Embedding Academic Rigor into 21st Century Teaching & Learning

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**K. Lynn Savage**, a retired teacher from City College of San Francisco, is a curriculum developer and teacher trainer. She has taught all levels of non-credit adult ESL, facilitated the development of the ESL content standards for several states and authored textbooks for students and training materials for teachers. She is the series editor of *Ventures*, a six-level series published by Cambridge University Press.

**Agenda Outline**

**Part 1:** Opening
- *Why teach these skills?*
- *The Challenge(s)*

**Part 2:** Examples of activities + Skills they develop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples [Ventures CCR worksheets]</th>
<th>Skill Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check your understanding</td>
<td>Citing evidence</td>
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**Academic Language**

- Build your vocabulary
- Develop vocabulary
- Find and use academic words
- Identify academic words
- Talk with a partner
- Use academic phrases in discussion

**Part 3:** Resources

**Handout**

- Reading, “How I Got My Job” (low intermediate level) p. 3
- “Check you understanding” & vocabulary activities) p. 4
- “Analyze the texts” p. 5
- Writing activities pp. 5-6
- Bibliography pp. 8-10
How I Got My Job

The interview is the most critical step in getting a job – and the most difficult. Here are some interview tips from people who have succeeded in their job search.

Grace Huang, sales assistant

“I think it’s really important to make a good first impression. Remember, interviewers talk to a lot of people; you want them to remember you in a positive way! You should always be on time for your appointment. Arrive early, and greet the interviewer with a firm handshake and a smile. At the end of the interview, shake hands again and thank your interviewer. I always send a thank-you letter after each interview. On my first day at work, my new boss said that I was the only applicant who sent a letter!”

Tomas Martinez, computer technician

“You need to prepare before you go to an interview. I always try to research something about each company and prepare questions to ask the interviewer. When you ask questions about the company and the job, it indicates that you’re really interested. Before I started my interviews, I practiced with a friend. He asked me questions and helped me prepare to talk about my work experience and my background. I also filled out job applications for practice.”

Sita Pillai, office manager

“I think the most important factor is the way you speak. I try to be enthusiastic and positive about the job and to speak with confidence. You should never answer a question with just ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ Explain all of your answers! This will help the interviewer to know about your strengths. And here's one more tip. English isn't my native language, and I sometimes talk too fast when I'm nervous. If the interviewer has problems understanding you, speak more slowly.”
UNIT 8

1 Check your understanding

1. What is the main idea of the article?
2. What did Grace Huang do that made her stand out as an applicant?
3. According to Sita Pillai, why is it important to explain your answers at an interview rather than answer with just yes or no?
4. What does Tomas Martinez do before an interview to show the interviewer that he’s interested in the job?
5. In the fourth paragraph, what word does the author use that means the same as positive qualities?

2 Build your vocabulary

A Find the words in Column 1 in the paragraphs indicated, underline them, and identify the part of speech. Many words have more than one definition. Look up the words in a dictionary and complete the chart with the definition that best fits the article.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Part of speech</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interview, ¶1</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>A formal meeting in which a person who is interested in getting a job is asked questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impression, ¶2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive, ¶2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience, ¶3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enthusiastic, ¶4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>native, ¶4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B Find each of the following academic words in the article and underline the sentence. assistant factor indicates research

Then, on another piece of paper, copy and complete the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic word</th>
<th>Phrase or sentence from article</th>
<th>Part of speech</th>
<th>Dictionary definition</th>
<th>My sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>assistant</td>
<td>Grace Huang, sales assistant</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>a person who helps another at work</td>
<td>The assistant manager works directly under the manager.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Talk with a partner

Answer each question with evidence from the reading. Use one of the phrases in the Useful Language box.

1. What are two ways to make a good impression at an interview?
2. What are two ways to prepare before an interview?
3. What are three things you can you do about the way you speak during an interview?

Useful Language

Phrases to cite evidence:
Some examples from the article are ...
A few examples from the article are ...
UNIT 8

Objective: CCR Anchor 9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

4 Analyze the texts

Review the following texts to answer the questions below: (1) Student Book, p.102, *Eden’s Blog*; and (2) Extended reading article, *How I Got My Job*.

1. What is the topic shared by the two articles?
2. Both articles say it is important to practice before an interview. Describe one way to practice from each article.
3. Both articles describe how to make a good first impression. What’s one strategy from each article?
4. Both articles discuss how to prepare for the interview. What did each article say about that?
5. In your opinion, which of the three interview tips is the most important? Explain your reason for choosing it.

5 Before you write

Complete the graphic organizer your teacher gives you. Fill it in with (1) the topic shared by the articles, and (2) two examples for each key point. Use information from Exercises 1–4 and evidence from the two articles. Finally, (3) use your answer to question five in Exercise 4 to fill in a conclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Make a Good First Impression</th>
<th>Preparing</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion:

6 Write

Write one paragraph that explains three keys to a successful job interview. Use the information from your graphic organizer.

7 After you write

A Check your writing. Did you include all the ideas in your graphic organizer?

B Share your writing with a partner.
   a. Take turns. Read your writing to your partner.
   b. Read your partner’s writing to yourself. Compare it to your partner’s graphic organizer.
   c. Comment on your partner’s writing: Ask one question; share one thing you learned.
1 Before you read

Talk with your classmates. Answer the questions.

