

Making Plans

Classroom at a Glance

Teacher:	Belal Joundeya
Language:	Arabic V/VI
Grades:	9–12
School:	Lincoln High School, Portland, Oregon
Lesson Date:	March 8
Class Size:	20
Schedule:	92 minutes, 2–3 times per week

Video Summary

In this lesson, high school students in Belal Joundeya’s Arabic V/VI class engage in authentic conversations about what they will be doing in the future. After first reviewing unit vocabulary as a class, students play a card game that involves talking about what they will be doing after school. Next, Mr. Joundeya presents a make-believe scenario in which two celebrities negotiate their busy schedules to agree on a dinner date. Mr. Joundeya role-plays a similar situation with a student volunteer. Then, students plan their own afterschool meetings, first in pairs and then in a group of four. Before class concludes, students extend their practice by writing emails to a native speaker, their “friend” Sami in Lebanon.

Standards Addressed

- Communication: Interpersonal Communication
- Cultures: Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives
- Communities: School and Global Communities

Read about these standards at the end of this lesson.

Key Terms

- dialect
- informal assessment
- negotiation of meaning

Definitions for these terms can be found in the Glossary located in the Appendix.

Class Context

“The point of the activity is to show them how to negotiate. So it is not just like, ‘Do you want to go to the restaurant?’ ‘Yes, I want to go to the restaurant.’ ‘Goodbye.’ ‘Goodbye.’ That’s not an authentic situation. In an authentic situation, people ask about time, days, and are they busy. After they did this activity, I asked them not just to have two students together, but to have four people agree on things. This is what happens in real life.”—Belal Joundeya

School Profile

Belal Joundeya teaches grades 9–12 Arabic at Lincoln High School in downtown Portland, Oregon, a city with 593,820 residents. According to the school, minority groups make up approximately 28 percent of the 1,721 students enrolled, and 14 percent of all students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Noted for its academic climate and rigor, the school’s college preparatory curriculum features a wide array of advanced classes. The school offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme’s curriculum, which includes language acquisition among its six subject groups. In addition to Arabic, which was first offered in 2010, Lincoln offers Mandarin, Spanish, Spanish Immersion, French, German, and American Sign Language. Some students study more than one language.

Year at a Glance

Extended Family and Relationships
Weather and Seasons; Hobbies and Sports
Food and Beverage; Eating Etiquette
University Majors; Employment and Future Careers
Time and Daily Routine; Free Time and Entertainment

My Future Plans

Personal Detail, Appearance, and Character
Town, Services, and Neighborhood
Middle East Geography

Class Context, cont'd.

Lesson Design

Mr. Joundeya uses backward design to plan the curriculum: he identifies anticipated student performance outcomes and creates 8–10 units that cover the learning goals. He then considers how to work in activities developed around the Five C goal areas, with particular emphasis on Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational Communication. Mr. Joundeya typically has students complete reading and writing assignments outside the classroom. Inside the classroom, he wants students to practice authentic conversation. They exchange customary greetings with Mr. Joundeya at the beginning of each class and participate in engaging and motivating activities that emphasize speaking in real-world situations. To preserve the immersion experience, Mr. Joundeya routinely employs nonverbal cues such as images and acting. He makes sure all students are conversing in pairs or small groups at the same time so that no one is left out. He walks around the room, listening for opportunities to add something new for students who quickly demonstrate a lesson objective, and to lend support for struggling students.

Mr. Joundeya implements curriculum through a dynamic set of resources, including textbooks, online materials, and videos. He constantly assesses the usefulness of particular items to determine whether he should continue using them or modify his selection.

The Lesson

This class of 20 students included one heritage speaker, whose parents are from Lebanon. The students were at different levels, many having started Arabic together in middle school, and most having studied for three to four years. Leading up to this class, students had been learning to talk about their daily routines and what they do in their free time. Mr. Joundeya introduced this lesson at this point in the unit so that students could connect the idea of “what they do” to the future tense: “What are you going to do?”

To set students’ expectations of what they will be practicing in class and at home, Mr. Joundeya posts daily goals on the board. For this class, he linked the objectives to the following Can-Do Statements, which are self-assessment checklists used by language learners to assess what they “can do” with language in the different modes of communication:

Class Context, cont'd.

