Integrating Career Awareness Lesson Plans

Level: Low/High Intermediate ELL                    Class Time: 2.5 hours

We All Have Transferable Skills

Learning Objectives:
Through recall and discussion, students will analyze the skills a typical housewife/mother uses on a daily basis. This will help them understand that they possess many personal strengths and transferable skills that might be useful in a future employment situation. Students will realize that even though they do not get paid for using these skills at home, they are still extremely valuable to have.

NV Content Standards and Performance Measures:
R4.8 Applies knowledge of the context to understand unfamiliar vocabulary
R4.16 Skims level appropriate material for general meaning and scans for specific information
R4.26 Collaborates in teams and works individually to analyze a problem presented in a narrative
R5.33 Interprets the author’s purpose in an unfamiliar reading passage
R4.35 Differentiates fact from opinion in written materials
L4.11 Differentiates between formal and informal language
L4.16 Verbally identifies and differentiates community member needs and matches with appropriate businesses
W5.3 Writes the main ideas from a simple story
W5.11 Uses tools such as spell check and grammar check in MS Word

Seven Cs:
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
Computing and ICT Fluency
Career and Learning Self-reliance

Materials needed:
1. Computer access for MS Word
2. Handout 1: Story "Just a Housewife: Jesusita Novarro"
3. Handout 2: Reading guide for the above story
4. Handout 3: Grammar: Capitalization and Punctuation
Vocabulary:
housewife, settlement house, social worker, charity, welfare, transferable skills, tedious, slipshod, degraded, rotten, ashamed, to vegetate, to lend an ear, to absorb, discreet, never-ending cycle, to break the cycle

Grammar Focus:
- Capitalization and Punctuation
- Proofread sentences
- Write a paragraph

Lesson Introduction:
- Write the title of the lesson on the whiteboard and ask the students for their understanding of "transferable skills." Ask for personal examples and record on the board.
- Explain that they are going to read a story about a young woman who has many transferable skills, but she says she is “just” a housewife.
- Ask the students what they think “just” means in the story title.

Lesson Procedure:
- Share and discuss the listed vocabulary with the students.
- Distribute Handout 1: Story “Just a Housewife: Jesusita Novarro.”
  - Since this is a relatively long story, the instructor should first read it to the students slowly and allow them time to underline any new vocabulary.
  - Next, the instructor should read one paragraph at a time and then ask for a volunteer to read the same paragraph.
  - Discuss each paragraph before moving onto the next one.
  - Repeat the same procedure for each paragraph.
  - Ask the students to find a partner and take turns reading alternate paragraphs to each other. Meanwhile, the instructor can wander round and help with any pronunciation difficulties.
- Distribute Handout 2: The Reading Guide
  - Read through/explain the questions with the class.
  - Ask students to find a partner with whom to complete the reading guide.
  - Review the guide together.
- Distribute Handout 3: Capitalization and Punctuation
- Explain that in any piece of writing the correct usage of capitalization and punctuation is crucial to the understanding of the material.
- Review the handout with the students, answer any questions they might have, and have them complete it.
- Correct the handout as a class.

**Lesson Assessment:**
1. Informal questioning on the lesson to check for understanding.
2. Successful completion of the grammar handout.

**Extension Activities:**
1. After the students have written their paragraph about their own transferable skills, they can use MS Word to type it.
2. The students can use the spell check and grammar check features of the program to aid in the process.
Handout 1: “Just a Housewife”

Jesusita Novarro

edited by Studs Terkel

I start my day at five o’clock when I get up and prepare all the children’s clothes. If there are shoes to shine, I clean them in the morning. At about seven o’clock I bathe my children. I leave my baby with the babysitter, and then I volunteer at the settlement house. I work until twelve o’clock, although sometimes I’ll work longer if I have to go to welfare and pick up a check for somebody. When I get back, I try to make hot food for the kids to eat. In the afternoon I scrub, clean, cook, and do whatever else I have to do in my house.

I used to feel I was getting something for doing nothing when I received my welfare check. However, I realize that mothers work hard also. My house is clean and the clothes are all washed and ironed. I’m home and I’m working. I am a working mother. As a working mother, my job is tedious, especially since I want to do it right. I’m a perfectionist. With the children, it’s a constant game of picking up this, picking up that.

