### LEVEL 4

#### Sequences

**Length of Activity: Approximately 2 hours**

**What will students do?**
- Recognize that the sequence of events effects the outcome.
- Use the comic strips to make a story that makes sense.
- Learn vocabulary that deals with sequencing.
- Unscramble the sentence strips to make a sensible story.
- Each student write a story about the comic strip.

**What will teachers do?**
- Introduce the concept of sequences by giving examples of good sequencing.
- Provide comic strips that have been cut apart and glued to index cards.
- Prepare sentence strips that can be put together to make a simple story or that give directions to make something.
- Offer help as needed.
- Coordinate and facilitate student interaction activity.
- Evaluate each student’s progress.

**Activities used to implement this learning activity**
- The teacher will define sequences and give some introductory examples.
- As a group look at one set of comic strips. Discuss what is happening on each card.
- Put the cards in the correct order.
- Divide into groups of two. Give each group a set of comic strip cards. Have them arrange the cards in the correct order and write a short story about their comic strips.
- Have the groups share their comic strips with the rest of the class.
- Discuss the sequencing vocabulary such as first, second, then, and finally.
- Put a set of sequence strips on the board with tape. As a group decide what happens first, then second, then third, and then last or finally.
- Have a student put the strips in the right order on the board.
- Divide into groups of two. Give each group a set of sentences strips. Have the group put the sentences in the correct order.
- Have the group share their sentence strip stories with the rest of the class.
- Individually have students write directions to tell how to make something. The directions must include at least four steps. Encourage the students to use the new vocabulary words.

**EFF Standard(s) Used in This Learning Plan**

- ✓ 1. Read With Understanding
- ✓ 2. Convey Ideas in Writing
- ✓ 3. Speak So Others Can Understand
- ✓ 4. Listen Actively
- ✓ 5. Observe Critically
- 6. Use Mathematics in Problem Solving and Communication
- 7. Solve Problems and Make Decisions
- 8. Plan
- ✓ 9. Cooperate With Others
- 10. Advocate and Influence
- 11. Resolve Conflict and Negotiate
- 12. Guide Others
- ✓ 13. Take Responsibility for Learning
- ✓ 14. Reflect and Evaluate
- 15. Learn Through Research
- 16. Use Information and Communications Technology

SUBMITTED BY:  
Ann Fischer & Regina Robbins

COUNTY/PROGRAM:  
Pellissippi State ESOL
Sequences, continued

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
- How well do the students present their comic strips and sentence strips?
- Are any of the students not participating, or looking puzzled?
- What are the results of the exercise handed in at the end of class?

How are you going to collect this evidence?
- Teacher observation of the results of the in-class exercises and discussions.
- Review of the exercise that is handed in, which will be marked or corrected by the teacher.

Instructor comments and reflections
- Stories or directions have a logical order: one thing must happen before another thing happens.
- Changing the order will either give a different ending or the story will not make sense.
LEVEL 4-6

Sales Sheet Scavenger Hunt

Length of Activity: 1 hour

What will students do?
• Find sales items in sales sheets.
• Calculate and compare purchase totals.

What will teachers do?
• Provide grocery lists with regular prices.
• Provide sales sheets.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
• The teacher will give each student a grocery list that has regular prices beside each item and sales sheets containing some, or all, of the items on the list.
• Students will find items that are on sale or that have coupons. They will calculate the total of the items, then figure the cost without the sale price or coupons.
• Students will then calculate their savings.

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
• Ability to perform the activity.

How are you going to collect this evidence?
• Observation.
• Correct answers on calculations.

Instructor comments and reflections
The grocery lists and sales sheets can be the same for the whole class or a variety can be distributed.