- I can talk about my future plans.
- I can ask others about their plans.
- I can invite someone to do something in the future.
- I can read an invitation.
- I can write a response to an invitation.

The lesson progressed from heavily guided practice to independent practice. The use of choral repetition of target forms (in which students repeat what the teacher says), modeling with a student volunteer, and group work (first in pairs and then in fours) reinforced this strategy. To meet the language goals, students practiced talking about future plans—something they would be doing after school, the following day, on the weekend, or over spring or summer break. Students also had to make or accept an invitation to do something with someone else. During the lesson, Mr. Joundeya made it clear that students should not simply accept or decline an invitation. Rather, they should practice negotiating until they ultimately agreed on a plan. Through practice in engaging with one another as native speakers do in authentic situations, students use language more independently and spontaneously, acquiring language rather than just analyzing or memorizing it.

Key Teaching Strategies

- **Incorporation of Technology:** The teacher uses technology, including school-sanctioned social media, to support or enhance opportunities for practicing the three modes of communication. Technology enables students to engage in more authentic tasks, interact with authentic audiences, and access information from authentic resources. They can do this by writing a blog or posting a podcast; exchanging messages with native speakers online or via video chats; and tapping materials from the target cultures for listening, reading, or viewing.
- **Individual/Group Writing:** The teacher provides multiple writing experiences that include individual work as well as group writing activities. Both contexts include opportunities for prewriting, drafting, revising, and sharing.

Class Context, cont'd.

- **Multilevel Group Work:** The teacher purposefully mixes students for group tasks, including students with stronger language skills in the mode required for the task and students with weaker language skills, and assigns roles and tasks appropriate to each student's strengths and level of proficiency. While heritage speakers are incorporated into group work as regular participants who may assist in maintaining the conversation, they are not called upon to act as "walking dictionaries."
- **Scaffolding:** Scaffolding is a method of structuring an instructional task in a way that helps learners gradually advance through the process. Initial portions of the task are designed to be within learners' competency so that they can complete them on their own. As students' confidence, skill, and knowledge increase, the teacher provides less and less scaffolding for that task in a gradual release of responsibility.

Analyze the Video

As you reflect on these questions, write down your responses or discuss them as a group.

Before You Watch

Respond to the following questions:

- How can clearly defining your objectives in the form of Can-Do Statements help you plan before a lesson and during the lesson itself?
- What will help students focus on what is most important in the day's lesson? How can you design group work to promote interpersonal communication?
- What makes technology central to instruction rather than supplemental?

Watch the Video

As you watch "Making Plans," take notes on Mr. Joundeya's instructional strategies, particularly how he varies group work to create new dynamics and to extend the task. Write down what you find interesting, surprising, or especially important about the teaching and learning in this lesson. Note what helps or supports student learning. How is each activity related to Mr. Joundeya's objectives for the day?

Reflect on the Video

Review your notes, and then respond to the following questions:

- How does Mr. Joundeya sequence activities to extend the central task and provide different kinds of opportunities for practice? Specifically, what activities does Mr. Joundeya use to consciously move from teacher-controlled activities, to some teacher-directed guided practice, and eventually to learners' independent practice?
- What does Mr. Joundeya do to create a positive, supportive environment and reduce student anxiety?
- What does Mr. Joundeya do to ensure that the tasks are authentic and reflect real-world activities?

Analyze the Video, cont'd.

- In what specific ways does Mr. Joundeya make his class “learner-centered”?

Take a Second Look

Watch the video again, but this time, focus on the following teaching practices: gradual release of responsibility and use of dialects.



Practice: Gradual Release of Responsibility



Mr. Joundeya models the gradual release of responsibility throughout the video.

- How does the teacher scaffold learning so the instruction moves from guided practice to independent practice?
- What activities did he do to ensure that students had sufficient practice to complete the communication tasks independently?

Analyze the Video, cont'd.



Practice: Use of Dialects



Students use ʿAammiyya, “Colloquial Arabic,” when discussing informal plans in the video, and Mr. Joundeya uses it when discussing everyday activities.

- How does Mr. Joundeya use both FuSHaa, “Standard Arabic,” and ʿAammiyya in his classroom?
- How does Mr. Joundeya support students’ understanding of these dialectical differences? How does adding these colloquial elements bring authenticity to the tasks themselves?

