

**“It’s News to Me!”  
Teaching with Colorado’s Historic Newspaper Collection  
Model Lesson Format**

*Fill out the list of the components to be included in a lesson using primary source materials that is aligned to Colorado Model Content Standards.*

**Lesson Title:**

Fires Now and a Century Ago

**Subject and Grade Level:**

English as a Second Language, Grade 7-8 (Intermediate-Advanced)

**Focus of Lesson:** A brief explanation of what students are to learn in this lesson (content and/or skills). What is the purpose of the lesson?

Purpose of the lesson is:

- to read non-fiction texts using news and database sources.
- to read for specific content (skimming/scanning).
- to practice and use academic (higher level) vocabulary.
- to write using content vocabulary.
- to make conclusions based on readings about the past and the present.
- to ask questions and find answers.
- to repeat and practice geographical map skills.
- to use the Internet for reading primary sources.

**Standards Assessed:** Which standards will you be assessing in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

**Foreign Language Standard 1:** Students listen to and derive meaning from a variety of foreign language sources.

**Foreign Language 1 – Listening 1.1 (Intermediate):** Follow meaning when working in small group or whole class discussions on personal, social, or grade-level academic topic.

**Foreign Language 1 – Speaking 1.2:** Students speak in the foreign language for a variety of purposes and for diverse audiences. Use key content and descriptive vocabulary.

**Foreign Language 1 – Reading 1.3:** Students read and derive meaning from a variety of materials written in a foreign language.

**Foreign Language 1 – Writing 1.4: (Advanced)** Students write in a foreign language for a variety of purposes and for diverse audiences. Incorporating information from foreign language resource materials in their writing. Use complex sentence structures with grade-appropriate vocabulary, appropriate syntax, and conventions, e.g.: spelling, capitalization, punctuation. Use

strategies of note taking, outlining, and summarizing in content areas.

**Assessment:** Explain the assessment. (Include the formal 'assessment assignment' and any forms, worksheets, etc. in the Materials Section)

Part of the assessment is informal (observation). For that part, the Rubric for Listening and Speaking is used. The other part is formal, and for that part, the vocabulary quiz, the reading of articles, and an ABC chart are used.

The informal assessment is done during class time. The teacher observes activity for the different students and makes notes on the rubric. The idea is to perform this assessment at least three times, so there is a fair chance for all students to participate. Repeating this assessment, the teacher can evaluate and make sure to ask students who do not say much. Depending on the class, the teacher can decide to add up all the informal assessments, or he/she can decide to use the best result from each section.

The formal assessment has three parts to it. The first is the vocabulary quiz. Students need to show they know the vocabulary focused on through the lesson. To give the students choices, so they get to show their best work, they choose 15 words from the vocabulary list, and they choose how to use them in a meaningful way. The second assessment is a reading assessment, where they are presented with three articles from Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection. They have to find the same information individually as they have practiced previously in pairs. The third assessment is filling out an ABC chart, using a combination of vocabulary and knowledge from the whole lesson getting assessed. Anything that has to do with the lesson can be included as long as it starts with the particular letter. Creativity helps. This chart hopefully gives the student a feeling of knowing much more about everything after having been through this lesson. The ABC chart can also be used as a pre-assessment, and after the lesson is done as the final assessment. The teacher as well as the students can see and compare.

**Standards Addressed:** Which standards will you be addressing (but not assessing) in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

**Geography Standard 1, Grades 5-8:** Students know how to use and construct maps, globes, and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. Identifying and locating each of the fifty states in the United States.

**Information Literacy Standard 1:** The information literate student accesses

information efficiently and effectively.

**Information Literacy Standard 3:**

The information literate student uses information accurately and creatively.

**Time:** The number of class periods required for the lesson as well as the length of class period.

Each session is 45 minutes:

Session 1: Introduction of vocabulary, fire article on overhead as a model.

Session 2: Repeat vocabulary, contemporary fire articles in the Rocky Mountains News or/and Denver Post.

Session 3: Repeat vocabulary and add more if needed. Write conclusions based on articles. Ask questions about the past.

Session 4: Repeat vocabulary. Introduce the Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection. Show and read sample article(s).

Session 5: Read 5-10 articles from the Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection for specific content.

Session 6: Write conclusions based on questions from session 3. Use vocabulary to share facts from the reading.

Session 7: Rewrite one of the articles from the Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection from a witness point of view.

Session 8: Share previous writing, revisit questions, answers, and conclusions. Make predictions for the future about fires.

Session 9: Assessment.

**Materials / Teacher Preparation Section:** List the technology, handouts, chart paper, text resources, etc. needed to complete the lesson. Include what you need to do to prepare ahead of time for your students to complete the lesson.

1. Internet service:

<http://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org> (check it out and practice.)

<http://www.post-newscustomer.com> (check it out and practice.)

(You have to sign up for this service. Ask the librarians to help.)