EFF Standard(s) Used in This Learning Plan
✓ 1. Read With Understanding
   2. Convey Ideas in Writing
   3. Speak So Others Can Understand
   4. Listen Actively
   5. Observe Critically
✓ 6. Use Mathematics in Problem Solving and Communication
✓ 7. Solve Problems and Make Decisions
✓ 8. Plan
   9. Cooperate With Others
 10. Advocate and Influence
 11. Resolve Conflict and Negotiate
 12. Guide Others
✓ 13. Take Responsibility for Learning
 14. Reflect and Evaluate
 15. Learn Through Research
 16. Use Information and Communications Technology

SUBMITTED BY:
Marcia Robertson

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
Stewart County
LEVEL 4-6

No Wonder the English Language Is So Difficult to Learn

Homographs (heteronyms): This lesson is to help students who are confused when trying to pronounce and use words that are spelled the same but have different pronunciations and meanings.

Length of Activity: Fifteen minutes a day for several weeks culminating in a one-hour activity.

What will students do?
• Recognize words that have the same spelling and different pronunciations.
• Recognize the definitions and different pronunciations of homographs.
• Practice using the pronunciations and definitions of the words.
• Be able to place the correct word in sentence strip with missing homographs.
• Use homographs in a sentence.

What will teachers do?
• List words that have the same spelling and different pronunciations.
• Define the words.
• Supply students with a list of words.
• Model the pronunciations of the words.
• Demonstrate the use of different homographs in sentences.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
• Write the definition of a homograph on the board: “Two or more words spelled the same way but pronounced differently.” Example: to bow (bau) low, and a bow (bow) and arrow.
• Give students the list of homographs.
• Each class period, list two or three homographs from the list on the board.
• Allow students to tell or guess the meanings and pronunciations of the words.
• Discuss the meanings of the words.
• Pronounce the words and have the students repeat.
• Write a sentence using the words on the board and have the students read aloud the sentence.
• Have the students write the words in a sentence.
• Review the words from the previous class before introducing new words.
After the entire list has been introduced and practiced, divide the students into groups for an activity using the homograph introduced in previous classes. Allow one hour.

- Provide the groups with 5-10 sentence strips that have the homographs missing and separate cards with the missing words (homographs). Each group can have a different set of sentences.
- Have the groups begin at the same time trying to find the right word for the sentences. Reward groups as they complete the activity.
- Ask each member of each group to read aloud one of their completed sentences.

**What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?**

- The class and group participation and discussion.
- The oral pronunciation and reading of sentences.
- The writing of sentences.
- The completion of the sentence strip activity.

**How are you going to collect this evidence?**

Written sentences, oral responses, and completed sentence strips.

**Instructor comments and reflections**

This teaching activity could be adapted for use in regular classrooms as either language arts instruction or as a way to help students understand how immigrants feel as they struggle with learning English.

Source: *Homonyms, Heteronyms, and Allonyms: A Semantic/Onomantic Puzzle* by Fred W. Riggs [http://www2.hawaii.edu/~fredr/homonymy.htm](http://www2.hawaii.edu/~fredr/homonymy.htm)

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**No Wonder the English Language Is So Difficult to Learn, continued**
LEVEL 4-6

Using Catalogs to Make Purchases

Students will learn to understand catalog descriptions, correctly interpret order information, and complete order forms.

Length of Activity: 3 hours

What will students do?
• Look through catalogs (in groups of two or three).
• Contribute to class list of new vocabulary.
• Give an oral report on his or her selection.
• Complete an order form as homework.
• Write a sentence using each new vocabulary word as homework.

What will teachers do?
• Provide dictionaries.
• Provide catalogs.
• Lead discussion of new vocabulary words.
• Provide sample order forms.
• Lead discussion of terms and abbreviations on order forms.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
• Each student will be given a catalog.
• Groups of two or three students will work together to understand catalog information and to develop a list of five unfamiliar vocabulary words with their definitions.
• Each student will select a gift from the catalog for a designated family member, marking the page and circling the selection.
• Each team will share its vocabulary list and definitions with the class.
• Each student will give an oral presentation to the class telling what item they selected, for whom it was intended, and why it was chosen.
• The teacher will hand out sample catalog pages and order forms highlighting several catalog items and discuss or explain any new terms or abbreviations.
• As homework, the teacher will ask the students to complete the order form in their catalog for the item they selected. (Students will be cautioned not to use a real credit card number in filling out the form.)
What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
• Are they contributing to the class discussion of vocabulary and terminology?
• Are they able to define these new words?
• Have they been able to make a selection from the catalog and are they able to describe and explain that selection?
• Have they successfully completed the order form for their selection?

