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**Winter - Spring 2011, Shaping Chile Networks
University of Oregon, American English Institute
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Action Plan Project for “Shaping the Way We Teach English”**

In this online course, we are focusing on new teaching techniques and resources. Choose one technique or classroom innovation that you would like to incorporate into your class, and develop an action plan (below) for accomplishing this. Please give as much detail as possible.

Date Created: 6/5/11

Class: Teens (15-17 years old)

Name of Action Plan Creator: Malaika Wilson

Number of Students: 15

New teaching techniques or ideas I plan to use: Authentic Resources, Creative/Critical Thinking.

Language Level: Intermediate

My Class Now

We use the course book where every conversation exercise and dialogue is staged and unnatural, making students feel like English is a silly language you speak when you are pretending to be someone else.

The authentic resources I have brought to class have been the right language level for the students but unattractive to them intellectually.

Most exercises have right or wrong answers with very little left up to the imagination.

My Class in the Future (My Vision)

English will become more a part of who they are and less of a “role-play”.

Students will be encouraged in their abilities by achieving challenging goals and thus motivated to stretch even more.

Students will actively reflect, question, predict, deduce and express opinions in English.

Additional Explanation from Action Plan Creator

1. The benefits I predict from this change: If I manage to choose and introduce authentic material correctly, I predict that it will have a positive effect on learner motivation, provide authentic cultural information and support a more creative approach to teaching. Students will acquire global skills that will serve them beyond the classroom.

2. Challenges I expect:

- a) I expect there to be a learning curve (for me) choosing material and designing graded tasks that are successful.
- b) I also foresee not being able to interest / engage the whole class each time.
- c) Students may resist the idea of being more active in the learning process either because they are lethargic and complacent with their passive role or are insecure about their ability to contribute meaningfully.

3. How I will address those challenges:

- a) By sharing my proposed lesson plans with experienced colleagues for feedback prior to the planned class time or inviting a colleague to sit in on the lesson and give me feedback.
- b) By brainstorming as a class and designing a survey to poll the students so as to get a feel of what their interests are. This survey could be run in small groups like mini interviews. Data would be saved and compiled and the information considered when looking for authentic material to use in class.
- c) Getting off to a good start by incorporating critical thinking skills into as many activities as possible from the very beginning of the semester.

4. Steps and timeline (schedule) for completing the change: (Traditional semesters are either 15 sessions of 180 minutes or 30 sessions of 90 minutes.) My aim would be to include a variety of activities using authentic materials in a minimum of 50% of the sessions for starters and gradually make it a staple of most classes.

I would start by mapping out the contents of the textbook by topics or themes and making notes of what resources could be inserted into which session so that I could have a few lessons prepared ahead of time. I would focus first on music and video clips with graded discussion and listening tasks as I think that would be the most appealing to students. Tasks would be designed to include level-appropriate critical thinking and problem solving skills.

5. How I will assess the degree of success of the change: Since I would essentially be assessing myself, I would ask a trusted peer to evaluate the success of my choice of material and activities either by visiting my class or by using the activities in a class of their own of a similar language level and providing feedback on the students' reaction and other helpful input.

I will also be able to self-assess by gauging the students' positive vs. negative responses to activities in addition to their language growth.