Connect to Your Teaching

Reflect on Your Practice

As you reflect on these questions, write down your responses or discuss them as a group.

- How can you design activities to encourage students to produce longer chunks of language (sentence- and paragraph-level discourse)?
- How do you sequence learning? Do you start with the skills you want the students to be able to demonstrate and design projects and activities around them? Or do you plan the culminating project and work backwards, thinking of what skills that will necessitate? What are the benefits and disadvantages of each approach?
- How can you use heritage speakers and more advanced students as resources in your classroom? How can you differentiate curriculum to ensure that they are also benefiting from activities in class?

Watch Other Videos

Watch other videos in the *Teaching Foreign Languages K–12* library for more examples of teaching methodologies like those you've just seen. Note: All videos in this series are subtitled in English.

- U.S. and Italian Homes (Italian) illustrates a sequence of activities, including a card game and emails to peers who speak the target language, that builds competence and prepares students for real-life situations.
- Daily Routines (Japanese) features the teacher's use of visuals to enhance student learning, gradual release of responsibility, interpersonal communication, and students negotiating meaning with one another.
- Hearing Authentic Voices (Spanish) shows how the teacher encourages students to extend their answers beyond single words and short phrases.

Connect to Your Teaching, cont'd.

Put It Into Practice

Try these ideas in your classroom. Where it's not already evident, reflect on how to adapt an idea that targets one performance range for application to other performance ranges.

- Encourage activities that necessitate authentic communication among students in the class or between students and native speakers on the Internet. Mr. Joundeya facilitated an email dialog between his students and Sami, a "friend" from Lebanon. If your school has an approved online forum for students, consider creating a space for your Arabic class(es) and ask students to write posts connected to the theme they're studying and to comment on each other's posts. For example, in a unit on hobbies, students could upload pictures of themselves engaged in their hobbies and write about what they're doing in the picture. Then the students could comment on each other's posts with compliments and connections to their own lives. Projects among students in the class itself can foster a supportive language-learning community; projects that involve native speakers can encourage cross-cultural communication. Decide which is more in line with your own needs and abilities.
- Extend the activity with a conversation during which you try to come to an agreement over a situation, an idea, or a difference of opinion. Offer a prompt, such as: "You want to go out to the movies with your friends this Friday, but your mom won't let you. With a partner, come up with an authentic dialogue about this situation. Why doesn't she want you to go? How can you convince her to let you go?"
- Encourage students to negotiate with each other by giving them "information gap" activities. For example, each student is given a sheet of paper that lists a schedule and an activity that he or she wants to do. Students then stand up and walk around and talk to as many different students as they can in a given time to try to plan an outing together. Each student has to find another student who has a schedule that matches up with his or hers.

Resources

Lesson Materials

Card Matching Game—Conversation Exercise*

Instructions for playing the card game based on making future plans that is featured in the classroom video

Engaging a Native Speaker via Email—Writing Exercise*

Instructions for the email activity, providing a sample invitation from the native speaker and student responses

* These lesson materials can be found in the Appendix.

Curriculum References

Oregon Second Language Standards

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/secondlanguages/standards/second-language-all-in-one.pdf>

Belal Joundeya’s Additional Resources

Print Resources:

Future Plans Reading: Sami—Reading Comprehension*

An account of Sami’s future travel plans in America, with comprehension questions

Future Plans Reading: Michael—Reading Comprehension*

An account of Michael’s future travel plans to Jordan, with comprehension questions

Dance Party Invitation—Writing Exercise*

An additional example of an email exchange involving a native speaker and students

* These lesson materials can be found in the Appendix.

Standards

World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages

The *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* create a roadmap to guide learners to develop competence to communicate effectively and interact with cultural understanding. This lesson correlates to the following Standards:

Communication: Communicate effectively in more than one language in order to function in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes

Standard: Interpersonal Communication

Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.

Cultures: Interact with cultural competence and understanding

Standard: Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives

Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.

Communities: Communicate and interact with cultural competence in order to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world

Standard: School and Global Communities

Learners use the language both within and beyond the classroom to interact and collaborate in their community and the globalized world.

Notes