How are you going to collect this evidence?
• Observation.
• Worksheets (order forms assigned as homework).
• Written definitions of vocabulary (assigned as homework).

Instructor comments and reflections
While the ability to use catalogs is certainly not, in itself, a survival skill, the individual skills needed for this activity are. This learning plan encourages oral and written expression and promotes the knowledge of terminology dealing with subjects such as shipping and handling, state and local taxes, clothing sizes, and American weights and measures.
LEVEL 4-6

Giving and Receiving Gifts

Students will learn about American customs and etiquette regarding the giving and receiving of gifts and they will write a thank-you note.

Length of Activity: 1 hour

What will students do?
• Students will read and discuss photocopied articles about American customs related to gift giving.
• Students will read and discuss photocopied articles about American etiquette as it relates to gift giving.
• Students will identify any unfamiliar vocabulary words.
• Students will write a thank-you note.
• For homework, advanced students will read O’Henry’s “Gift of the Magi” and write a short essay telling the main idea of the story. (Or, the teacher can read this to the class.)

What will teachers do?
• The teacher will prepare articles explaining American gift-giving customs and etiquette.
• The teacher will lead discussions of these articles and explain any unfamiliar vocabulary words.
• The teacher will explain the form and content of a well-written thank-you note.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
• The teacher will introduce the day’s topic to the students.
• Students will take turns reading out loud the articles on American gift-giving customs and etiquette.
• Any new vocabulary words will be listed on the board and defined by the students or the teacher.
• Students will be asked to share any differences between their countries’ customs and etiquette and those of America as they relate to the giving and receiving of gifts.
• The teacher will use the board to show the correct form and basic content of a well-written thank-you note.
• The students will select the name of a gift from slips of paper turned face down. They will then write a thank-you note for that gift. If this activity is not completed by the end of class, it will be completed at home and turned in the next day.
• For homework, intermediate students will be asked to write a short essay telling about a favorite gift they have received.
• For homework, advanced students will be asked to read O’Henry’s “Gift of the Magi” and to write a short essay telling the main idea of the story.

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
• Participation in class discussion.
• Written thank-you note.
• Written homework.

How are you going to collect this evidence?
• Observation.
• Correcting written class assignment and homework.

Instructor comments and reflections
This was an enjoyable activity for the class.
LEVEL 5 AND 6

Learning to Be Assertive

Length of Activity: 2 to 4 hours

What will students do?
• Define the word *assertive*.
• Discuss times when they needed to be assertive but were unable to communicate.
• Discuss times in the future they may need to be assertive.
• Respond to scenarios presented by the teacher.

What will teachers do?
• Lead discussion about assertiveness.
• Present the language and demeanor of being assertive.
• Present video scenes from TV shows of people being assertive.
• Provide scenario cards for role-play.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
• Teacher defines the word *assertive*. Then she leads a discussion about students’ experiences with being assertive. Talk about when it is necessary, the consequences of being assertive, of not being assertive, and of being too assertive.
• Teacher presents the language and demeanor of being assertive: Students make checklist, or teacher can make the checklists to hand out.
  – Know your rights.
  – Keep calm.
  – State the facts.
  – Tell what you expect.
  – Use “I” statements, not “You” statements. *I expect, I need, I want*, etc.
  – Ask to speak with the manager or supervisor.
• As a class, students make conversations and practice the language.
• Finally, teacher gives pair of students two cards with possible situations requiring assertiveness. Students role-play for class.

Some examples:
(a) Returning an item to a store.
(b) Being asked to do something you don’t want to do.
(c) Taking your car to the garage and the bill is far higher than you were told it would be.
(d) Telephone salespeople.
(e) Problems with a child’s teacher.
(f) Problems with neighbors.
(g) Asking for a raise.
(h) Being treated unfairly at work.