1. How many dates are in the reading? What are they?
2. What is the reading about?
3. What is a blog? Have you ever seen one?

2 Read

Read the blog. Listen and read again.

Eden’s Blog

Wednesday 9/24
I’ve been feeling depressed about the job search lately, but my counselor at school told me I shouldn’t give up. He said I need to be patient. Today, I organized my papers. I made lists of the places I have applied to and the people I have talked to. I also did some more research online.

Monday 9/15
Hello fellow job searchers! I have been looking for a job for several weeks. Everyone tells me that it’s critical to network, so I’ve been telling everyone I know. I’ve been calling friends, relatives, and teachers to tell them about my job search. If you have any good job-searching tips, please share them with me!

Tuesday 9/16
Today, I went to a job fair at my college. I filled out several applications and handed out some résumés. There were about 20 different companies there. Several of them said they were going to call me back. Wish me luck!

Thursday 9/25
Great news! One of the companies from the job fair finally called me back! I’ve been preparing for the job interview all day. I’m really excited. I’m going to have a practice interview with some classmates today. That will prepare me for the real one.

Monday 9/29
I had my interview today! I gave the interviewer a big smile and a firm handshake. I answered her questions with confidence. I’ll let you know if I get the job.
Academic Rigor into 21st Century Teaching and Learning

Source of examples
Ventures College and Career Readiness Worksheets. At the Ventures website Link: www.cambridge.org/ventures
1) Register or Sign in. 3) Select “Teacher Resources” in grey box on left-hand side under Ventures banner. 4) Type “College and Career Readiness Worksheets in the search box on the right-hand side OR use the menu bar on the left-hand side to scroll down to “Resources” and choose “College and Career Readiness Worksheets.” You can also limit your search to a specific ESL level (1=low beginning, 2=high beginning, 3=low intermediate, 4=high intermediate, Transitions= advanced) and (5) select reading (there are 10 for each level).

Online sites to access informational texts
California Distance Learning Project, Adult Learning Activities. LINK http://www.cdlponline.org

CSAL, Library of Web–Based Texts. LINK: http://csal.gsu.edu/content/are-you-teacher

News in Levels (3 levels of readings) LINK: http://www.newsinlevels.com


NEWSELA (CCRS leveled news articles) LINK: http://www.newsela.com

NDP Group Market Research (Interesting pieces on trends) LINK: https://www.npd.com/wps/portal/npd/us/home/

ReadWorks.org LINK: http://www.readworks.org/books/aad

USA Learns – Intermediate reading texts. LINK: http://www.usalearns.org/
References

*College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education.* Susan Pimental 2013.  

*English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education.*  

Parrish, B. & Johnson, S. *Promoting Learner Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Work: Developing Academic Readiness Skills From the Beginning* (2010).  
**LINK:** [www.cal.org/caelanetwork/resources/transitions.html](http://www.cal.org/caelanetwork/resources/transitions.html)

Other Useful Resources

*Academic Word List (AWL).* A list of 570 words that appear with high frequency in English-language academic texts, divided into 10 sublists from most frequent to least frequent. Developed by Averil Coxhead, at the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.  
**LINK:** [www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist)

Frey, N. & Fisher, D. *Close Reading in Elementary Schools* (Reading Teacher Vol. 66 Issue 3, Nov. 2012). Identifies the following types of text dependent questions: (1) General understandings (2) Key details (3) Vocabulary (4) text structure (5) Author’s purpose (6) Inferences and (7) Opinions, arguments, intertextual connection  

Kinsella, K. *Cutting to the Common Core: Analyzing Informational Text.* Includes useful tables (e.g., informational text features, language to discuss prediction about text content, vocabulary to discuss key ideas and details)  


Related Articles by Presenters

The following articles are available on the Ventures website: Go to Cambridge.org/ventures. Scroll past the Cambridge banner to the Ventures banner; Click on product details tab (in the second row of tabs below the Ventures banner);
Then click on the Professional Development link listed in the menu bar on the left-hand side. Then click on “visit the blog”. Type the name of the article in the search box at the top of the screen.

Ramirez, S. Increasing Comprehension with Graphic Organizers. (Ventures Newsletter 15 Jan 2017). Identifies three kinds of graphic organizers and provides examples for using each to increase comprehension of text.

Ramirez, S. Text Dependent Questions: A Tool for Teachers and Materials Writers Focusing on College and Career Readiness (Cambridge University Press, Ventures website Sept 2015, first printed in the TESOL Materials Writers Interest Section Newsletter, Aug 19, 2015). Provides tips on distinguishing text dependent questions from questions that are not text dependent, shares six types of text dependent questions, and provides tips on how to frame text dependent questions.

Savage, K. L. Three Activities to Promote Citing Evidence (Ventures Newsletter, 15 Sept 2016). Identifies situations in which students need to cite evidence and provides examples of activities for developing skills in citing evidence.

Savage, K. L. Do Instructional Materials align with CCRS? (Ventures Newsletter 4 Feb 2016). Provides examples of four different strategies for building vocabulary – using context clues, analyzing word parts, using references, and discovering multiple meanings.