
Teacher Package

English As a Second Language Exemplar Task Study Skills in English, ESL Level 4, Open (ESLDO) Teacher Package

Title: A School Newspaper Article

Time Requirement: 5 periods of 75 minutes each

Expectations Addressed in the Exemplar Task

This task gives students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of all or part of each of the following selected expectations from the Oral and Visual Communication, Reading, and Writing strands.

Students will:

1. create a documentary or news report on a current issue;
2. scan texts for specific information;
3. write a passage of three or more paragraphs to develop a central idea;
4. use common tenses and verb phrases, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions of direction and time, and interrogative and negative constructions appropriately and with accuracy most of the time;
5. use periods, commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, colons, and parentheses correctly in final drafts;
6. spell words accurately in final drafts, including subject-specific terms.

Description of the Task

Present the following scenario to students:

Wayne Gretzky is planning a visit to your school. Your class has been asked to accompany Mr. Gretzky on his tour of the school, and each student is to submit an article to the school newspaper describing the highlights of his visit. In preparation for writing your article, you will need to read some background information about Wayne Gretzky. This is provided in Appendix B: Informational Text. You will also need to develop at least two questions that you would like to ask Wayne Gretzky during his visit and formulate his answers as direct quotations. You will invent the responses to the questions, but they must be appropriate to Mr. Gretzky's background and accomplishments.

Final Product

Each student will submit a school newspaper article of approximately 300 words describing the highlights of Wayne Gretzky's visit to the school, including:

- the purpose of his visit;
- areas and/or activities that were of interest to him;
- details of his interaction with the students;
- information he shared about himself;
- at least two direct quotations.

Assessment and Evaluation

The final draft of the newspaper article will be assessed and evaluated using the task rubric* provided. Introduce the rubric to students when you introduce the task. Review the rubric with the students and ensure that each student understands the criteria and the descriptions for achievement at each level. Allow ample time for a thorough reading and discussion of the assessment criteria outlined in the rubric.

Some students may perform below level 1. Although the rubric does not include descriptions of achievement below level 1, the characteristics of these students' work should be reviewed in relation to the criteria outlined in the rubric.

Teacher Instructions**Prior Knowledge and Skills**

To complete this task, students are expected to have some experience with, or some knowledge and skills related to, the following:

- reading and writing a newspaper article
- extracting information from sections of grade-level texts
- using quotation marks for direct speech
- using the writing process to plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing, with a checklist

Accommodations

Accommodations that are normally provided in the regular classroom for students with special needs should be provided in the administration of this performance task.

Materials and Resources

- dictionaries, thesauri, and/or a spellcheck program

**The rubric is reproduced on pages 9–10 of this document.*

Task Instructions

Day 1 – Examining a Model Newspaper Article

- Discuss the task and the task rubric with the students.
- Ask students to name some of their favourite pop stars and discuss how they would feel about having a pop star visit their school and what they would like to show the star at their school.
- Have students read Appendix A: A Model Newspaper Article independently. Ask questions to check that the students understand the article.
- Have students, as a class, analyse the model article with respect to purpose, format, verb tense, punctuation, use of quotation marks for direct speech, and tone.
- Ask the students what biographical information about Céline Dion the writer needed prior to writing the model article. List this information on a chart or board in the classroom. **Highlight for students the integration of biographical details with the events of Ms. Dion’s visit to the school.**
- Work with the class to assess the model article on Ms. Dion’s visit, using the task rubric.

Day 2 – Reading and Discussing Background Information on Wayne Gretzky

- Have students, as a class, brainstorm any information they know about Wayne Gretzky. Record this information on a chart or board in the classroom.
- Have students read Appendix B: Informational Text independently to learn more facts about Wayne Gretzky.
- Have students highlight or underline key facts that might be useful when they are writing their articles.
- Ask students to work in small groups to share the key facts from the informational text.

Day 3 – Planning the Article

- Ask students to work in small groups to discuss areas of the school and activities that might interest Wayne Gretzky.
- Discuss Appendix C: Newspaper Article Planner with the students.
- Remind students that they are to formulate at least two questions that they would like to ask Wayne Gretzky.
- Remind students that the answers to their questions are to be included in their articles as direct quotations.
- Ask students to complete Appendix C.

Day 4 – Writing a Draft of the Article

- Review an appropriate newspaper article format with the students.
- Have students work independently to write a first draft of their school newspaper article.

Day 5 – Editing and Writing Final Copy

- Ask students to use Appendix D: Checklist to ensure that they have included all of the required components of the task and to check for errors.
- Ask students to edit and revise their own work.
- You may wish to confer with individual students.
- Have students prepare and submit the final draft of their school newspaper article.