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
• Observation of role-play.
• Participation in discussion.

How are you going to collect this evidence?
• Observation.

Instructor comments and reflections
This is a very practical exercise and enjoyable for students. My students told of times that, rather than speak up for themselves (due to the language barrier), they just paid extra money or settled for whatever circumstance was involved, even though they were treated unfairly. This lesson arms them with some “ammunition for handling difficult situations.” Students could also practice writing letters to a company about a product they are dissatisfied with.
LEVEL 5 & 6

Newspaper Scavenger Hunt

Length of Activity: One 1-hour session

What will students do?
• Search newspaper.

What will teachers do?
• Provide newspapers.
• Provide items-to-find lists.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
The teacher will divide the class into groups. Each group will get a newspaper section (classifieds, comics, sales, local, etc.). Each group member should have his or her own copy of the section their group is assigned. The teacher then gives the groups a specific assignment for which they will search, such as adjectives, adverbs, science words, weather terms, animals, etc. Each group will report to the class.

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
• How well the group members work together.
• Reports.

How are you going to collect this evidence?
• Observation.
• Reports to class.

Instructor comments and reflections
This can be tailored to include whatever the class is studying at the time.

SUBMITTED BY:
Marcia Robertson

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
Stewart County

EFF Standard(s) Used in This Learning Plan
✓ 1. Read With Understanding
2. Convey Ideas in Writing
3. Speak So Others Can Understand
4. Listen Actively
5. Observe Critically
6. Use Mathematics in Problem Solving and Communication
7. Solve Problems and Make Decisions
8. Plan
✓ 9. Cooperate With Others
10. Advocate and Influence
11. Resolve Conflict and Negotiate
12. Guide Others
✓ 13. Take Responsibility for Learning
14. Reflect and Evaluate
15. Learn Through Research
16. Use Information and Communications Technology
**LEVEL 5 & 6**

**Courtroom Drama**

**Length of Activity: Two 2-hour sessions**

**What will students do?**
- Play a role in a court trial.

**What will teachers do?**
- Guide the mock trial.

**Activities used to implement this learning activity**
The teacher will present a court case for the class to perform (the students may suggest possible issues). Students will role-play in a courtroom drama. Roles will be decided by a draw. The first two hours will be preparation time. The second two hours will be the actual drama. The roles of judge, defendant, defense lawyer, prosecutor, witnesses, and jury will be included. The students then write an evaluation of how the trial was handled and what they learned.

**What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?**
- Students abide by court rules.
- Students demonstrate spontaneous problem-solving.
- Students’ evaluations.

**How are you going to collect this evidence?**
- Observation.
- Student evaluations.

**Instructor comments and reflections**
- This activity may be at the completion of a judicial system unit. Before the drama, invite a lawyer into the classroom to discuss trials and the different people involved in courtroom trials.

**EFF Standard(s) Used in This Learning Plan**
- ✓ 1. Read With Understanding
- ✓ 2. Convey Ideas in Writing
- ✓ 3. Speak So Others Can Understand
- ✓ 4. Listen Actively
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- ✓ 6. Use Mathematics in Problem Solving and Communication
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- ✓ 10. Advocate and Influence
- ✓ 11. Resolve Conflict and Negotiate
- ✓ 12. Guide Others
- ✓ 13. Take Responsibility for Learning
- ✓ 14. Reflect and Evaluate
- ✓ 15. Learn Through Research
- ✓ 16. Use Information and Communications Technology

**SUBMITTED BY:**
Marcia Robertson

**COUNTY/PROGRAM:**
Stewart County
LEVEL 5 & 6
Learning About Cars

Length of Activity: 2 hours

What will students do?
• Demonstrate prior knowledge by listing all the automobile-related vocabulary they can recall.
• Learn new vocabulary about the automobile.
• Identify various parts on a car.
• Practice dialogue related to the car.
• Demonstrate writing abilities by writing about a car breakdown, road trip, etc.

