
INTERNET LESSON PLANS

World News Review Audio Software

by Andrew P. Bowman

Learning Laboratory Coordinator

Intensive English Language Center

Wichita State University

abowman@feist.com

World News Review Audio Software is designed for ESL students in our computer lab. It is intended to help English students train themselves to understand radio broadcasts in normal North American English.

How the software works

1. At the beginning the user sees a menu showing twelve titles, each referring to a recent international news story. The user selects a story and continues to the second stage.
2. In the second stage the student simply listens to the selected news story three times. The screen is nearly blank, leaving the user with only the newscast. The student hears a twenty to thirty second excerpt from an authentic radio broadcast. Once the story begins it may not be stopped or interrupted, thus more closely simulating the experience of listening to an actual radio broadcast. The user only hears one broadcaster. There are no commercials, music, or other voices.
3. A set of three multiple-choice questions automatically appears after the newscast has played three times. All of the questions are based on the story heard and require no previous knowledge of the event discussed. The user may listen to the story again while answering the questions.
4. Once the user finds all the correct answers to the questions, the script box appears. The script matches the audio portion of the story word-for-word. The students can find out why their answers were wrong (or right). They may also listen to the story again and learn any new words they have encountered. Finally, the user returns to the menu to select another story and begin the process again.

The newest versions of World News Review allow the user to control the audio as the same as a tape player. However, this option is only available once the story has been heard three times non-stop, as explained in stage two.

Use of the Software

The students use the software twice per each eight-week session in their computer lab classes. We occasionally create two or three versions of the program, so that learners at various levels will have appropriately challenging tasks. For example, students at the lowest levels hear shorter excerpts and answer easier comprehension questions. A few students have downloaded the freeware version of the program in order to use it on their own at home or elsewhere. On occasions we have collaborated with classroom teachers who have the students write reports or give presentations based on material appearing in World News Review.

Our students have reacted favourably to World News Review. Most students develop the habit of taking notes while they listen. Others focus on learning the vocabulary they find in the stories. The interface has changed little in the past years, but the software has not grown stale because its content is always different. Thus, students have become comfortable using the program from session to session without getting bored. Every set of exercises is real and unique. The user controls the dimensions and extent of use. One may listen to all the stories just a few of times, or one may select to focus on just five or six stories the entire class period. One of the payoffs of using World News Review comes when the user reads the script matching the story. To see exactly what was heard provides students satisfaction in various ways: Students who cannot understand all of the broadcast can fill in the missing pieces by reading the script. Students weak in reading benefit by reading along with the story while they listen to it. Hearing the words said by professional broadcaster speaking at a normal speed provides a model of pronunciation for all users. English language learners who work with the software gain important practice that will help them when they listen to live radio broadcasts on their own. Authentic material adds the powerful ingredient of reality to the entire exercise, especially when the event discussed pertains to one's country or region. Students pay attention to language when it's real and affects them directly. Whether it's an earthquake in Latin America, world oil prices, or the recent US-China conflict, people listen.

Most of our students range in age from 18 to 24 and are planning on attending a university in the U.S., so TOEFL commands a lot of their attention. With this in mind, we create computer activities that will help them prepare not only for the exam, but for academic study. We try to employ as much realia as possible in the programs, using audio, video, and texts. Our homegrown software is designed specifically for our students based on their skill level and

interests. World News Review has proven to be one of most popular titles in our computer lab.

World News Review is available here: <http://www.mrc.twsu.edu/ielc-lab/wnr/index.html> The program is free and updated every two months. We are currently testing a new version which was released in April.

VISIT THE USA

by Agnieszka Goliszek

English teacher, Lublin, Poland

aggo@poczta.onet.pl

Subject: Visit the USA

Level: Pre-intermediate and above

Time: 45 minutes

Aims:

1. To practise the skills of searching for information on the Internet
2. To collect information about the USA
3. To familiarise students with vocabulary referring to geography, history, economy
4. To practise speaking (presenting the country)

Technical requirements: one computer per a student, with the Internet connection and a Web browser.

