

Guess Who?

THEME: SELF (IDENTITY AND CHARACTERISTICS)

LANGUAGE: ANY

STANDARD(S): COMMUNICATION

1.1 1.2 1.3

Time Frame:

Three 50-minute class periods

Materials Needed:

- Self-portrait of each student
- Peer review form (provided)
- Poster paper
- Pencils, crayons, colored pencils
- Access to computer
- Handout with information on metric system of measurement
- Rubric for assessment (provided)

Description of Task

This activity is particularly important at the beginning of the year or a new semester, as it provides an opportunity for students to get to know each other and an opportunity to review basic grammatical structures and vocabulary.

Pre-task:

Ask students to describe physical traits of well-known individuals in the community (athletes, movie stars, principal, teacher) to elicit necessary language for this kind of description. After students have brainstormed a list of physical attributes, co-generate lists to describe an individual's personality and favorite past-time activities. Display this vocabulary on the

Level:

Intermediate-Low

Purpose:

To describe in writing; to listen for specific information

Communicative Functions:

Interpersonal: Asking about others; sharing information about self.

Referential: Describing someone

Language Structures:

Adjectives; gender and number agreement; present tense; question formation

Cultural Aspects:

Metric measurement system

Modalities:

Writing

Listening

Speaking

Reading

NOTES

blackboard under the appropriate category name, i.e. physical attributes, personality traits (e.g., outgoing, shy), etc.

Task:

Informational interview:

Students will create introductory posters in the target language about a classmate based on information they collect while interviewing each other. First, place students into pairs and ask them to interview their partner for the following information:

- Name
- Birthdate
- Place of birth
- Height
- Gender
- Physical characteristics
- Personality attributes
- Special interests/likes, e.g.:
 - Favorite foods
 - Favorite day of the week
 - Favorite movie
 - Favorite recording artist
 - Favorite book
 - Favorite color
 - Favorite past-times
 - Pets
- Dislikes

Review question formation and generate a list of interview questions that students can use. Encourage students to take good notes and ask why their partners have their particular likes/dislikes so that they are able to embellish their written introduction with interesting details. Provide metric measuring system conversion information to students so they are able to convert their height into culturally appropriate terms. A handout may assist this process.

Note: It may be wise to ask males and females to work together so that they are working with writing and editing using both genders!

Process writing:*Writing the first draft or “Sloppy copy”:*

During the paired activity, students have exchanged personal information by asking and answering questions in the target language using brainstormed vocabulary and questions to guide the process. As homework, students write two paragraphs on the interviewed individual including information received during the interview as well as their own personal observed experience of the person.

Revising:

Each student will conference with their partner student about their initial draft (see peer review form provided). Together they will decide if the written description accurately reflects information obtained during the interview and how the writing could be improved. Students may use a dictionary to check the spelling of words they are unsure of. Editing will also focus specifically on gender and number agreement between adjectives and nouns and appropriate use of present tense. The teacher may choose to review these language structures with the whole class prior to beginning the revision process.

Final copy:

The student types the information into a computer or writes a final copy of the revised writing onto paper in poster style. In addition to the written information, the students can create a “child’s version” of a self-portrait at age 5 of either their partner or of themselves. These will be turned in to the teacher so that the teacher has an opportunity to review the pictures and the writing and check them for classroom display. Alternatively, students can create self-portrait collages that are made of pictures depicting their characteristics, likes/dislikes, etc.

Classroom display and matching:

The teacher attaches the written descriptions to the appropriate self-portraits and displays them around the classroom. Once displayed, students are given a piece of paper with the same number of self-portraits/writings as there are students, each number is followed by a blank space in which the student can enter a name. Each portrait/written description is also numbered. Students are then invited to circulate throughout the room and match the number of the picture/written description with a student’s name on their papers.

Assessment:

Teacher will circulate and informally assess student interview interactions checking for on-task behavior and use of target language.