What will teachers do?
• Observe and evaluate the students’ familiarity with a car by having the students list parts of a car.
• Introduce vocabulary by presenting students with a picture of a car.
• Help them to write a story about their most interesting car adventure using as much of their new vocabulary as possible.
• Distribute index cards with the new vocabulary.

Activities used to implement this learning plan
• Have students list parts of a car on the board. Pronounce and discuss the words. Ask students if the parts are on the inside or outside of the car. What is the part for? Have you had to have this part fixed on your car?
• Distribute dialogues. Have the students practice the dialogues. Distribute the index cards. Have the students create dialogues using the new vocabulary.
• Tell the class of a car breakdown, adventure, or such. Help students to write a car story of their own.

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
• Vocabulary words and dialogues pronounced understandably.
• Dialogues are understandable and achieve purpose effectively.
• Stories are understandable and use target vocabulary.
How are you going to collect this evidence?
• Listen to pronunciations and dialogues.
• Check written work.

Learning About Cars, continued
LEVEL 5 & 6

Earth Day Every Day

Length of Activity: 4-6 hours

What will students do?
Learn new vocabulary. Identify how to have an impact and recognize individuals can make a difference. Get involved in the community and get others involved.

What will teachers do?
Define new vocabulary. Give assistance, motivation, and direction. Organize and plan Earth Day activities. Provide the necessary materials needed for class projects.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
• Introduce, define, and discuss new vocabulary:
  – biologist – food
  – cloth – material
  – decomposition – metal
  – dirt – plastic
  – Earth Day (April) – potting soil
  – ecology – natural resources
  – ecosystem – rot
  – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – rubber
• Give each student a copy of “Earth Day - April 22, 1970.” Read the article to the class. Have students take turns reading the paragraphs orally. Discuss and define new words.
• Encourage students to share the ways they can save the environment. Examples: recycle, volunteer for clean-up projects, assigned community work, etc.

Class Project - Rotten Stuff
• Divide the class into five groups. The number of students per group depends on the size of the class.
• Each group will be responsible for one of the five materials: food, cloth, rubber, plastic, and metal. The teacher should provide an example of each material to share with the students.
• Have the students gather five things made from their assigned material. These materials should come from home.
• Get five plastic containers and fill them with dirt from outside. Do not use potting soil.
• Bury each group’s material in one of the containers. Ask for the permission to bury the containers on-site.
• Have the groups convey predictions in writing about what will rot. Have a group member share the group’s predictions orally in class.
• Keep containers moist and warm for several weeks. Then dig up the containers.
• Allow each group time to analyze their material. Have the group convey the outcome in writing. Compare the predictions with the outcome. Have a group member share the comparison orally in class. What rots? What does not?
• The teacher and the students participate in a community clean-up project.

References
• *Silent Spring*, Rachel Carson, 1962
• [www.EarthDay.net](http://www.EarthDay.net)
• [www.cfe.cornell.edu/EarthDay/ednethome.html](http://www.cfe.cornell.edu/EarthDay/ednethome.html)

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?
• Class discussion.
• Interest of the learner.
• Class participation.

How are you going to collect this evidence?
• The prediction/outcome comparisons the groups did in class.
• The questions the students prepare for the landfill and recycling center workers.
• Have students write the workers’ responses on paper.

Instructor comments and reflections
This is a good lesson to encourage the students’ awareness of Mother Earth and the impact we have on the environment.
April 22, 1970

**Earth Day**

Save the Earth! was the cry on the first nationwide Earth Day, held April 22, 1970. More than 20 million Americans showed they cared about the environment in many ways. They picked up trash and planted trees. They held giant parades and rallies. They biked and walked instead of driving cars. More than 1,500 college campuses and 10,000 schools participated in a nationwide “teach-in.” Teachers taught students about possible solutions to problems such as air pollution and rapid population growth. More than five million students, from grade school to college, participated. Earth Day was the greatest single student activism in the nation’s history.

