
THE AUTHOR

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GETTING AROUND TOWN: A SERIES OF FUNCTIONALLY ORIENTED LESSONS

Maureen Guerriero

The following series of lessons was developed during a recent training course for volunteer teachers. At that time, I was working with a beginner level class in the Adult ESL Multi-cultural Program at Bendale Centre in Scarborough, Ontario.

General Objectives

My objective was to have the students become familiar with the community in which they lived and went to school. I wanted them to feel that they were a part of the community. I hoped to give them the necessary language tools to get around in their community, to be able to ask for, give and understand directions. I also wanted them to know what was available to them in the local shopping plaza so they would not be afraid to go there and mix with other people.

Topic One: Scarborough Town Centre

1. Functional objectives:
 - to use a directory to find information;
 - to read the floor plan of their local shopping mall (Scarborough Town Centre) and understand the symbols used on it;
 - to ask for directions;
 - to answer questions regarding locations;
 - to understand courtesy expressions; e.g., *excuse me, thank you*.
2. Structural objectives:
 - alphabetical order;
 - prepositions, e.g., *on, between, in front of, beside, next to*;
 - nouns giving locations, e.g., *upstairs, downstairs*;
 - questions using: *where, what, how many*;
 - present tense of verb *to be*.

ACTIVITIES

1. Listen to taped song: "There's a Little Grocery Store Right Across the Street" (from *Tune in to English*, by Uwe Kind, Regents, 1980, p. 6)
 - Follow with comprehension questions, e.g., *What does Alice want?*
 - Listen to song again and complete a fill-in-the-blanks exercise naming the different kinds of stores.
 - Focus on vocabulary:

<i>grocery store</i>	<i>butcher shop</i>
<i>pastry/bake shop</i>	<i>flower shop</i>
<i>pharmacy/drug store</i>	<i>shopping plaza/mall</i>
2. Examine copies of the store directory for the Scarborough Town Centre.
 - Focus on vocabulary related to:

<i>clothing</i>	<i>furnishings</i>
<i>beverages</i>	<i>appliances</i>
<i>hardware</i>	<i>snacks</i>
<i>stationary</i>	
 - Sample questions:
 - What other kinds of stores are in the plaza?*
 - How many restaurants/bookstores/candy and nut stores are there?*
 - Where can I buy a gift for my aunt?/sweater for my son?/tie for my husband?*
3. Examine the floor plans of the Scarborough Town Centre (use an overhead projector if one is available).
 - Develop an understanding of upper and lower levels/zones, upstairs, downstairs and other related vocabulary.
 - Locate the stairs, elevators, escalators.
 - Sample questions:
 - What is the name of a large department store?*
 - How many department stores are there?*
 - Excuse me, where is the drug store? etc.* Students respond:
It's downstairs/upstairs/between Eaton's and Miracle Mart.
4. Divide the class into small groups and give each group a set of floor plans. Then ask one group to locate all the restaurants on the floor plans; ask another group to locate all the men's clothing stores on the floor plans and so on. Within each group, students practise asking each other questions, and answering them, e.g., *Excuse me, where's the shoe store? It's upstairs beside the Bay.*
5. List the types of stores on the blackboard and point out that they are in alphabetical order. Ask questions such as: *I want to buy*

_____ . *Where do I look in the directory?* Response: *You look under Nuts and Candy.*

6. Develop different ways of asking for directions and list these on the blackboard.

Excuse me, where is _____ ?

Excuse me, can you help me find _____ ?

Excuse me, can you tell me the way to _____ ?

7. Have students recall the important vocabulary for expressing location. List on the blackboard, e.g.:

in front of

beside

between

next to

across from

upstairs

downstairs

Develop different ways of asking directions and list these on the blackboard, e.g.:

Excuse me, where is _____ ?

Excuse me, can you help me find _____ ?

Excuse me, can you tell me the way to _____ ?

8. Have students refer to previous group work. Have them mark some of the restaurants and the men's and women's stores on the overhead transparency. Then have students ask each other questions, e.g.:

Excuse me, where is _____ restaurant?

A student from the restaurant group must answer:

It's downstairs between Simpson's and Miracle Mart.

9. Take a field trip to the shopping centre to practise what has been learned in class.

Topic Two: Getting Around in Scarborough

1. Functional objectives:

- to review the work of the previous lessons;
- to give and respond to simple directions;
- to become familiar with local streets and landmarks;
- to comprehend a simple story/song.

2. Structural objectives:

- to review previously learned structures;
- to use imperatives: *go, turn, cross, pass*;
- to learn terms for directions: *left, right, north, south, east, west*.

ACTIVITIES

1. Listen to taped song: "First Turn Right at the Light" (also from *Tune in to English* by Uwe Kind, Regents, 1980, p. 14).
 - Focus on comprehension questions, e.g., *What does he want?*
 - Listen again and fill in the blanks (handout) with directional phrases.
 - Make a chart of directional phrases: *turn right, turn left, straight ahead, pass.*
 - Draw the cardinal points on the blackboard and add to chart: *go north, go south, go west, go east.*
2. Prepare a very large map of the section of Scarborough near their school and, using the large map:
 - Locate and name the streets.
 - Locate and name various landmarks.
 - Talk about Highway 401 and types of intersections.
 - Using dinky cars, let students direct each other from one place to another. They can refer to the chart for vocabulary and add prepositions to the chart as necessary: *turn right (at), go north (on), go west (to).*
3. Make up two sets of maps of the same area as is shown on the large map for the students, but mark different places to locate, one for each map. Put the students into groups of two. Give one student Map A, the other Map B, along with the list of places to find. Student A: *Excuse me, how do I get to...?* Student B must then direct student A to the place and mark it on Map A.
4. Using individual maps of Scarborough, put the main north-south and east-west streets on the blackboard. For homework, ask students to put their names and addresses on index cards and find out the nearest main intersection to their homes. The following day ask students to explain where they live. Then attach their cards to a large wall map of Scarborough. Working in pairs, ask the students to draw a route to each other's home and write the directions using transit maps to help them.

THE AUTHOR

Maureen Guerriero teaches beginner level ESL students in the Adult ESL Multi-cultural Program in Scarborough, Ontario. This program is run by the Scarborough School Board and attracts a wide range of students including both literate and non-literate immigrants and refugees.