Spice up your teaching
 - Encourage reflection and action!

Teachers Helping Teachers:

Peer Observation for Professional Development

Thank you!

Be sure to visit americanenglish.state.gov

Heather Benucci

Shaping the Way We Teach English Webinars – Course 14

