

## ESL Lesson Plan Describing a Traffic Accident

ESL 5053

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### Introduction

The following lesson plan was designed for intermediate level adult ESL learners of all ages and backgrounds, and to be implemented in a community learning center context. The end goal of this lesson is that the student will be able to describe a traffic accident, verbally and in writing. This particular lesson would be situated in a unit with an overall theme of “Safe Driving”, and would be preceded by lessons which focus on safe driving practices, car maintenance, obtaining a driver’s license and driving insurance, and exchanging information at the scene of a traffic accident. Hence, students would already be familiar with vocabulary related to weather, car parts, and driving a vehicle. It is also assumed that students are familiar and comfortable with the use of the simple present, simple past and present progressive tenses, and with forming *wh*-questions in the past tense. The lessons are built around a one and a half hour class period.

### Lesson Plan Overview

#### Day 1

- Activity A - Vocabulary input activity using TPR – 30 min.
  - Goal: TSWBAT identify the pictures that correspond to the vocabulary terms introduced.
  - Goal: TSWBAT indicate recognition of vocabulary terms by responding with physical actions.
- Activity B - Vocabulary listening and speaking activity – 1 hour.
  - Goal: TSWBAT identify the pictures that correspond to the vocabulary words/events heard in a story.
  - Goal: TSWBAT place the pictures in a sequence corresponding to the order the events occurred in the story.
  - Goal: TSWBAT discuss the events of a story with a partner and negotiate to create a reconstruction of the story.
  - Goal: TSWBAT combine newly learned material with previously learned material to create a list of suggestions for preventing/avoiding or better handling the accident situation in the story assigned.
  - Goal: TSWBAT present their reconstruction of the story and their suggestions to the class.

## Day 2

- Activity C – Review of simple past and present progressive – 10 min.
  - Goal: TSWBAT recall the simple past.
  - Goal: TSWBAT recall the present progressive in order to complete a speaking activity in pairs.
- Pre-activity D<sub>(a)</sub> – Introduction of the past progressive. – 10 minutes
  - Goal: TSWBAT recognize the past progressive tense through an input activity/demonstration.
- Activity D<sub>(b)</sub> – Grammar-focused input activity – 30 min.
  - Goal: TSWBAT attend to the past progressive form during reading and listening comprehension.
- Activity E – Grammar-focused structured output activity – 40 min.
  - Goal: TSWBAT discuss, organize, and write about major events using the simple past and past progressive, in small groups.

## Day 3

- Activity F – Information Exchange Task – 1 ½ hours
  - Goal: TSWBAT read a description of a traffic accident and use it to complete a chart.
  - Goal: TSWBAT ask and answer questions about a traffic accident.
  - Goal: TSWBAT write a paragraph comparing two traffic accidents.
  - Goal: TSWBAT write a paragraph describing a real-world traffic accident.

## Day 4

- Activity G – Verbal assessment task – 10 min. per student
  - Goal: TSWBAT verbally role-play the part of a driver telling a police officer about a traffic accident.
- Activity H – Written assessment task – 30 min.
  - Goal: TSWBAT write a summary of a traffic accident to submit to an insurance company

## Lesson Plan

### Activity A – Vocabulary Input TPR Activity

1. Goals:
  - a. TSWBAT identify the pictures that correspond to the vocabulary terms introduced.
  - b. TSWBAT indicate recognition of vocabulary terms by responding with physical actions.
2. Materials needed:
  - a. Pictures (mounted on cardstock or poster board) of vocabulary terms
3. Time to complete: 30 minutes
4. Instructions:
  - a. Introduce the nouns and descriptors related to driving and collisions by using pictures. For each term, show the picture and repeat the word. As you do this for each work, line up the pictures across the front of the classroom.

- b. For each picture, repeat the phrase “Point to the \_\_\_\_,” while pointing to the corresponding picture. For example, for the term “shattered,” show the picture of a shattered windshield while repeating the word “shattered.” Then put the picture aside and issue the command, “Point to the shattered windshield.”
- c. Have students practice by physically responding to the command to point to specific pictures. Continue practicing this until it is clear that the students have learned the terms.
- d. Introduce the verbs related to driving and collisions by using pictures. As in step 1, for each term, show the picture and repeat the word.
- e. Put the picture aside and repeat the term, but this time, accompany the word with a physical action representing the word. For example, for the word “swerve,” first show a picture of a car swerving while saying the word “swerve.” Put the picture aside, then repeat the word “swerve,” this time miming swerving a car.
- f. After each term has been introduced, practice using the terms and having students respond with the corresponding physical action. Continue practicing until it is clear that the students have learned the terms.
- g. After the input activity has been completed, the pictures and words should be displayed on a word wall throughout the remainder of activities in the unit.

