

CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE

Overview:

In this lesson, students select a school issue of importance to them, the faculty and the administrative staff. Working in groups, they will devise a proposal for mounting a campaign around the issue.

Aim:

To raise students' awareness about the process of devising a viable campaign

Objectives:

At the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Identify key issues of importance to their school.
- Evaluate and select the most important issue.
- Work in groups to strategize about ways to address the issue.
- Present a viable campaign proposal.
- Work in groups to problem-solve and negotiate solutions and strategies.

Target Group:

Intermediate to high-level ESL students (level 4 to level 8)
 (For the purpose of this lesson, the target group levels range from 1 through 8, with the following guidelines: 1 = beginning, 5 = intermediate, 8 =advanced.)

Length:

Four 60-minute class periods

Materials:

Copy of the DVD *Please Vote for Me* (optional)
 Information at the *Independent Lens* website
 (<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/pleasevoteforme/>)
 Materials for making posters

Day One

Schema Building

- 1 Ask students to identify major issues/problems/difficulties they face at school. Brainstorm and write representative responses on the board.
Examples:
 Not enough computers in the library
 Not enough opportunities to play sports at school
 Not enough funding for student activities and organizations
- 2 Students circulate and ask classmates what they believe to be major issues facing their school. Students use the chart below to record their findings.

Invite the students to report back on their findings and add to the list of issues on the board.

| Student Name | Issue #1 | Issue #2 | Issue #3 |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|
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- 3 Arrange students in groups of four or five to discuss the issues and to choose *one* issue that they feel is the most important.

Ask each group to report back, then tally their choices to determine the most important issue.

Day Two

Group Work

- 1 Inform the class that they will be holding a class election. In this election, they will have the opportunity to devise a proposal for a campaign to address the issue they have chosen. The class will vote on the best campaign proposal.

Optional: Show a clip from the PBS film *Please Vote for Me* as preparation for their campaign.

- 2 Ask each group to collaborate and write a paragraph about the selected issue, addressing:
 - Why this issue is important
 - Possible solutions to the problem
 - Why students and faculty should support their proposal to solve the problem
 - How they might campaign to galvanize support.

Homework

Tell students that they will be creating a poster to promote their campaign. Suggest that they brainstorm visuals and text for their posters and start to gather the material that they will need.

Day Three

Creating Campaign Proposal Materials

- 1 Bring in samples of actual posters from current or past election campaigns to stimulate students' thinking. Encourage them to browse the Web for ideas. Invite each group to create their own campaign poster.

Allow groups time to make a campaign poster that has images and text.

- 2 Explain to students that in the following class period, they will make a presentation on their campaign proposal, using their statement about the issue and the poster they have created. The class will have the opportunity to vote for the strongest campaign proposal.
- 3 Working with the class, design a tool to evaluate the proposals.

Sample evaluation tool:

Presentation

Rate the Presentation Using a Scale From 1 to 5

For example: 1 = unclear

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clear | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organized | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Well-argued and convincing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Poster

Rate the Poster Using a Scale From 1 to 5

For example: 1 = unclear

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attractive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Legible | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Well-designed | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Homework

Ask students to finish their posters and practice their presentations.

Day Four**Presentation Skills**

- 1 Invite each group to present their ideas. The other groups should listen, take notes and use the tool above to evaluate each proposal.
- 2 Ask each group to compare their evaluations, then calculate the scores for each presentation and poster design

Provide paper ballots for the students and invite students to vote for their preferred proposal. The teacher and students tally the votes and announce the winning proposal.

Optional Contact Assignment

Suggest that the winning group presents their proposal to other classes, the administration and faculty members of the school with the hope of mobilizing support.

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