

TUTORS TALKING

May 2023

Welcome to the first edition of Tutors Talking, a monthly resource for LLNB tutors. Each issue will focus on an educational tool or activity that can easily be incorporated into your lessons to help keep learners engaged. If you have an idea – or a success story! – that you'd like to share with fellow tutors, let us know!

— Alison

The Language Experience Approach

With this technique, learners relate their experiences to a tutor, who transcribes them. These transcriptions are then used as the basis for other reading and writing activities.



WHY USE IT?

- Works in any setting (one-to-one, group, virtual)
- Emphasizes connection between oral and written language
- Works for all reading levels and ESL learners
- Empowers learners to see their words in print
- Provides insight into learners' experiences (which can be used to build future lessons)
- Helps establish rapport with new learners

1. Sit with the learner

So they can see what is being written.

2. Identify an experience

Converse with the learner to generate ideas and narrow down a topic. Prompt with photos, community events, or from the list of suggestions in Appendix A.

3. Ask them to tell you a story

You can help the learner expand or focus the account by asking questions.

4. Transcribe the story

Exactly as dictated by the learner. Do not make corrections or change words. Do use correct spelling and punctuation.

- beginning learners: 3–5 sentences
- advanced learners: longer is better

Ask the learner to give the story a title.

5. Read and verify the story

Read the story back to the learner, tracking the words with your finger. Ask if it says what they wanted it to say. Ask if they want to make any changes.

6. Ask them to read the story

- beginning learners: read one sentence at a time, tracking words, then ask them to read the sentence back to you. Repeat the process until they can read the entire story independently.
- advanced learners: may be able to read the story on their own after listening to you read it.

7. Identify reading/writing skills

You can now use this story to identify language skills for the learner to work on. See Appendix B for suggestions.



Additional Resources

For Beginning Learners:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PK1PII90joQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYVA5oNgNL8&t=26s>

For Advanced Learners:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hw8XBqaKpVY&feature=youtu.be>



Appendix A

Generating Story Ideas

Use the questions and other ideas below to start conversations that will lead to the creation of a Language Experience story.

General prompts:

- ↳ What is something you do well? How would you tell someone else how to do it?
- ↳ What type of work do you do? What do you like and dislike about your work?
- ↳ What do you most like to do on your day off?
- ↳ Family, school, work, trips.
- ↳ Tell me a story about someone in your family.
- ↳ Something the learner is proud of or happy about.
- ↳ Think about someone you know. Describe what he or she looks like.
- ↳ Ask the learner to bring in a photo and tell you what the photo represents.
- ↳ Choose a photo depicting an odd situation. Ask the learner to describe what they think happened just before the photo was taken and just after it was taken.



For ESL Learners:

- ↳ Why did your family come to Canada?
- ↳ What was it like when you first arrived?
- ↳ Tell me about life in your homeland. What was your day like?
- ↳ Descriptions of people, or everyday routines.
- ↳ Tell me about a family tradition.



Appendix B

Generating Activities

Use their Learning Experience story to build on language skills such as vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, comprehension, grammar and writing.

For Beginning Learners:

- ↳ Scramble key words and have your learner unscramble them.
- ↳ Write the sentences in scrambled order and have your learner rewrite them, restoring the correct sequence.
- ↳ Use the text to review a grammar point, such as sequence of tenses, word order, or pronoun referents.
- ↳ Select words from the story for vocabulary, spelling, or sound-symbol correspondence activities.
- ↳ Create a CLOZE exercise – delete every nth word (4th, 5th, 6th, etc.). Have the learner fill in the blanks either with or without the assistance of a word bank, depending on their literacy level.

For Advanced Learners:

- ↳ Read other texts related to the same topic.
- ↳ Generate comprehension questions.
- ↳ Write other types of texts – songs, poems, letters (for example, a letter to the editor), or directions for how to do something.