### **Activity B** – Vocabulary Listening and Speaking Activity

1. Goals:
  - a. TSWBAT identify the pictures that correspond to the vocabulary words/events heard in a story.
  - b. TSWBAT place the pictures in a sequence corresponding to the order the events occurred in the story.
  - c. TSWBAT discuss the events of a story with a partner and negotiate to create a reconstruction of the story.
  - d. TSWBAT combine newly learned material with previously learned material to create a list of suggestions for preventing/avoiding or better handling the accident situation in the story assigned.
  - e. TSWBAT present their reconstruction of the story and their suggestions to the class.
2. Materials needed:
  - a. Recordings of accident stories found at:  
<http://student.coehd.utsa.edu/~lorrainecantu/AccidentStories.html>
  - b. “Activity B – Accident Stories Listening Activity – Student Worksheet”
3. Time to complete: 60 minutes
4. Instructions:
  - a. Say: *Listen carefully to the short stories told by people who have been in a car accident or near-accident. For each story, circle the pictures that match the events that are described in the story. In the space below the pictures, number the pictures in order as they were described in the story. The story will be played*

*once unless you raise your hand to let me know that you need the story repeated. Each story may be played up to two times.*

- b. Play the recording of the first story. Check if any students raise their hand to indicate that they need the story repeated. If needed, replay the story.

Story #1

I was in my car heading to the mall to buy a birthday present for a party I was invited to. I was really excited about the party actually. It was raining pretty hard, but I was trying to be careful. Suddenly, I hit a patch of wet road and began to hydroplane. My car spun out of control before I finally hit the guardrail and came to a stop. My car was damaged when it hit the guardrail, but luckily I didn't hit any other cars and no one was hurt.

- c. Now model choosing the correct pictures and putting them in order, by thinking aloud or asking for input from the students. Respond to any questions the students have about the instructions and, when it is clear that students understand the task, continue.
- d. Play the recordings for the rest of the stories. Be sure to give students time to circle the pictures and put them in order after each recording has been played. Also remember to allow students the opportunity to request that a story be repeated, and replay the story if necessary.

Story #2

I was driving through my neighborhood on my way to a friend's house, and I came to the stop sign down the street from my house. I came to a full stop and then began to move through the intersection. All of a sudden, just as I was going through the intersection, a child ran in front of me, chasing a ball into the street. He was right in front of me and I was too close to stop, so I swerved to miss him. As soon as I passed him I braked hard so I could make sure he was OK. When I looked back, I saw the boy happily running off with his ball. I'm not even sure he noticed what had happened.

Story #3

I was driving my truck down the highway, on my way home from work. It was a bright sunny day and I'd forgotten my sunglasses at home, so the glare from the sun was bothering my eyes. I was also on my cell phone, talking to my wife. Suddenly, I realized that the van in front of me was slowing down. I hadn't noticed its brake lights because of the glare, but I was quickly getting closer and closer to it. I slammed on the brakes and tried my best to swerve to the side a little, but I still hit its rear-end. The van and everyone inside were OK, but my front bumper was completely crumpled.

Story #4

I was driving down the highway on my way to a party. The weather had been kind of funny and it was actually pretty foggy outside. Everything was fine until suddenly I heard this loud noise and my car started to pull to the right. I'd had a blowout! It was really hard to control my car so I started trying to pull over. I made it safely across one lane, but when I tried to get across the last lane, all of a sudden, I was hit from behind. That car had been driving fast and in the fog, he hadn't seen me trying to pull over. Well, with my car already hard to control, when he hit me it spun completely out of control. The car was totaled but I survived.

Story #5

I was taking a drive in the country, enjoying the beautiful day in my new truck. The weather was great and I was enjoying all the curves in the road. My radio was starting to fade out, so I began trying to find a new radio station. I looked down for just a second, but when I looked up I saw a dog in the middle of the street. He'd come out of nowhere! I swerved to avoid the dog, but I was in the middle of a sharp turn in the road. I just couldn't make it; I didn't even have time to brake. I ended up driving off the road and straight into a tree! It was a smaller tree and when I hit it, a few seconds later it actually fell...right onto my car. My car was crushed! I got away with a few bruises, but nothing too terrible.

- e. Put the students into pairs. Say: *Now you and your partner should compare your worksheets. Do you have the same pictures circled and in the same order? If not, discuss your differences and come to an agreement about what actually took happened in the stories.*
- f. Say: *I'm now going to assign each group one of the stories we listened to. With your partner, I want you to try to remember all the details you can about the story. Use your worksheet to help you. You are going to try to recreate the whole story, and then you will share it with the class. You will also come up with a list of things that the driver could have done to prevent the accident or handle the situation better. Think back to what we learned previously about safe driving. One of you will present the recreation of the story and the other person will present your suggestions.*
- g. Have each pair share the recreation of their story and their suggestions with the whole class. If there are any disagreements about the recreation or the suggestions, discuss this as a whole class.