List of Appendices

- A. A Model Newspaper Article
- B. Informational Text
- C. Newspaper Article Planner
- D. Checklist

Appendix A: A Model Newspaper Article

Famous Singer Visits School

The Trillium High School community had a taste of the glamorous world of pop music yesterday when internationally famous singer Céline Dion paid a long-anticipated visit to the school. Ms. Dion, who last year said she wanted to visit a Canadian high school to get more in touch with teenage fans, spent two busy hours visiting a number of classrooms and programs around the school.

The 33-year-old pop star first sat in on a rehearsal of the school choir and made some suggestions for polishing a song the choir is preparing for this fall's music festival. Never before has Trillium's choir had the opportunity to take direction from a top musician who has released more than two dozen albums and won every major music award, including Grammys, Junos, and Felixes. Ms. Dion's most important advice to Trillium's budding singers was, "You have to be disciplined and you have to be ready to work really hard."

Next, Ms. Dion visited the school daycare centre. Ms. Dion, who is the mother of a nine-month-old baby boy, happily sat on the floor and sang nursery songs and played finger games with a circle of toddlers. She also shared with the daycare-centre staff that she is the youngest in a family of fourteen children.

The last stop on the performer's school tour was the Guidance Office, where she participated in a Teacher-Adviser Group of Grade 9 students. The students were discussing possible community service placements. Ms. Dion told the group that she has found her volunteer work with the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation very rewarding. "My niece was taken from us by this disease," she said, "and this is my way of trying to help other families who are dealing with this illness."

The response to Dion's visit to Trillium was overwhelmingly positive. Said Jenny Lum, a Grade 10 student, "I wish her visit could go on and on."

Appendix B: Informational Text

Wayne Gretzky

Background Information

Wayne Gretzky is recognized as a true Canadian hero. Many people consider him to be the greatest player in the history of hockey; in fact, he is often referred to as “The Great One”. He has become an inspiration for young athletes everywhere. He combines natural talent with hard work and a love of his sport. In the hockey world, he is known for his skating speed and for his ability to manipulate a hockey puck.

Early Years

Wayne Gretzky was born in Brantford, Ontario, on January 26, 1961. He showed an early interest in hockey. He maintains a very close relationship with his family, and it was his father, in particular, who encouraged his interest in hockey and taught him about the game. When Wayne was about 4 years old, his father built him an ice rink in the family’s backyard and Wayne spent many hours every day practising his skating skills. Perhaps the best advice his father gave him was to tell him to “go where the puck is going, not where it has been”. Wayne followed this advice throughout his career, and it proved to be very sound advice. Wayne developed an uncanny ability to anticipate where the puck was going to be on the ice, and this ability contributed to many victories for the teams for which he played.

Career

At a very young age, Wayne began playing hockey for minor-league teams. He often played against others who were much older than he was. In 1978, Wayne became a professional hockey player at the age of 17. He joined the Edmonton Oilers and played with them for ten years. During this time he set many records for scoring goals and led his team to many victories. Although he was small for a hockey player, he showed outstanding talent, and his unique style of playing amazed the hockey world. Wearing his trademark “number 99” sweater, he became a household name in Canada.

In 1988, Wayne married an actress, Janet Jones, and was traded shortly after to the Los Angeles Kings. The couple moved to Los Angeles, where they both could continue their careers. The Gretzkys now have three children. Wayne retired from playing hockey in 1999 and was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame. He has never forgotten his Canadian roots. He played a major role in putting together the Canadian hockey team that won the gold medal at the 2002 Winter Olympics.

Other Accomplishments

Wayne Gretzky maintains a great love for hockey. He continues to assist and encourage many young athletes. He has encouraged athletic abilities in his own children. His sons, Ty and Trevor, play youth hockey, and his daughter, Pauline, is studying at New York’s American Ballet Theatre School. In addition to his athletic abilities, Wayne Gretzky is also a very successful businessman. He has his own line of clothing and a restaurant.

Appendix C: Newspaper Article Planner

Using point form, construct a plan for your article.

Purpose of Visit

Areas/Activities of Interest

Interaction With Students

Information Shared With Students

Questions

Responses

Appendix D: Checklist

My newspaper article:

- begins with a headline
- provides an opening paragraph explaining the purpose of the visit
- describes areas and/or activities of interest to Wayne Gretzky
- gives details about his interaction with the students
- contains facts about Wayne Gretzky taken from the informational text
- includes at least two direct quotations
- summarizes the visit
- is written in paragraph form
- provides interesting reading for other students

I edited my composition for:

- correct spelling
- correct use of quotation marks
- correct use of all other punctuation
- correct use of verb tenses and verb forms