2. Article from contemporary paper on fire. Have the article made into a transparency.

2. Vocabulary List (included in lesson)

3. Fire Information Chart (included in lesson)

4. Rubric for Listening and Speaking (included in lesson)

5. Vocabulary Quiz (included in lesson)

6. ABC Chart (included in lesson)

7. CHNC Articles for Assessment:

“Houston Fire Loss \$7,000,000” in the *San Juan Prospector* (Feb 24, 1912, page 1)

“School House is Swept by Fire” in the *Fairplay Flume* (May 25, 1923, page 2)

“Flames Lick up \$800,000” in the *San Juan Prospector* (Aug 10, 1907, page 1)

8. Index cards to put vocabulary on a word wall
9. Word wall space with title of lesson and vocabulary. As the lesson proceeds, conclusions are added; questions are added; predictions for the future are added; as well as other items important for the lesson.
10. USA and world map
11. Small sticky notes to write city, state or country on, and add to the maps.

**Possible Procedures:** Enumerate the procedure teachers can follow to teach the lesson to students. Provide the URL for the digital primary sources that you will use.

Introduce the lesson by explaining what students will learn through this lesson, and what activities they will do. Explain the assessment, and if a pre-assessment is the choice, use the ABC chart for this.

**Lesson 1:** The vocabulary presented on the vocabulary list is a start, and depending on which articles the students end up reading and the need of the student group, others might need to be added or even eliminated from the list. Go through the list with the students. If there are words known by some students, have them share and explain. Divide the rest of the vocabulary among the class, and use a dictionary to find synonyms and explanations. Use index cards to write the word on one side and the explanation and/or synonym on the other. Use Tac n Stick to glue the cards to the word wall, and it will be easy to take them down for practice.

It is assumed that the students know about newspaper articles, their format, and the vocabulary. Use the transparency of the contemporary article to model skimming and scanning for information. Have the fire information chart out, and fill it out with facts from the article.

**Lesson 2:** Work on the vocabulary by distributing the index cards to the students, and they take turns reading a word and its explanation/synonym. Students note down their specific words in their notebook/journal. For homework they will create sentences with the words included.

Divide students into pairs and explain that they take turns writing for each article, so the actual reading and writing work is shared. Access Internet and look up <http://wwwpost-newscustomer.com> for the recent week's articles on fires in both newspapers. Use the fire information chart to fill out information from the Rocky Mountain News and Denver Post. At the end, have students fill out sticky notes for city, state, and country. Take turns in class and have students explain where the fire took place, and add the sticker to the maps.

**Lesson 3:** Read aloud the sentences written as homework, and have students copy them on paper after checking them. Add these sentences to the word wall

next to each vocabulary word. Ask the class questions about vocabulary. For example: What is another word for 'looking into something'? (Investigate) Add new vocabulary if needed. Students work together in the same pairs and write conclusions on the articles they read the day before.

Where are the fires?

How damaging are they?

How did they start?

Share the conclusions in class and talk about them. Ask questions about the past to compare what happens now and what happened then. Write the questions down and post them on the word wall.

**Lesson 4:** Read vocabulary words aloud. Have students write down the vocabulary words in their notebook/journal that they have not yet worked on. Practice for homework.

Use the same pairs as before or create new ones. Access the Internet and introduce the Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection, <http://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>, by walking the students through how to search, how to open an article, and how to read for specific content. Fill out the fire information chart for 1-2 articles as examples.

**Lesson 5:** In pairs, the students access the Internet, and find information for 5-10 new articles, depending on time, number of students, etc. The information is noted on the fire information chart.

**Lesson 6:** Use the vocabulary to share facts from the articles. All students prepare to share at least one piece of information. Have students fill out sticky notes for city, state/country. Take turns in class and have students explain where the fire took place, and add the sticker to the maps.

The information chart is used for writing conclusions based on the questions posted during lesson 3. The conclusions are made and written down by each pair and shared in the whole class. Through the sharing, where the teacher records the conclusions on the board, opinions, questions and thoughts are voiced, as well as written down in notebook/journal and on the board. At the end of class, the students should have made conclusions, answered questions, maybe come up with new questions or observations.

**Lesson 7:** Have each student choose one fire article they felt was special from the Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection. The class accesses the Internet, and each student prints out his/her choice of article and uses it to write about the fire from a first person's and a witness' point of view. Give guidelines for the use of vocabulary so students remember to use it.

**Lesson 8:** Share the witness writings by reading it aloud to a partner. Have each student share sentences where the vocabulary words are used. For the whole class revisit original questions and answers. Compare fires now and in the past. Are they the same? Write predictions and advice about types of fires, how to prevent, and fight fires in the future. Look at the maps and repeat the locations adding appropriate geographical information (north, south, east, west, continents, ocean, etc). Use this session to repeat, to pull everything together, and to write new questions/predictions. Prepare students for the assessment the following lesson.

**Lesson 9:** Follow the assessment as described in the assessment section.

Depending on time, the ABC chart can be postponed until another lesson. The chart is good to discuss with the students so they get a clear feeling of what they have learned. Compare to pre-assessment if the ABC chart was used for that.

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