**Activity C** – Review of the simple past and present progressive.

1. Goals:
  - a. TSWBAT recall the simple past and present progressive in order to complete a speaking activity in pairs.

2. Materials needed:
  - a. Flash cards containing people performing actions
3. Time to complete: 10 minutes.
4. Instructions and Steps:
  - a. First, the teacher will begin by reading the objectives/goals from the board to the students. As warm-up the teacher will elicit the simple past by asking several students what they did yesterday, last weekend, last month, etc. For example, "Jim, what did you do last weekend?" Student will respond, "I swam at the lake with my family." After several drills, ask the whole class what X did on X day. For example, "Class, "What did Jim do last weekend?" and the class will respond, "Jim swam at the lake."
  - b. Then, the teacher will elicit the present progressive by holding up a flash card and asking the whole class what X is doing in the picture. For example, "What is he doing?" Students will look at the picture and respond, "He is playing soccer at the park?" Then, ask the students to form the question in the present progressive.
  - c. Next, the teacher will group the students in pairs and pass out the flash cards to each group member (two cards for each student).
  - d. Then the teacher will give the following instructions: Each group is to practice the present progressive by making questions and answers depending on their partner's flash card. For example, partner A will look at Partner B's card and ask, "What is she doing?" and partner B will respond, "She is shopping at the grocery store with her husband."
  - e. Next, the teacher will instruct the pairs to begin and monitor the students as they work. When the groups are finished the students will come back as a whole class to begin activity D<sub>(a)</sub>.

**Pre-Activity D<sub>(a)</sub>** – Structured input activity to introduce the past progressive tense.

1. Goals:
  - a. TSTWBAT recognize the past progressive tense through an input activity/demonstration.
2. Materials needed:
  - a. Three to four tasks written on strips of paper. Examples of tasks: Sit down on the chair numbered #1 and read this book silently, Write the following sentence on the board twenty times, sit down on the chair numbered #2 and read this newspaper silently, etc.
  - b. Material for each task such as a book, newspaper, notepad, chairs, chalk and board, etc. (Depends on what tasks you choose).
  - c. Board, big paper or overhead and chalk or markers.
3. Time to complete: 10 minutes
4. Instructions and steps:
  - a. First, the teacher will ask for or choose three to four volunteers to come up to the front of the class.

- b. Then, the teacher will give the following instructions so that the whole class can hear: Each volunteer will get a strip of paper with a task written on it. They are to read their task and immediately begin doing it. The rest of the class is to pay close attention to what the volunteers are doing.
- c. Once the students have begun their tasks, the teacher will go to the back of the room quietly and create a commotion like slamming a book on a desk or blowing a whistle or a horn, so that all the students turn around. Then, the teacher will instruct the volunteers to go back to their seats and thank them for participating.
- d. Next, the teacher will form questions and answers in the past progressive tense, based on what the students were doing. At the same time, the teacher will write the questions and answers on the board or overhead for the whole class to see. For example, “What was Sal doing when I blew the whistle?” “He was writing on the board.” The teacher should do this for each task that was done and for the non-volunteers. Finally, the teacher will introduce the next activity.

**Activity D<sub>(b)</sub>** – Form-focused structured input - [loosely based on Activity K, p. 157, Lee and Van Patten (2003)]

1. Goals:
  - a. TSWBAT attend to the past progressive form during listening and reading comprehension.
2. Materials needed:
  - a. “Activity D – Accident Stories - Listening and Reading – Student Worksheet”
3. Time to complete: 30 minutes
4. Instructions and steps:
  - a. Say: *Break up into groups of three and listen as I read a short narration. (Ask students to turn over their worksheets while you read. Read the following paragraph once. Read the paragraph again only if students request that it be read a second time.) Mr. Smith was driving west on Culebra. It was raining hard, and he was listening to the forecast on the radio. He was worried about being late to work, but he was driving slowly because of the rain. He noticed that a blue Honda in the oncoming lane was moving very fast and weaving around other cars. Suddenly it was heading straight towards him!*
  - b. Say: *With your group members, give as many details as you can remember by completing the following sentences. You have five minutes. The group with the most details wins! (Students complete the following statements on their worksheets.)*

Mr. Smith was driving \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

It was raining \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Smith was driving \_\_\_\_\_.

He was listening to the \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_.

The car coming toward him was a blue \_\_\_\_\_.

The car was moving very \_\_\_\_\_.

It was weaving around other \_\_\_\_\_.  
Suddenly it was heading \_\_\_\_\_!

