

The Authentic Lesson Cycle

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1

What are your Learning Targets?

Whether you call them learning targets or objectives, this is the most important step and what keeps your lesson or activity true to teaching language proficiency. Decide what you want your students to be able to do with the language as a result of their interaction with the authentic resource you choose and make this the goal of the lesson.

2

What is the Input?

What resource are you going to use? Is it text, video, audio or an image? Choose resources that are linguistically authentic (written for natives of the target language), but relevant to your students and your instructional unit. Look for a resource that teaches cultural aspects or comparisons as well as the linguistic elements you want to draw attention to.

3

What is the introduction to the lesson?

This step is more important than it may seem. This is the attention grabber, the prior knowledge activator, the connection maker and your point to transition out of English and into the target language for the day. How does this resource connect the students to their lives and experiences? What comparisons should students make from interacting with this resource? What critical new vocabulary needs to be introduced in order to interact with the resource? These are the questions that should drive how you introduce the lesson to your students to ensure maximum engagement and ensure that your students meet the learning targets you chose for the lesson. This is more than reading the instructions; it is staging the learning experience for the day.

4

What processing will students do with the resource?

Processing is more than just having a student answer questions or number a sequence of pictures. It is both the guide that helps students take in new language / culture and the spotlight on that language and culture that leads them to discovering a way to make it their own. What do you want students to do while working with this resource? Are they collecting information? Answering a survey? Sketching to demonstrate understanding? How do you want them to personalize the language and information they are gaining from this learning experience?

5

What is the output? **SPEAKING**

What can the students talk to each other about in the target language based on what they learned from the text? How can they communicate with each other using the text as a model? Speaking practice is best at this point because they have someone to talk to. They should never leave the class without speaking.

6

What is the output? **WRITING**

How can the students respond to, reflect on or personalize what they learned from the resource? What type of writing is most appropriate as an informal assessment of the lesson? Writing practice is best as a last step to the authentic lesson because it can be done independently and even outside of class.