Knowledge: students should be skilled at searching for information on the Internet

Important note: to make the lesson even more interesting the teacher should collect some objects which symbolise the USA e.g. a flag, a banknote, some famous landmarks like The Statue of Liberty, The White House, Coca-Cola and McDonald's trademarks, some photos of famous faces etc. I also recommend using "You See America" posters which present different states of the USA, which can be obtained free of charge if you write to :

Anna Wilbik – Świtaj
Sekcja Kulturalna
Ambasada Amerykańska
Al.Ujazdowskie 29/31
00-540 Warszawa

Procedure:

I. Pre-stage

1. Computers off. The teacher gives the students the test about the USA. Three answers are given to each question. Example questions:

- a) When was America discovered?
- b) Who was the first president of the USA?
- c) How many states are there in the USA?
- d) What is the capital city of the USA?
- e) What are two main political parties in the USA ?
- f) Who is the president of the USA ?
- g) When do the Americans celebrate the Independence Day ?
- h) What city is the partner city of Lublin ?

If the students are more advanced the questions should be more difficult .

2. The teacher sticks the symbols of the USA (mentioned above) to the board and comments on them. Then asks the students: "What comes to your mind when you think of the USA? What associations have you got?" The teacher tries to elicit the answer from each student.

II. While-stage

1. "You See America" posters lying on the floor (each of them represents different state with a caption below).

The teacher says: "Today you are going to visit the USA on the Internet. These pictures show you the beauty of this country. Go round and look at them for a while. Then choose the one which is 'special' for you and get the information about the state it comes from."

Having done this task, the students are asked to sit down and switch computers on.

This stage can be omitted if you don't have any pictures or postcards. You can just ask students to choose one state they want to find information about.

2. The teacher asks the students to go to www.50states.com and click on the chosen state. The teacher gives students the worksheets to complete when working on the Internet.

They include: a) Name of the state

- b) Area
- c) Border states
- d) Population
- e) Largest cities
- f) Admission to statehood

- g) Flag
- h) Biographies
- i) Economy
- j) Tourism
- k) Fast facts
- l) Nickname
- m) Motto
- n) Additional information

The teacher explains that students have to fill these worksheets and then report back to the class. They can also copy portions of text and graphics from web pages as reference in their presentations.

2. The teacher tells the students to stop. Now the presentations follow.

III. Post-stage

The teacher tells students to prepare A4 projects about "their" states at home which they can start doing still in the classroom. The projects will be joined into one big poster about the USA and hung in the English classroom.

A VIRTUAL TOUR IN LONDON

by Linos Viglas

English teacher – ICT trainer

Programme “Odysseia”

Greek Ministry of Education

kvigklas@de.sch.gr

Title: “A Virtual tour of London”

Level/Target group: Upper Intermediate - Advanced

Duration: 4-5 teaching hrs.

Introduction

Taking into consideration the lastingly ongoing significance of the new technologies in the Greek educational system, we are attempting to teach a unit with the aid of new technologies (computers/Internet/CD-ROM), in the school lab, in combination with the traditional media (photocopies, maps, text etc.).

We must admit that the environment of the school lab (computers, the Internet, video projector, OHP etc.) is more attractive for students than the dull, monotonous and colourless environment of our classes and undoubtedly it creates an interesting and relaxing atmosphere. It will be reinforcing and helpful for teaching of a specific unit if we decorate the lab with maps of the U.K., several tourist guides of London, postcards, photos etc. It is easy to find all the above supporting material through the national and international book exhibitions, publishing houses, bookstores, the Internet etc.

A presupposition for teaching of the specific unit is our students' familiarization with the new technologies. We consider that this has been achieved after the introduction of the lesson of Informatics in the Greek secondary education.