- c. Say: *Read the story of Mrs. Ramos' accident on your worksheet.* (Students read the following.)  
*Mrs. Ramos was driving west on Bandera Rd. In a hurry to get home, she was driving a little too fast. She was talking to her daughter on her cell phone and listening to the radio. She was worried about her daughter and didn't notice that the car in front of her was suddenly braking...*
- d. Say: *Listen to your instructor read some statements about Mrs. Ramos, and check the box you think is right.* (Read the following statements.)
- i. *Mrs. Ramos was driving west.*
  - ii. *Mrs. Ramos was driving fast.*
  - iii. *Mrs. Ramos was driving on Bandera.*
  - iv. *Mrs. Ramos was listening to the radio.*
  - v. *Mrs. Ramos was talking on her cell phone*
- (Student checks the appropriate box.)
- i. \_\_\_\_\_ So was Mr. Smith. \_\_\_\_\_ But Mr. Smith wasn't.
  - ii. Etc.
- e. Say: *Now remain in your groups for the final activity of the day.*

**Activity E** – Grammar structured output activity using speaking and writing skills.

1. Goals:
  - a. TSWBAT discuss, organize, and write about major events using the past progressive, in small groups.
2. Materials needed:
  - a. Board or big paper and chalk or markers.
  - b. "Activity E – Student Worksheet"
3. Time to complete: 40 minutes
4. Instructions and steps:
  - a. The teacher will ask the whole class to brainstorm major events, in San Antonio, the U.S. and/or the world that are memorable to most people/everyone. As the students respond the teacher will write their responses on the board in the form of a semantic web.
  - b. Then, the teacher will break up the students into small groups of three, and give the following instructions: Each group is to choose a discussion leader, a writer, and a reporter. Then, each group will pick three of the major events on the semantic web and discuss what they were doing when those events happened. For example, "I was studying in my dorm room when the Twin Towers were attacked." Each group is to fill out the chart on their handout (show handout to students). This will help organize the group's responses. Next, each group will complete the last part of their handout by choosing one event from the chart and



writing a summary of what everyone in the group was doing when that event happened. When all the groups have finished, each group will report their summary to the whole class.

- c. The teacher will pass out a handout to each group and monitor the students as they work. Once all the groups have finished the teacher will ask each group to present their summary.
- d. As closure, the teacher will have the students reflect on one of the activities of the day by writing in their journals. The teacher will write the prompt on the board or overhead. For example, “Think about one activity that we did today and write about how you felt when you were doing that activity, or write about some thing new you learned today.”

**Activity F – Jigsaw Information Exchange - Reading, speaking, and writing**

1. Goals:

- a. TSWBAT read a description of a traffic accident and use it to complete a chart.
- b. TSWBAT ask and answer questions about a traffic accident.
- c. TSWBAT write a paragraph comparing two traffic accidents.
- d. TSWBAT write a paragraph describing a real-world traffic accident.

2. Materials needed:

- a. “Activity F – Accidents – Information Exchange – Student Worksheet”
- b. “Activity F – Reading passages - Teacher Resource”

3. Time to complete: 1 hour and a half

4. Instructions:

- a. Brainstorm as a class what causes traffic accidents. Say: *What are some things that often occur in a traffic accident?* List on the board various causes and their consequences.
- b. Give each student one of the following reading passages.

On a summer afternoon, on I-25 south of Raton, New Mexico, I was creeping along very slowly in fog after a thunderstorm. I could only see about 100 feet ahead of me, and hail covered the road like little marbles, making it very slippery. A man in a Cherokee passed me in the left lane doing about 70 mph. Suddenly there was a huge log in his lane. He swerved into my lane in front of me. I braked hard, but he hit my left front fender and I spun around and ended up in the ditch on the right side of the road. He hit another car that was in the far right lane and ended up the hospital with some serious injuries. My car was pretty much totaled, but thankfully his insurance paid for me to get a new one fairly quickly. I had a sore neck for a few days, but I’m OK.

I was driving south on General McMullen, which has 2 lanes going both ways. I was in the inside lane. A vehicle to my left wanted to cut across traffic from the HEB driveway and make a turn into traffic going south, in other words, into my lane. The vehicles going north in both lanes stopped and left room for him to get across. The

car pulled out in front of them, and started to turn left. I was talking to my daughter in the car and not paying close attention, so I didn't see him, and apparently he didn't see me coming. I was going about 45 mph when I suddenly saw the vehicle. I braked and tried to swerve right, but I rammed into him anyway. The left front of my car was smashed up to my windshield, and his passenger side door was crushed. Fortunately, both our air bags deployed and no one was injured. The car making the left turn got the ticket, but I learned that I need to pay closer attention to all the traffic around me.