Earth Day organizers wanted people to conserve natural resources. They also wanted people to be aware of the increasing threats to the Earth’s ecosystems. Concern about environmental issues has been growing since the 1960s. Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring* was published in 1962. It made Americans aware of the dangers of overusing chemical pesticides. When President Kennedy’s Science Advisory Committee studied the problem of pesticides, it proved that Carson’s findings were true. As a result, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created in 1970.

Earth Day was the idea of Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson. It was largely organized by a college student, Denis Hayes. Hayes left Harvard University to serve as National Coordinator.

Earth Day celebrations continue to help teach people about the environment and ways to help.
LEVEL 6

War on Poverty

Length of Activity: 4-6 hours

What will students do?
Learn new vocabulary. Identify, monitor, and anticipate problems, community needs, strengths, and resources for the poor. Figure out how the system that affects an issue works.

What will teachers do?
Introduce new vocabulary. Help students better understand the workings of government. Give assistance, motivation, and direction.

Activities used to implement this learning activity
• Introduce, define, and discuss new vocabulary:
  – Disabilities  – Congress
  – Disadvantaged  – Great Society
  – Food stamps  – Medicare
  – Impoverished  – Community Action Programs (CAPs)
  – Initiatives
    a. Head Start
    b. Neighborhood Legal Services
• Guide the students in a class discussion about reasons that some people have a low income. Why might they stay that way? List the reasons on the board. Examples: Not enough education, no job training, single parenthood, drug/alcohol addiction.
• Give each student a copy of “President Johnson’s War on Poverty.” Read the article to the class. Have students take turns reading the article orally. Discuss and define new words. Provide information to the students about President Johnson.
• Have students share if they believe that government could and should fix society’s problems. How do they think government can help people best? Have students discuss how their native government helps their native citizens. What kinds of programs?

Class Project - Mock War on Poverty
• Tell the students that they are going to get a chance to lead a mock war on poverty. Divide your students into several “task forces.” Tell them that the state’s governor (played by the teacher) has dedicated 30 million dollars over three years for a War on Poverty in our state.

EFF Standard(s) Used in This Learning Plan
✓ 1. Read With Understanding
✓ 2. Convey Ideas in Writing
✓ 3. Speak So Others Can Understand
✓ 4. Listen Actively
✓ 5. Observe Critically
✓ 6. Use Mathematics in Problem Solving and Communication
✓ 7. Solve Problems and Make Decisions
✓ 8. Plan
✓ 9. Cooperate With Others
✓ 10. Advocate and Influence
✓ 11. Resolve Conflict and Negotiate
✓ 12. Guide Others
✓ 13. Take Responsibility for Learning
✓ 14. Reflect and Evaluate
✓ 15. Learn Through Research
✓ 16. Use Information and Communications Technology

SUBMITTED BY:
Shanna Sutton

COUNTY/PROGRAM:
Putnam County Adult Education
War on Poverty, continued

- The War on Poverty programs exist in the following six areas:
  1. education  
  2. medical care  
  3. child care  
  4. housing  
  5. job training/job placement  
  6. food stamps/food aid

- Some programs are strong; some are not so successful. Your task force may create a new program in one of these six areas, or you may choose to help make an existing program more successful.

- Provide students with a goal sheet of the following questions:
  - In which program area(s) should you spend the money?
  - Whom should you help among the poor? Everyone? The elderly? Teenagers? Mothers?

- What can they do that will best help further the governor’s goal?

- Remind the students that the money will run out in three years.

- After each task force discusses options, decide on a plan.
  - How would you begin?
  - What steps would you take?
  - How would you wrap it up in three years?

- When the plan is finished, have each task force present it to the governor (teacher). Persuade the governor your plan is great. Explain its benefits and how it will help to further the governor’s War on Poverty goal. Each task force must choose a spokesperson who will present the group’s recommendation.

- The teacher might want to reward the task force with the best recommendation to a pizza lunch.

References

- www.hcfa.gov/facts/f9510ann.htm
- *Celebrate the Century* - United States Postal Service

What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

- Class discussion.
- Interest of the learner.
- Class participation.

How are you going to collect this evidence?

