

Freire's Learning Sequence

By Larry Ferlazzo



Do you have 5 minutes? LMC's editor and media maven Gail Dickinson is assembling librarians and other educators to share practical and novel ideas for using today's best educational resources. Media Maven tips reveal actionable, quick guidance on a spectrum of resources and practices to engage, inspire, and prepare today's learners for 21st century challenges. This month's tips author also has a podcast for you, sponsored by Capstone Publishers: go to www.LibraryMediaConnection.com/MediaMaven.

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator who developed strategies to help low-income people build literacy skills by connecting reading to the everyday challenges they faced in their lives.

The Peace Corps developed an engaging lesson using Freire's techniques, which teachers of English language learners can use regularly during the school year. It follows a simple sequence:

- 1 Show a picture or short video clip portraying a common challenge your students face (for example, the first two minutes of the movie *Les Misérables*, when Jean Valjean steals bread to feed his family, or a photo of a student being bullied). Ask students to describe what they see, including physical descriptions.
- 2 Next, ask students to share what they believe is happening. What is the problem they think is being portrayed?
- 3 Ask students what they think caused the problem.
- 4 This is followed by asking students if they, members of their family, or friends have ever experienced a similar problem.
- 5 Next, students can share how they responded to the problem.
- 6 The final task is to ask them to talk about other ideas they might have about how to respond to the problem, potentially bringing everything together in a poster to share.

There are limitless opportunities for oral, listening, and writing practice in this sequence; for individual, partner, and small group work; for expanding vocabulary; and for developing higher-order thinking skills.

RESOURCES

This is a great list of Peace Corps manuals for teaching English from which I adapted the lesson I write about, and which have tons of other great activities:

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED313902&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED313902

http://multimedia.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/library/M0046_teflarge.pdf

Here's a list of resources to find good videos for ELL lessons:

<http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2008/04/26/the-best-popular-moviestv-shows-for-eslefl/>

And here is a list of ideas on how to use photos with ELL's:

<http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org/2010/06/27/the-best-ways-to-use-photos-in-lessons/>

*Larry Ferlazzo teaches English language learners at Luther Burbank High School in Sacramento, California. He writes a popular teacher's blog at <http://larryferlazzo.edublogs.org> and is the author of *English Language Learners: Teaching Strategies That Work* (Linworth, 2010).*



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