
Telling Time on the Overhead Projector

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This easily made, movable clock transparency can open the door to a variety of interesting, student-centered classroom activities. It provides a change-of-pace, starting-point lesson which teachers can vary to suit their own and their students' needs. Made in minutes, the transparency will stimulate both oral and written language practice for years to come.

Oral Practice

At first, the hour hand may be used alone for an introductory lesson on telling time. After students have demonstrated understanding of this basic concept, the minute hand can be added and additional lexical items practiced, such as...

1. quarter past ____, quarter after ____
2. half past ____, half after ____
3. quarter to ____
4. ten to ____, twenty to ____, etc.
5. forty-five
6. noon, midnight
7. AM, PM
8. morning, afternoon

This transparency can help get students organized and working during those critical first few minutes of class. Before class, ask a student to teach the class for the first few minutes. As soon as the bell rings, this student can be at the front of the room at the overhead projector and start calling on other students, asking them to tell the time which he or she has made the clock transparency show. Students appreciate variety in classroom procedures and like

the occasional experience of a peer teaching them. In addition, you will be freed for a few minutes to circulate throughout the room. This technique can also be used to stimulate interest at the end of the class period.

If the class can be divided into dyads or triads, these small groups might converse describing a typical day, telling what each does at different times (perhaps at half-hour intervals, as shown on the clock transparency). To practice past tense, students might ask each other what they were doing yesterday at a certain time (again shown on the clock).

These activities allow students to talk about matters of interest and concern to them, while learning about each other. From such experiences grows the supportive classroom environment so essential to successful language learning.

Written Practice

As a pre-writing activity to stimulate students' thinking, use this clock transparency and ask class members questions such as, *Which hour of the day is your favorite (and why)? What time of the day is your least favorite (and why)? Or, If you had one wish, what would you like to be doing a year from now (or tomorrow, or this coming Saturday) at the time shown on the clock?* Reflecting on topics like these gives students ideas to write about, and discussing them provides motivation to communicate them in writing.

Construction

Using the master provided below, the transparency base can be made easily with a photocopier and an infra-red (thermo-fax) transparency-making machine. If no copier is available, inexpensive stick-on numbers can be purchased and arranged in a circle on a clear or colored plastic page-protector sheet.

For easy manipulation, cut the hands from a stiff manila folder or from cardboard. There are several ways to provide a pivot point for the hands. A brass paper

fastener or a thumb tack (stuck up through the plastic and into a pencil eraser) serves well. A tie tack or military insignia holder also works fine. Alternatives include the plastic replacement buttons (available at discount stores) which have break-off, needle-sharp shanks.

If commercial transparency frames are not available, a manila folder may be cut to create a transparency frame, or one can be made from cardboard. For a more substantial frame, glue two conventional frames together.