Teacher observation.
President Johnson’s
War on Poverty

In the 1960s in America, as it is today, poverty was a complicated problem. The federal government tried to decide “How poor is poor?” It created a “poverty line.” A person or family who made less than a certain amount of money a year was defined as “poor.” In 1964, a family of four who made less than $3,169 a year was defined as poor by the federal government.

Here are some of the programs that were developed in the 1960s during President Johnson’s War on Poverty:

- Loans for small businesses and for rural development.
- Funding for work-study programs for college students.
- Volunteers In Service To America, or VISTA. VISTA volunteers went into rural and urban America and worked with local agencies to help with local problems of poverty.
- Job Corps centers to give job training.
- Neighborhood Youth Corps to create jobs for young people.
- Community Action Programs (CAPs), which called for local leaders to create programs for their communities.
- Two notable CAPs were:
  - Head Start, which tried to help preschoolers from poor families get ready for school.
  - Neighborhood Legal Services, which offered legal advice to poor people on welfare and others.

Congress gave about $800 million for Johnson’s War on Poverty in 1964. There were at least 35 million poor people in America in 1964. Many people felt that this was not enough money to make a difference. It came to about $228 per person for the year.
LEVEL 6
American History and Culture Through Literature:
Mark Twain and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

The purpose of the lesson is to expand vocabulary, practice reading, writing, and speaking while teaching American history and culture through literature.

Length of Activity: 4-6 hours

What will students do?
• Read and discuss a short paragraph of background information on Mark Twain, his writings, and life on the Mississippi River during his time.
• Read an excerpt from Mark Twain’s The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.
• Discuss the vocabulary in the reading and the excerpt.
• Discuss and list descriptive words that help paint a mental picture of life on the Mississippi in the 1800s.
• Discuss early river travel and the hazards the early primitive rafts experienced and compare this with the journeys the students took to reach the United States.
• Find and discuss the nonstandard English found in the excerpt, such as misspellings and verb tenses.
• Construct a raft using the written description in the excerpt.
• Show and describe rafts to the class.
• Write an essay in response to a quote by Mark Twain about the American spirit and the urge for freedom.

What will teachers do?
• Present background information on Mark Twain and life on the Mississippi in the 1800s.
• Teach new vocabulary.
• Demonstrate the activities of the lesson.
• Supply students with materials used in the lesson.
• Guide the discussions and the writing.

Materials:
– A map of the United States.
– A box with glue, scissors, markers, pieces of wood, nails tacks, twine, string, glue, tongue depressors, modeling clay, Ivory soap, chewing gum, marshmallows, toothpicks, cloth, construction paper, and other odds and ends that could be materials for constructing a raft.
– Copies of the background material on Mark Twain and the excerpt from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
– Pictures of the time period or story.

**Activities used to implement this learning activity**
- Have the students find the Mississippi River, Hannibal, Missouri, and Hartford, Connecticut, on the map of the United States.
- The teacher will read aloud the background on Mark Twain while students follow.
- Students will then read aloud, one sentence at a time.
- Students will circle any unknown words.

**Vocabulary Used in Lesson**
- Names of items in the materials box.
- Vocabulary found in the background material and the excerpt.
- Teacher will list unknown words on the board and provide definitions and sample sentences for each word. Allow students time to copy into notebooks.
- Repeat this for the excerpt and the quote.
- Discuss the descriptions of the characters and the rafts and what they understand of the American culture during this time period.
- Find the nonstandard English usage such as misspelled words and misused verb tenses. Discuss the technique Twain used of writing the way the characters might speak, local color or use of vernacular.
- Discuss how perilous this adventure must have been during the era of intensive river travel. Have the students compare this to the journeys they took to reach the United States.
- Divide the students into groups with access to the materials box and have each group construct a raft that is as close to the description in the excerpt as possible, including Huck and Jim.
- Have the students present their rafts to the class and have the class vote on the raft that is closest to the description.

**Writing Activity:** Read and discuss the statement from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, “Other places do seem so cramped and smothery, but a raft don’t. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft.” Have the students write how they think this statement captures the essential American spirit—the simple, spontaneous urge for freedom.