The written description and the portrait should allow classmates to successfully identify the student! In addition, the written description should accurately reflect the responses of the interviewed partner to their satisfaction. The final written copy can be assessed with a combined rubric/checklist. Suggested categories include: comprehensive and interesting description, use of descriptive adjectives, gender and number agreement, accurate verb forms with the present tense, and accurate use of metric measurement (sample combined rubric/checklist provided). Students will be required to turn in the notes from the oral interview, the “sloppy copy” with peer review notes, and the final poster and portrait to the teacher.

Extensions:***Suggestions for adapting the task for various levels:***

For beginning levels: Display only the student drawings and a series of single-word or short phrase descriptions.

For advanced levels: Have the students design a FOR SALE (Se Vende) poster. Students draw a picture of an item they would like to sell. Then they write a description of the object, making it as appealing as possible to interested buyers, and making sure to include the price. Complete the idea using pictures from target culture magazines and newspapers as a basis for the description, instead of student drawings.

- Integrate this activity into a unit on community and jobs. The students could design a “Se Busca” (“Help Wanted”) poster where they advertise for a particular job opening. The poster could include qualities/ characteristics the employer is looking for, previous experience needed (if any), the salary, and when the job starts (or how long it lasts, if a temporary position).
- Use this activity to build vocabulary and enhance descriptive writing skills. Have the students draw a picture of an object of their choice, or an object directly related to a particular theme (for example: clothing, modes of transportation, body parts, toys, rooms in a house). Then have them write a paragraph describing the object, making sure they use each of the five senses in their description. Enhance this activity by using the writing process in the development of the students’ writing.

Other extensions:

Have the students write “Who am I?” riddles about an animal of their choice. Their selection may be limited to a particular region or country of study, if so desired. They may want to include clues about the animals such as color, size, habitat, or food. The students should also draw a picture of their animal. Have the students read their riddles to the class to see if the class can guess which animal they are describing. The students would also enjoy going into other classrooms, at a variety of grade levels, to read their riddles.

Cultural extensions:

- Interview an international penpal or keypal using the same list of categories as in this task and draw comparisons about past-time activities and likes/dislikes.
- Discuss and discover physical traits and personality descriptors more commonly used in other cultures.

References and Resources:

Curtain, H. (1993). *Strengthening foreign language instruction through outstanding proficiency-based strategies*. WA: Bureau of Education & Research.

For international key-pals:

These websites provide a list of schools in the U.S. and around the world that are linked to the Internet and interested in exchanges. (See also website information under Resource Sections in “Exploring the Metro” task).

<http://web66.coled.umn.edu/schools.html>

IECC is a free teaching.com service to help teachers link with partners in other cultures and countries for email classroom pen-pal and other project exchanges.

<http://www.iecc.org>

Reflections:

Peer Review Form for First Draft of “Guess Who” Descriptions

Name of Reviewer: _____

Name of Partner: _____

Read your partner's description and answer the following questions. Make sure to give detailed and specific answers!

1. Does the description have the same information that was given in the interview? If not, suggest ways for your partner to improve the description. What should be included? Do some descriptions need to be corrected so that they represent the interview more accurately?
2. What parts of the description do you find most interesting? Suggest other ways for your partner to make the description interesting.
3. Does your partner include many descriptive adjectives? If not, suggest where others can be included.
4. Do all nouns and adjectives agree (gender and number)? Look through the description with your partner and check them. Help your partner to make corrections.

5. Are all verbs written correctly in the present tense? Is there consistent subject/verb agreement? Look through the description with your partner and check them. Help your partner to make corrections.

6. Can you find any misspellings? If so, write them here and help your partner to spell them correctly. Look in the dictionary.

Rubric/Checklist for Evaluating “Guess Who” Descriptions

Name: _____

- 1 = needs improvement
- 2 = satisfactory
- 3 = outstanding/excellent

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Content of the description is comprehensive and interesting.	1 2 3	
Description contains a variety of descriptive adjectives.	1 2 3	
Description contains consistently accurate gender and number agreement.	1 2 3	
Present tense is consistently accurate.	1 2 3	
Metric measurements are accurate.	Yes No	

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