



Five College Center for World Languages

Published on LangMedia (<https://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>)

[Home](#) > [Five College Center for World Languages Conversation Partner Training Tutorial](#) > Section 3: Planning

Section 3: Planning

Section 3: Planning for Sessions

3A: Preparing Lessons

3A: Preparing for the First Session

Step One: Study the Assignment

Before your conversation session, go through the material assigned for the session. Make a list of the types of language usage and vocabulary that are covered. Based on this list, what speaking skills do you need to practice with the students? Also, consider what speaking skills covered in earlier sessions should be reviewed?

Step Two: Make a Plan

You should always go to your sessions with a written session plan. You may find you need to adjust your plans during the session, but you need to start with a written plan. Your plan should include practice of new language skills and also include some review activities.

Your plan should also include notes about certain vocabulary, expressions, or usages you will target for special attention during the session. For example, if your students are learning the names for foods, you should have a list of the specific food names they are learning so that you can make sure that those food names are used repeatedly during the session. Having a list will also help you avoid introducing food names different from the ones the students are officially learning.

Your First Session with Absolute Beginners

If you are working with absolute beginners, your preparations should include a list of expressions you expect to use during the sessions. These expressions will help you stick to the expressions and phrases the student is learning on his/her own. Include expressions for greetings, partings, and words or expressions you have noticed in the study materials that the student has been using. By creating a list of “target” expressions for each session, you will have a list of phrases/sentences/words that you want to make sure you use and have the student or students use during the session.

Practice Speaking Slowly for Beginning Students

Remember to practice speaking slowly before your first sessions. Practice speaking slowly with a few words and phrases you expect to use during your first few sessions. Work on a clear pronunciation of syllables and letters. It helps if students can clearly see how your lips and mouth move to form the sounds. You may want to practice in front of a mirror. This will take some time getting used to, so be sure to practice. As your students become more accustomed to the sounds of the language, you can gradually speed up your speech.

3B: Sample Plan

3B: Sample Lesson Plan - First Week of Greek I

Language and level: Greek I

Date of session: September 14

Chapter or material covered: Lesson 1 "Essential Expressions"

WARM-UP

Exchange greetings and "How are you?" questions using the language.

SESSION ACTIVITIES

Topic: Greetings and introductions

Description of activity: Build on the warm-up by exchanging more greetings, asking "How are you?", and exchanging names.

Time: 5 minutes

Topic: Greetings and introductions

Description of activity: We will role play different scenarios to practice greeting different people and at different times of day. I will bring cards with different identities on them, such as friend, professor, boss, young child, friend's grandmother, etc. The role plays will include greetings, exchanging names, inquiring about well-being ("How are you?"), and goodbyes. I will explain to the students about appropriate body language in different situations (double-cheek kisses, handshakes, etc.).

Time: 25 minutes

Topic: Alphabet

Description of activity: Using flashcards, I will have the students name different letters. Then I will ask the students to spell some of the vocabulary words out loud.

Time: 15 minutes

Topic: Useful expressions for conversation sessions

Description of activity: Using the expressions from the textbook, I will have the students practice asking someone what they said and saying that they don't understand. I will also make sure they know how to say "More slowly please", "What does ... mean?", and "How do you say ...?" so that they can use the Greek expressions in conversation sessions instead of asking in English.

Time: 10 minutes

QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH

Give students a chance to ask questions in English.
5 minutes

3C: Sample Expressions

3C: Sample List of Expressions to Use in Sessions

These are expressions and instructions that might be commonly used in a conversation session in which students are learning English. Conversation partners can use this sample for English as a starting point for creating a list appropriate for the language students are learning.

Yes

No

Okay

Words for praise: great, super, bravo, excellent

Please try again.

Please repeat.

Please speak, say, talk, etc.

Please stand up.

Listen carefully.

Ask [fill in name of person].

What does _____ mean?

Do you understand?

3D: External Materials

3D: On Using External Materials

Common Question: Can I use outside materials not included in the student's study materials?

If external materials (such as multimedia or authentic materials) correspond to what the student is currently studying in his/her study materials and as dictated in the syllabus then, yes, you may use external materials. At the end of the semester students will have an oral evaluation scheduled with a professional evaluator. This evaluator is testing the student based on what the student has covered in his/her study materials and syllabus and how s/he communicates. Therefore, your priority in planning the conversation speaking activities should be emphasizing the study materials students are using to teach themselves the language. If you find multimedia examples, such as online videos or songs that exemplify the material and complement the material without introducing too many new vocabulary words or advanced linguistic structures, then feel free to use them. Examples of appropriate and inappropriate external materials are illustrated below:

Appropriate: Student is learning the vocabulary for vacations and holidays. In the vocabulary for vacation, the student does not learn about vacationing in the mountains, only at the seaside or in a city. The conversation partner brings in a very short commercial in the target language about seaside vacationing.

Inappropriate: Student is learning the vocabulary for vacations and holidays. In the vocabulary for vacation, the student does not learn about vacationing in the mountains, only at the seaside or in a city. The conversation partner brings in a short advertisement about camping in the mountains.

Example of appropriate use of an external resource:

Students Discussing Song

Here students are listening to a song and discussing it. This is a listening exercise at the same time that it is a cultural exercise because they are discussing the song and its role in the target culture.

Section 3E: Assignment

Section 3E: Section 3 Written Assignment

Create the lesson plan and expression list described below. If you are doing this training individually, you will need to e-mail your written work to the FCCSWL office before scheduling your individual conference.

1. Create a written plan for your first/next session. Your plan should be similar in format to the sample plan for Greek I (3B: Sample Plan). You should write the plan in a way that you can easily refer to it with quick glances during your session. You do not want your head buried in your session plan, but it is fine to refer to it throughout the session so that you keep yourself and the student on track. If you do not yet have the textbook and syllabus for the course you will work with, you may need to wait to do this step.

2. Using the list of commonly used expressions and instructions for conversation sessions for learners of English, create a similar list for your language that you can teach your students and use regularly in your sessions.

Five College Center for World Languages

79 South Pleasant St, Suite 100

Amherst College, AC Box 2264

Amherst, MA 01002

USA

[FCCWL website](#)

p: 413-542-5264

e: fclang@fivecolleges.edu



© Five Colleges, Incorporated

[Staff login](#)