Aim

Language is a dynamic element of every nation's culture. It can't be isolated or cut from this frame. So, our aim is the acquaintance with several aspects of the British culture. This unit is one of a series of units based on the Internet, which are entitled:

- Digesting English food (about English cuisine)
- Where does that noise come from? (about music)
- Romeo and Juliet...who are they? (about English literature)
- Manchester United vs. Liverpool? (about sports and football)
- Tea, rain, pub, queen. (about everyday life)

Objectives

- To search, find and locate the right information from a variety of information on the Internet.
- To match pictures and their description.
- To be able to work with a map.
- To be able to give directions using the map.
- To find keywords and fill in the gaps.
- To link different pieces of information (timetables, bus and underground itineraries, distance, maps etc.) for the production of a tour guide.

Help – Resources

- 1) Web pages

- ◆ <http://www.virtual-london.com/index.htm>
- ◆ <http://www.ukguide.org/london.html>
- ◆ <http://www.strolling.com/londonstart.htm>
- ◆ <http://www.londononline.co.uk/>
- ◆ <http://www.worldexecutive.com/cityguides/london/maps.html>
- ◆ <http://www.londontransport.co.uk/>
- ◆ <http://www.afn.org/~alplatt/tube.html>

2) CD-ROM

“Europe’s Capitals” (Greek title) – Group Multimedia Systems

3) Printed material

- A text about the monuments of London (see Appendix A).
- Maps of London / Posters / Photos / Tourist guides etc.

Procedure

Content - Steps	Method	Media
We ask students to write down on a piece of paper 10 of the most famous monuments in London. They search in the specified sites.	Active Fact-finding	Computers Internet
We give out photocopies with pictures and descriptions of several monuments. The students match the 10 places that they have found on the Internet with the right pictures and descriptions. They can stand up and look at the maps, photos etc.	Guided activity	Photocopies Appendix B

We ask students to locate the 10 places they have found, on the clickable map at the following address: http://www.strolling.com/londonstart.htm	Active Fact-finding	Computers Internet
They practise giving directions for the place they choose, starting from the point indicated by the teacher or another student.	Pair work Role play	Computers Maps

Evaluation

- ✓ Gap filling – the students fill in the gaps with the keywords. This activity is given out on photocopied sheets of paper and students do not need access to the Internet. (Appendix C).
- ✓ Giving directions on a map.
- ✓ Quiz. (Appendix B).

Project work

Students are given the following assignment:

"A friend of yours is in London for the weekend and is staying at Stakky's hotel near the Baker Street Underground station. Use the information found today, websites and everything else you consider helpful, prepare a guided tour for your friend. Take into consideration timetables, bus and underground itineraries, distance, opening hours etc."

Appendices

A. Sightseeing in London

Millennium Dome

Millennium Pier, North Greenwich

Tel: +44 870 606 2000

The Millennium Dome is the largest single structure in the United Kingdom. Inside there are six zones of interest: Body, Learning, Dream, Spirit, Play and

Living. Hands-on exhibits, live entertainment, restaurants and shops provide everything necessary to make this a unique 21st-century experience.

Open Sunday to Thursday 9.00 am – 8.00 p.m., Friday and Saturday 9.00 am – 11.00 p.m.

British Museum

Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG

Tel: +44 207 636 1555

Founded in 1753, the six and a half million objects include collections from all over the world dating from pre-historic times. World famous collections of prints, drawings, coins medals and vast statues are among the exhibits.

Open Monday to Saturday 10:00 am – 5.00 p.m., Sunday 12.00pm – 6:00pm

B. Sightseeing in London

(Match the descriptions to the places you have found)

_____?

It is the largest single structure in the United Kingdom. Inside there are six zones of interest: Body, Learning, Dream, Spirit, Play and Living. Hands-on exhibits, live entertainment, restaurants and shops provide everything necessary to make this a unique 21st-century experience.

Open Sunday to Thursday 9.00 am - 8.00 p.m., Friday and Saturday 9.00 am - 11.00 p.m.

_____?

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C. Sightseeing in London

(fill in the gaps with the following words)

necessary, worship, construction, paintings, collections, attraction, structure, residence, funeral, exhibitions, booking, dated, founded, entry, depicting,.

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