Some men work eight hours a day. Many mothers work eleven or twelve hours a day. Sometimes we have to get up during the night to tend to our children. When do we get a break? We don’t. I don’t understand why some people think welfare is like charity. We’re working for our money and providing a good home for our children. I’m so busy all day that I don’t have time to daydream.

I used to get in my house and close the door. I had no confidence, and I felt degraded. Now I speak up for my rights, and I walk with my head held high. If I want to wear big earrings, I do. If I’m overweight, I don’t worry about it. I’m going to get off welfare very soon…that’s my goal.

Recently I was at the hospital, and I went to pay my bill. A nurse came over and gave me a green card which shows I’m on welfare. She then gave it to the cashier and said, loud enough so I could hear, “I wish I could stay home and let the money fall in my lap”. I felt so terrible and ashamed. Why can’t we just get a check in the mail and not advertize the fact that we’re on welfare? In her mind, that nurse thinks she represents the working people and welfare recipients represent the lazy folks.
How are people going to get off welfare if they’re constantly being put down? It’s a never-ending cycle, continuing from one generation to the next. I would like to break that cycle so my kids won’t have to go on welfare when they are adults. Life is never easy.

The head of the settlement house would like me to take the social worker’s job when I get back to work. I could visit homes, talk to mothers, and try to make them aware of their own potential. I would like to empower these women who usually have no self confidence. That was me…not so long ago! We have to learn to help each other out when things become difficult. We can ask our friends for advice when we have obstacles in our way; they might help us find solutions.

I went to one woman’s house and she was Spanish speaking. I was talking to her in English, but she wouldn’t respond. I could see the fear in her eyes. Then I started speaking Spanish, and right away she invited me in for coffee and we were soon chatting. I would also like to help mothers to become aware of how they can help in the community.

I remember when the people from the settlement house began visiting me and other welfare mothers, trying to get us interested in cooking or sewing projects. At first when they knocked on my door I felt angry. It was just like I had drawn a curtain around myself. I didn’t think I was good for anything, and I just wanted to keep my troubles to myself. However, these people continued to try and help me, and soon I accepted their help. Before long I became a volunteer.

I want to be a paid social worker one day. I want to help these women who are just like I was. I would be a good listener and try to keep a level head, even if things get emotional. I would try to be a good friend to them. Often these women think the social workers are spying on them and they feel threatened. I would be discreet and try to help them as much as possible.

I have promised myself that if I ever get a full time job, I’m going to get my own insurance. Then, if I have to go to the hospital again, I wouldn’t feel embarrassed having to hand over a welfare card. I want my children to be successful adults when they grow up. I want to learn more; I’m hungry for knowledge. I want to do something that makes a difference in my life.

Adapted From Working People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do by Studs Terkel.
1. What is the first thing that Jesusita does in the morning?

2. What does she do in the afternoon?

3. One of Jesusita’s goals is to:
   
   a. lose weight
   
   b. wear fancy earrings
   
   c. get off welfare

4. The head of the settlement house wants Jesusita to:
   
   a. take a social worker’s job
   
   b. go to the hospital
   
   c. stay on welfare

5. Jesusita:
   
   a. has a paid job
   
   b. is a mother on welfare
c. has a husband with a paid job

6. Describe some of the things that you do that you don't get paid for.

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

7. Jesusita says, “I'm hungry for knowledge. I want to do something that makes a difference in my life.” Finish these sentences with your own words:

I'm hungry for________________________________________________________

I want to ____________________________________________________________
Capitalization and End Punctuation

1. Use a capital letter for the first word in a sentence.
2. A sentence always ends with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point.
   - Use a period to end a statement—a sentence that gives information or states facts. Also use a period to show the end of a command.
     Examples: I am looking for a job. Be on time for your interview.
   - Use a question mark to end a question.
     Examples: Did you get the job? Were you on time for the interview?
   - Use an exclamation point to end a sentence that shows strong emotion.
     Examples: I got the job! I was early for my interview!

Exercise A Add the correct capitalization and end punctuation to each sentence:

1. when will the job be available
2. employers will often ask about your interests
3. complete every section of the job application form
4. good luck with your interview
5. what are your work values
6. have you ever worked in a restaurant
7. well done, you got the job
8. there are many good websites that can help you find a job
9. i am so happy you got a promotion at work

Exercise B Using correct capitalization and end punctuation, write a short paragraph that tells about YOUR transferable skills.