I was going north on Bandera with my wife and two kids in the car after one of my kid's soccer games. We decided to eat lunch at a restaurant that was on the right side of the road, and I needed to change lanes, so I put on my blinker and I looked over my shoulder to see if it was clear. I didn't see anybody coming, so I changed lanes. I really needed to be over two, so I looked again while I still had my blinker on. I didn't see anybody coming. I changed lanes one more time. All of a sudden, I heard a screech, and a car hit us from behind. Immediately after the wreck I checked to make sure everybody in my car and in the other car were OK, which they were. I felt really silly, because I changed lanes right in front of this guy. But I didn't see him, so I don't know if he was going really fast or why I didn't see him. The police must have thought we were both at fault because his insurance and mine split the cost of the repairs. His car was only damaged a little – I think his front fender and headlights were broken. My whole back windshield was shattered and the back end of the car was crumpled.

In October of 2004, at 4:00 pm I was driving south on 1604 at 50 mph. I was following a dark green car. All of a sudden I saw the car's brake lights and realized that it was slowing down. I glanced quickly in the mirror and at the same time braked hard. But the car following me was very close, so I decided my only option was to swerve onto the shoulder to my right. As my car began to slide in the gravel, I saw that the green car in front of me had started to turn right onto a cross street. The driver was talking on her cell phone and turning very slowly. I remember yelling, "Hurry up, or I'm going to hit you!" Unfortunately I did hit her rear fender. All this happened in seconds!

- c. Say: *Based on the paragraph I gave you to read, use words and phrases to fill out the chart on your worksheet, as much as possible.*

Where? (Road, direction?)	
Speed?	
Weather? Road conditions?	
What happened first?	
What happened next?	
Whose fault?	

Injuries?	
Car damage?	
Other details?	

- d. Say: *What questions would you use to ask someone about a car accident?* As a class, brainstorm and create a list on the board. Ask the students to copy the questions.
- e. Say: *Using your questions, interview your partner about “his/her” accident. Fill in the chart in step 4 with details about his accident. Use your chart (above) to answer your partner’s questions about your accident.*
- f. Say: *With your partner, write a paragraph comparing your traffic accident to your partner’s. Include as many details as you can. Turn it in.*
- g. Homework: Write a paragraph describing your own traffic accident, or interview someone involved in an accident and write about their experience.

### **Activity G** – Verbal assessment task

1. Goals:
  - a. TSWBAT verbally role-play the part of a driver telling a police officer about a traffic accident.

### **Activity H** – Written assessment task

1. Goals:
  - a. TSWBAT write a summary of a traffic accident to submit to an insurance company

## **Rationale**

This lesson plan has been developed from a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, which focuses on a functional or communicative view of language (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p. 154) and has communicative competence as the goal (p. 155). By the end of the lesson, it is hoped that students feel comfortable and confident in being able to describe a traffic accident to police officers and insurance agents, the necessary communicative tasks that a student would be confronted with after a traffic accident. CLT is based on the theory that meaningful communication promotes language learning; thus, as much as possible, the teaching activities in this lesson involve the exchange of information and negotiation of meaning (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p. 165). CLT is learner-centered, which means that the needs, goals, interests, and styles of students drive curriculum design (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p.158), and the learners’ experiences and knowledge are at the center of the pedagogic process (Auerbach, 2000, p.146). In many adult education settings, an interest in the rules and customs of driving and a fear of speaking with police officers has been expressed. Thus, the choice of driving safety and describing accidents in particular are a reflection of the students’ own needs and interests. Cooperative and collaborative learning is emphasized in the lesson (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p.166). The role of the teacher is not to transmit information, but to provide communicative

opportunities in the classroom in which acquisition can occur (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 23). In doing so, the teacher acts as a resource person and as an architect or designer of plans (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 68, 71). She is also a researcher and co-learner (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p. 167).

The end goal is that the student will be able describe a traffic accident verbally and in writing. These goals are assessed in the final role-play tasks, and are also embodied in the information exchange task (Activity F). The vocabulary and grammar activities that precede the information exchange task are designed to meet subgoals required for completion of the final goals. Both the vocabulary and grammar sections begin with input activities, designed to facilitate intake, and move to output, in which learners are required to produce the forms, in accordance to the model set forth in Lee and VanPatten (2003). The overall sequence of activities also moves students from a focus on input to the end goal of producing output. By first beginning with the vocabulary exercises, the students are prepared with the language they need to describe an accident. The grammar activities then equip students with the grammatical forms they will need. The final task puts all this together in a way to ensure mastery of the skills before students are assessed.

Activity A is a vocabulary input activity aimed at encouraging the binding of the new vocabulary words (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.39). The pictures and physical responses create concrete references for the words and terms that the students are being introduced to. That is, the pictures provided combined with the TPR activity make certain that the students receive comprehensible input, and the concepts are anchored through the use of the visuals and the physical actions the students engage in (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.39). The use of TPR in this initial activity also ensures that the new lesson is begun with a lower amount of stress on the part of the students (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.75). All that is required of them in the beginning is to point to the appropriate picture or mime the correct action. Finally, this activity serves as a prelistening activity that prepares students for Activity B (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, pp.209-210).