- Have students read completed essays to the class.

**Extension Activity**
If there is access to a small stream or river – an appropriate body of water – the students might have raft races with the rafts they have constructed. They could time the rafts, see which rafts stay afloat the longest, or choose the raft that was the closest to the description in the excerpt. This would lead to further conversation in English and a lesson on comparisons and superlatives as the races were discussed and winners are rewarded.
What evidence are you going to look for to know that learners are developing this learning skill?

- The class participation.
- The communication and interaction between students.
- The oral reports, completed rafts, and essays.
- Student observations of learning.

How are you going to collect this evidence?

- Observation, oral reports, raft projects, and completed writing.

Instructor comments and reflections

Recently a movie was shown on A&E about Mark Twain. In the movie Mark Twain was speaking at his daughter Susy’s commencement and he tells many of his adventures. This might be good to use to supplement this lesson.

Resources

- Adapted from “Rafting the Mighty Mississippi with Huck and Jim” by Allyson Geary, WOW, 1993.
- Reader’s Digest: The World’s Best Reading Pamphlet, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: Mark Twain, 1986
Mark Twain is one of America’s most distinctive writers. He is also one of America’s funniest writers. Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain is his pen name) was born in Hannibal, Missouri, in 1835. He worked as a printer, riverboat pilot, prospector, and journalist. He saw a picture of his future wife on a cruise to Europe and the Near East when a Mr. Charles Langdon showed him a miniature of his sister Olivia. Samuel returned to America and arranged to meet Olivia Langdon. He courted her until she consented to be his wife. They were married in 1870. They moved to Hartford, Connecticut, where they built a big, odd-looking house. Their three daughters grew up in this house.

In 1895, Twain’s daughter Susy started to write a biography of her father. “Papa’s appearance has been described many times, but very incorrectly. He has beautiful gray hair, not any too thick or any too long, but just right; a Roman nose, which greatly improves the beauty of his features… in short, he is an extraordinarily fine-looking man. He has got a temper…. And oh, so absent-minded. He does tell perfectly delightful stories. Clara and I used to sit on each arm of his chair and listen while he told us stories about the pictures on the wall.”

_Huckleberry Finn_ was published in America in 1895. The book was an enormous success. The first printing of 40,000 copies were sold out in advance. Some think it is America’s greatest novel. In 1913, H.L. Mencken predicted that “it will be read by human beings of all ages, not as a solemn duty but for the honest love of it, and over and over again.” Ernest Hemingway said, “All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called _Huckleberry Finn_. . . There has been nothing before. There has been nothing as good since.”

**EXCERPT**

**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**

by Mark Twain

When it was beginning to come on dark we poked our heads out of the cottonwood thicket, and looked up and down and across; nothing in sight; so Jim took up some of the top planks of the raft and built a snug wigwam to get under in blazing weather and rainy, and to keep the things dry. Jim made a floor for the wigwam, and raised it a foot or more above the level of the raft, so now the blankets and all the traps was out of reach of steamboat waves. Right in the middle of the wigwam we made a layer of dirt about five or six inches deep with a frame around it for to hold it to its place, this was to build a fire on in sloppy weather or chilly; the wigwam would keep it from being seen. We made an extra steering oar, too, because one of the others might get broke on a snag or something. We fixed up a short forked stick to hang the old lantern on, because we must always light the lantern whenever we see a steamboat coming downstream, to keep from getting run over; but we wouldn’t have to light it for upstream boats unless we see we was in what they call a “crossing”, for the river was pretty high yet, very low banks being still a little underwater; so up-bound boats didn’t always run the channel, but hunted easy water.

This second night we run between seven and eight hours, with a current that was making over four mile an hour. We caught fish and talked, and we took a swim now and then to keep off sleepiness. It was kind of solemn, drifting down the big, still river, laying on our backs looking up at the stars, and we didn’t ever feel like talking aloud, and it warn’t often that we laughed—only a little kind of a low chuckle. We had mighty good weather as a general thing, and nothing ever happened to us at all—that night, nor the next, nor the next.