



Interview Book

A Unit Plan for Painter (optional) and Corel WordPerfect® Office Suite

Subject: Language Arts, Math, Social Studies

Grade Level Range: 3-12

Summary Description of the Lesson/Activity

In this lesson, groups of students create a set of questions on a topic, interview subjects to obtain the answers, and create a book of responses. They will use mathematics to analyze the results (as appropriate) and present their findings to the rest of the class for evaluation.

Activities:

1. Create a set of questions and interview someone of interest
2. Create an interview book featuring the results of their interviews and anecdotal materials to help the reader better understand the interviewee
3. Present their interview book to the class for evaluation

Goal/Overview:

Develop interviewing skills and perform simple data analysis to learn more about a person and/or profession.

Objective/ Expected Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify appropriate questions.
- Students will distinguish yes/no (closed) questions from open-ended questions.
- Students will be able to prepare to interview a subject.

Duration:

3 or more class periods

Preparation and Materials:

- Access to computers is required during this activity several times:
 - to enter the questions
 - to enter the responses
 - to compile all responses into a book
 - to create their presentation
 - to summarize their evaluations
- Some prior experience working in groups and writing questions on a topic.

Materials (continued)

- Identify a person or group of people to be interviewed. This can be used as part of a career presentation or other adult presentation to the class; or the students can interview other students as part of a social studies or current events project. If students will be interview subjects, make any necessary arrangements.

Materials Required:

Computers: Corel WordPerfect Suite
CorelDraw Suite (optional)
Printer
Binder and/or scrapbook-making materials

Assessment:

- Variety and quality of questions (are they appropriate to the subject and interviewee, do they ask about important matters, do they elicit thoughtful replies)
- Accurate recording of answers.
- Assembly of book and selection of questions & answers in book

Instructional Steps:

Introduce the lesson

- 1) Set stage for interview: Explain to students that they'll each interview a member of the school faculty, member of the community, family member or someone else of their choosing. Note that interviewing skills are important skills to have both in the workplace and to help you ask meaningful questions when you meet someone new. Suggest that they make a short list of 3 or 4 people with which they could have a short interview – either in person, by phone, or on the Net.
- 2) Conduct a brief brainstorm/discussion: what questions might the students want to ask the interviewee about the selected topic. Are there categories of questions they might want to think about (for example, if it's a vocational interview, they might want to think about categories of schooling and preparation).
- 3) Develop the questions. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Set a time period for the groups to come up with 5 questions each.
- 4) Have each group share its questions with the class. (Depending on time, you may want to have each group select its 'best' question and just read that one.)
- 5) Discuss: after you've heard all the questions, are there other questions you want to ask? Were there some questions that several groups had? Why are some questions more common than others? Are some questions better at eliciting answers than others? What makes them better (yes/no vs. open-ended questions)? Do any of the questions lend themselves to basic statistical analysis (comparison with larger known groups)?
- 6) Give groups a few minutes to review their questions and make any changes. You may want to have each group pick their best questions (one per student in the group). Then have them type the questions into their computer using Corel WordPerfect. They should leave about 5 blank lines after each question. Once they've proofread their questions, they should print out one copy for each student in the group.

- 7) Try role-playing the question and answer process. Talk to students about “active listening” and why it’s important to give your interviewee feedback in order to get the correct information.

Conduct the Interview(s)

- 1) Remind students of the purpose of the interview. If they will be interviewing other students, set any ground rules for when and how they do it. Have students get out their question pages and review their questions.
- 2) Have students conduct their interviews over a 2 or 3 day period. If they have a digital camera, suggest they take a picture of the interviewee.
- 3) Students enter the interviewee responses in their Corel WordPerfect document, and do any necessary editing and checking.
Repeat this process for each additional interview. The goal is to assemble enough information about each person to create a complete “picture” of the interviewee.

Create the Book

- 1) Set the stage: each student will compile questions and answers and create a book
- 2) Provide directions for the activity. You may wish to have a printed copy for each group. For younger students, you may want to demonstrate the activity, and possibly provide a template for them to use. Include a format for identifying each speaker (for example, as it is done in a play).
- 3) Each student uses the computer to cut and paste answers so that each question appears at the top of a page, followed by the response for each interviewee.
- 4) Offer students the opportunity to expand and enhance their book of questions and answers with photos, news clippings or custom artwork (created using CorelDRAW or Corel Painter). Students can also use these programs to create a cool cover for their book.
- 4) Depending on time, and student ability and number of interviewees, you can conclude in two ways:
Younger students/a few interviewees: have each student save his or her completed work. You or a volunteer can import each group’s work to compile a single document with all groups’ questions and answers. Add a title page, and a page with the pictures and names of the guests who were interviewed, print and bind a copy and make it available for students to read.
Older students/more interviewees: Books can be individual, or, if there are themes (educators, for example), consider binding more than one interview set into one book. Make these books available in your school media center.

Extension:

- Share the interview book with the subject(s) of the interview and get their feedback
- Use the interview as a catalyst for creating an article for a school or community newspaper – or your school’s website

Student Materials/Worksheets:

None required