Activity B is an activity that combines both noncollaborative and collaborative listening as well as aural and visual stimuli (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.202). In the beginning, students work in a noncollaborative mode while they listen to the stories and pair up the pictures on their worksheet with the actual events heard in the story. The format of the activity requires the student to attend to the message, as they not only have to identify which pictures make up the events of the story, but then subsequently must put those pictures in order. The second half of the activity places the students into a more collaborative role as they must then work with a partner to recreate one of the stories. They must negotiate meaning together and arrive at a reconstruction that both students agree upon. Additionally, creating the list of suggestions allows them to combine newly learned material with previously learned material. This last step also provides a greater purpose for engaging in the initial listening activity (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.62). The information they hear will be put to use by ultimately recreating a story and sharing that story and their suggestions with the class as a whole.

Activity C is designed to prepare students for grammar activities D and E. This activity serves as a scaffold for the rest of the activities in day 2. The students will recall what they already know, and the following activities will expand on that knowledge. Here the teacher's role is to guide the

students in remembering the known structure (simple past) by using meaningful information from the students' own lives. The teacher accomplishes this through communicative drills. In these drills the students pay attention to meaning and provide new information unknown to the person asking the question (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.122). Then, the students work in pairs to practice the other known structure (present progressive). This type of cooperative learning task is great for reviewing (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p. 197). The teacher acts as a facilitator in the sense that he or she "must move around the class helping students and groups as needs arise" (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p. 199). Thus, the teacher can make sure that the students are prepared to move on to the next activity.

Pre-activity D<sub>(a)</sub> is a structured input-like activity designed to demonstrate to the students the past progressive tense. Rather than just giving the students the structure, they get to see it in action. This goes along with the communicative language teaching method in that "communication involves more than just speaking" (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 2). In this activity the students are actively involved without having to say anything. They are involved through performing tasks and observations. Thus, when the teacher forms questions and answers in the target structure the students can immediately refer to the tasks that just occurred in the activity. Finally, this activity acts as a model for Activity E where students will use the same structure and form. However, before this activity the students will receive more structured input in Activity D<sub>(b)</sub> to allow students to process the new structure.

Activity D<sub>(b)</sub> is a structured input activity, designed to flood the learner with examples of the past progressive form. The activity privileges the past progressive, so that learners have a better chance of noticing the structure while attending to the message (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.142). For maximum efficiency, the activity focuses on only one structure, the past progressive (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 154). This structure is embedded in oral, written, and aural input, so that students with various learning styles will benefit (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.158). The learners are required to do something with the input (recall details and compare one driver to another), which encourages the processing of grammar, but they are not required to produce the past progressive in their responses (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 158). As the input in Activity D<sub>(a)</sub> is embedded in connected discourse, perhaps it should be preceded by a structured input activity involving isolated short sentences, which would give the learner more processing time (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p.156).

Activity E is the final activity of day 2. It will allow the students to put into practice what they have reviewed and learned. Through this cooperative learning task the students will use a combination of the simple past and the past progressive in small groups. Some of the main benefits of this activity are "to provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities and to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate" (Richards & Rodgers, 2005, p. 193). The importance of this activity in the thematic unit is to emphasize the use of the target tense and the known tenses to retell a major event. This will transfer to the end goal which is to retell a car accident which in itself is a major event in one's life.

Activity F is a communicative task in which students are given the opportunity to both express and interpret meaning. This information –exchange task embodies the proficiency goals of the

entire lesson. Because each student possesses information the other needs, the learners are required to interact and negotiate meaning, which creates greater opportunities for input and subsequent modification of output (Pica, Kanagy, & Falodun, 1993). Because the task has an end goal (writing a comparison), it is meaning-focused and purposeful. The learner must produce output, both in spoken and written form, which pushes the learner to process the input received earlier more deeply and incorporate it into his implicit language system (Swain, 1995). However, the activity is not form-focused, as no particular forms are specified to complete the task. Activity E begins as a reading exercise, thus Step 1 is a pre-reading strategy designed to activate the learner's previously learned schemata (Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 228). As this lesson is part of a broader unit on driving, the pre-reading step should help students recall words related to cars, weather, driving, etc. The charts in Step 3 and Step 6 help the learner organize and compare information, and provide a resource for use later during assessment. The homework, which asks students to write up their own traffic experience or that of someone they interview, personalizes the activity, relates it more closely to the real world, and begins to prepare the student for the final writing task.

