

Going Places An ESL unit for students ages 6 to 10

This unit uses the concept of “going places” as a way of exploring language related to places and movement. In this unit students will have opportunities to explore and talk about the places they live and the places they go, how they get from one place to another, and directions for traveling.

Your primary role as the teacher. With all of these lessons, the primary objective is to engage the students in conversation through the interaction of the activities. These social interactions, one-on-one, provide the best opportunity for quickly learning correct grammar and vocabulary. Your relationship and interactions, in other words, are more important than the actual activities in this unit. Throughout the activities, look for chances to use new words and model good grammar. Be careful not to correct incorrect word or grammar usage too often. It can get discouraging to the child. Rather, repeat the word or grammatical statement correctly. For instance, if the child says, “I seen her.” You say something like, “oh, you *saw* her, did you?”

Use open-ended questions as often as possible rather than close-ended questions that require a brief answer such as “yes” or “no” questions. Open-ended questions, like “tell me about your family,” provides an avenue for greater conversation than do questions such as “do you have a brother?”

The lessons are not sequential. That is, they do not have to be completed in the order given. You may use any lesson at any given session.

LESSON ONE: NAMING PLACES

Objective: Students will learn to name and describe places.

Preparation: When possible, learn the student’s country of origin and have materials available related to that country as specified below and in any other way you find advantageous. Review the lessons and gather materials for each lesson you decide to use.

Activity: Exploring Maps

Materials: maps of the world, the student’s country of origin, the U.S., and the city in which the student lives. It is preferable in this instance to use paper maps, books, or globes rather than computer-based maps because they allow for more tactile involvement.

Objective: Students will be able to identify their country of origin and their current place of residence on the maps and use appropriate language when doing so.

Introduction: “People live, work, go to school, and play in different *places*. We are going to have some fun with the different places in your life.”

Instructions: Place the map of the world (or globe) in front of the student and ask him/her to show you where they are from. Guide the student in telling you about their country of origin, that part of the world, and other countries around their country. Continue on to explore the map of the US—finding your city of residence—and exploring other facts of interest. Finally, use a map of the city of residence to identify your current location, the student’s residence, and other places of interest. Be sure to use as many different words as possible to describe places.

Questions to extend learning:

- Point to places on the map of the city and ask which are closest and farthest from where you are now.
- Count the number of streets between places.
- Name the other countries around the student’s country of origin.
- Name the other states around your state and ask if they can tell you anything about those states.

Key words: live, move, country, ocean, travel, city, state, house, apartment, street, road, highway, block, library, church/synagogue/mosque, fire station, store, restaurant. Concentrate on present and past tense of such words as live/lived and travel/traveled.

Activity: Drawing a Map

Materials: large paper, pencils, crayons, and/or markers.

Objective: to use the art of mapping to explore places of interest.

Summary: The student will create a map of their neighborhood.

Instructions: Have the student tell you about the places he/she goes on a regular basis such as home, school, playground, church, etc. If you have not completed the first activity on Maps above, discuss with the student the uses of maps. Ask the student to make a map showing the places of importance to them. Assist as needed. The larger the paper, the more enjoyable this lesson will be for the student. If the child is capable, have him or her draw symbols for places on their map such as the library, a school, etc. Or, they could draw representations of the places on the map. If the student works well without much help, you may want to make your own map of your life. This will provide more opportunity for discussion.

Questions to extend learning:

- How far is it from “here” to “here?”
- How can you get from one place to the other?
- Ask the student to tell you about the places on their map. What do they like and dislike about these places?
- Ask the student to describe the buildings at each of the places on their map.

Key words: live, work, play, house, apartment, street, road, street sign, traffic light, sidewalk, school, highway, block. Concentrate on *action verbs* such as walking, traveling, and riding.

Other activities:

- Complete puzzles of places such as map puzzles and pictures of places.
- Read a book about the student’s country of origin and/or a book about your city.
- Look at and discuss travel brochures to places around the world,
- Create a 3-D map of the student’s neighborhood with clay or play dough.

Ongoing activity: Write keywords on index cards and use them as flash cards for written vocabulary development. Each week, as time permits, get out the cards and review.

LESSON TWO: AROUND MY HOUSE

Objective: Students will learn how to name and describe the places and things around their house.

Keywords: house, apartment, home, upstairs, downstairs, inside, outside, sidewalk, driveway, elevator, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, den, living room, porch, hall, hallway, closet, dining room, utility room, couch, sofa, chair, table, bed, dresser, chest-of-drawers, bath tub, toilet, sink, stove, oven, dish washer, washing machine, dryer.

Activity: *Building my Home*

Summary: The student will construct a model of their home

Materials: Building blocks, Legos, or any other available material for table-top construction.

Objective: the student will construct a replica of his/her home and use appropriate language to describe the parts of the home.

Instructions: Ask the student to tell you as best he or she can about their home. Is it an apartment or house or something else? How many stories high is it? How many rooms does it have? Tell him or her that you are going to have fun making a model of their home. Provide the student with your chosen materials, or allow him or her to choose if possible. Ask the student to build a model of their home. Assist as necessary. Remember that the point of this activity is to use a fun, hands-on activity to explore language. So the accuracy and beauty of the model is irrelevant. Ask questions throughout the activity to extend language.

Questions to extend learning:

- How many windows are in the front?
- How many stories high is your home?
- What is on the outside of your home (brick, wood, etc.)?
- How close to the street is your home?
- Do you have a yard? What's in it?
- How many doors to the outside do you have?

Keywords: build, construct, wall, roof, window, door, sidewalk, driveway, street, road, wood, block, floor.

Activity: Inside my Home

Objective: To provide students with an opportunity to talk about the physical layout and things inside their home.

Summary: Students will draw a floor plan of their home complete with furnishings.

Materials: Paper, pencils, crayons, and/or markers.

Instructions: Tell the student you want him or her to show you what the inside of their home looks like. For younger students, demonstrate what a floor plan looks like by drawing the rooms where you are during this session. For all, explain that a floor plan is similar to a map (as created in the last lesson) of the home. Provide the student with paper and drawing materials. As they draw their home, ask questions about their home (see questions below).

Questions to extend learning:

- Which is the biggest room in your home?
- Which is the smallest?
- What do you call each room?
- What do you do in each room?
- Count how many doors and windows you have in your home.
- Name the furniture.

Keywords: floor plan, wall, rooms, coach, chair, table, bathroom, kitchen, dining room, living room, hall, bedroom, bed.

Other activities:

- Create a house from scratch either building a model or drawing a floor plan. Ask the student what she would like in a house if she could design it anyway she wanted.
- Draw a floor plan of the room in which you are both sitting. Include the furniture. With older students, use a measuring tape and measure the room and the furniture to help with drawing a more accurate plan.
- Look through some “House Beautiful” type magazines together. Discuss the décor and styles.

Ongoing activity: Remember to write keywords on index cards and use them as flash cards for written vocabulary development. Each week, as time permits, get out the cards and review.