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## **Appendix**

### **Teacher Resources & Student Worksheets**

## Activity A - Vocabulary Illustrations - Teacher Resource

### Vehicles



CAR



TRUCK



SUV



VAN



MOTORCYCLE



SEMI / 18-WHEELER



## Distractors



CDX-46

RADIO



CELL PHONE



CAT



DOG



CHILD CHASING BALL



CHILD/MAN ON BICYCLE

**Weather Conditions**



FOG



HAIL



RAIN



GLARE

**Accident Verbs**



BRAKE



SPIN



SWERVE



BLOWOUT



HYDROPLANE



PULL OVER

## Road Features



STOP LIGHT



STOP SIGN



PARKING LOT



DITCH



GUARDRAIL

**Car Damage**



CRUMPLED



CRUSHED



SHATTERED

### Activity B – Accident Stories Listening Activity – Student Worksheet

#### Part A

Instructions: Listen carefully to the short stories told by people who have been in a car accident or near-accident. For each story, circle the pictures that match the events that are described in the story. In the space below the pictures, number the pictures in order as they were described in the story. The story will be played once unless you raise your hand to let me know that you need the story repeated. Each story may be played up to two times.

1.



\_\_\_\_\_

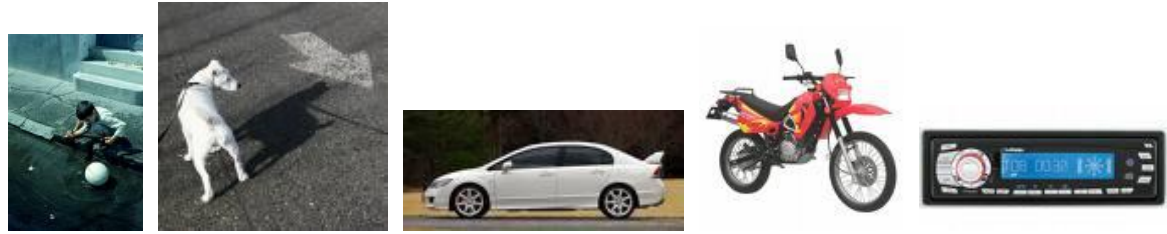


\_\_\_\_\_

2.



\_\_\_\_\_

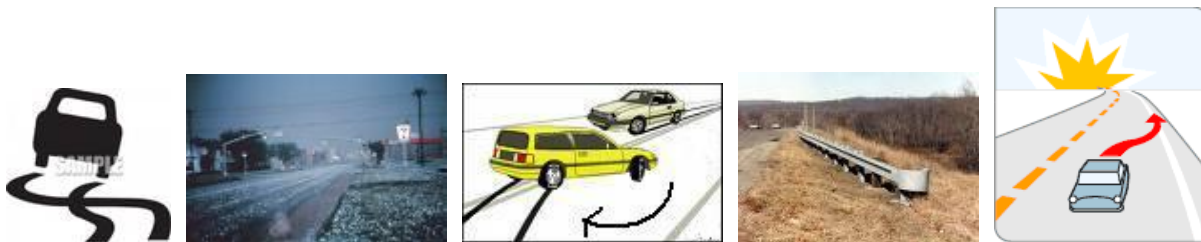


\_\_\_\_\_

3.



4.



5.



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

### **Part B**

1. Compare your answers for Part A with your partner's. Have you both circled the same pictures and put them in the same order? Discuss any differences in your answers and come to an agreement about the actual events described in the story and correct order of those events.
2. With your partner try to recreate the whole story you are assigned by the instructor. It may be helpful to write out as much of the story as you remember.
3. Now think about what the driver could have done to prevent the accident or situation. How might they have handled it better? Come up with a list of suggestions.
4. Report back to the class your reconstruction of the accident story and the list of suggestions you came up with. One of you will present the reconstruction and the other will present the list of suggestions. Decide who will do which part before you present.



### Activity D – Accident Stories - Listening and Reading – Student Worksheet

1. Break up into groups of three and listen as your instructor reads a short narration.
2. With your group members, give as many details as you can remember by completing the following sentences. You have five minutes. The group with the most details wins!

Mr. Smith was driving \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.  
 It was raining \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Mr. Smith was driving \_\_\_\_\_.  
 He was listening to the \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_.  
 The car coming toward him was a blue \_\_\_\_\_.  
 The car was moving very \_\_\_\_\_.  
 It was weaving around other \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Suddenly it was heading \_\_\_\_\_!

3. Read the following story of Mrs. Ramos' accident.  
*Mrs. Ramos was driving west on Bandera Rd. In a hurry to get home, she was driving a little too fast. She was talking to her daughter on her cell phone and listening to the radio. She was worried about her daughter and didn't notice that the car in front of her was suddenly braking...*
4. Listen to your instructor read some statements about Mrs. Ramos. Compare her experience to Mr. Smith's, and check the box you think is right.

- |          |                   |       |                       |
|----------|-------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| a. _____ | So was Mr. Smith. | _____ | But Mr. Smith wasn't. |
| b. _____ | So was Mr. Smith. | _____ | But Mr. Smith wasn't. |
| c. _____ | So was Mr. Smith. | _____ | But Mr. Smith wasn't. |
| d. _____ | So was Mr. Smith. | _____ | But Mr. Smith wasn't. |
| e. _____ | So was Mr. Smith. | _____ | But Mr. Smith wasn't. |

### Activity E – Student Worksheet

1. Choose three major events and discuss what each group member was doing when that event happened.
2. Fill out the following chart using the information you discussed in your groups.

Student's Name	Event #1: What were you doing when _____ happened?	Event #2: What were you doing when _____ happened?	Event #3: What were you doing when _____ happened?
1.			
2.			
3.			

3. Choose one of the three events you discussed and write a summary of what each group member was doing when that event happened. Use the space below and the back of this sheet to write your summary.

### Activity F – Accidents – Information Exchange – Student Worksheet

1. Read the description of a traffic accident your instructor gives you
2. Based on the paragraph you read, use words and phrases to fill out the following chart as much as possible.

Where? (Road, direction?)	
Speed?	
Weather? Road conditions?	
What happened first?	
What happened next?	
Whose fault?	
Injuries?	
Car damage?	
Other details?	

3. Copy the list of questions from the board:

4. Using your questions, interview your partner about “his/her” accident. Fill in the following chart about his accident. Use your chart (above) to answer your partner’s questions about your accident.

Where? (Road, direction?)	
Speed?	
Weather? Road conditions?	
What happened first?	
What happened next?	
Whose fault?	
Injuries?	
Car damage?	
Other details?	

5. Working with your partner, write a paragraph comparing your traffic accident to your partner’s. Include as many details as you can. (Use a separate piece of paper.) Turn it in.
6. Homework: Write a paragraph describing your own traffic accident, or interview someone involved in an accident and write about their experience.

## Activity F – Reading passages - Teacher Resource

On a summer afternoon, on I-25 south of Raton, New Mexico, I was creeping along very slowly in fog after a thunderstorm. I could only see about 100 feet ahead of me, and hail covered the road like little marbles, making it very slippery. A man in a Cherokee passed me in the left lane doing about 70 mph. Suddenly there was a huge log in his lane. He swerved into my lane in front of me. I braked hard, but he hit my left front fender and I spun around and ended up in the ditch on the right side of the road. He hit another car that was in the far right lane and ended up the hospital with some serious injuries. My car was pretty much totaled, but thankfully his insurance paid for me to get a new one fairly quickly. I had a sore neck for a few days, but I'm OK.

\*\*\*\*\*

I was driving south on General McMullen, which has 2 lanes going both ways. I was in the inside lane. A vehicle to my left wanted to cut across traffic from the HEB driveway and make a turn into traffic going south, in other words, into my lane. The vehicles going north in both lanes stopped and left room for him to get across. The car pulled out in front of them, and started to turn left. I was talking to my daughter in the car and not paying close attention, so I didn't see him, and apparently he didn't see me coming. I was going about 45 mph when I suddenly saw the vehicle. I braked and tried to swerve right, but I rammed into him anyway. The left front of my car was smashed up to my windshield, and his passenger side door was crushed. Fortunately, both our air bags deployed and no one was injured. The car making the left turn got the ticket, but I learned that I need to pay closer attention to all the traffic around me.

\*\*\*\*\*

I was going north on Bandera with my wife and two kids in the car after one of my kid's soccer games. We decided to eat lunch at a restaurant that was on the right side of the road, and I needed to change lanes, so I put on my blinker and I looked over my shoulder to see if it was clear. I didn't see anybody coming, so I changed lanes. I really needed to be over two, so I looked again while I still had my blinker on. I didn't see anybody coming. I changed lanes one more time. All of a sudden, I heard a screech, and a car hit us from behind. Immediately after the wreck I checked to make sure everybody in my car and in the other car were OK, which they were. I felt really silly, because I changed lanes right in front of this guy. But I didn't see him, so I don't know if he was going really fast or why I didn't see him. The police must have thought we were both at fault because his insurance and mine split the cost of the repairs. His car was only damaged a little – I think his front fender and headlights were broken. My whole back windshield was shattered and the back end of the car was crumpled.

\*\*\*\*\*

In October of 2004, at 4:00 pm I was driving south on 1604 at 50 mph. I was following a dark green car. All of a sudden I saw the car's brake lights and realized that it was slowing down. I glanced quickly in the mirror and at the same time braked hard. But the car following me was very close, so I decided my only option was to swerve onto the shoulder to my right. As my car began to slide in the gravel, I saw that the green car in front of me had started to turn right onto a cross street. The driver was talking on her cell phone and turning very slowly. I remember yelling, "Hurry up, or I'm going to hit you!" Unfortunately I did hit her rear fender. All this happened in seconds!



















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