

Giving & Asking for Directions

It's something we may hesitate to ask when in a foreign country but when you actually have to, you'll wish you knew how. I've used this lesson in my Enjoy English course, an elective that second-year high school students can take. As the name suggests, the focus of this course is to show that English is not just a subject, it's something fun and also useful outside of the classroom. Enjoy English courses usually run about 18-20 students per term, which is a lot nicer since students get more interaction with teachers. Because it's an elective, the students in the class tend to be more motivated as they opted for the course, which makes interaction more lively as well.

As with other lessons in this course, one of our objectives is to gradually build confidence speaking in English, which in turn will reduce hesitation to speak with foreigners. Asking for and giving directions may often be one of the first if not only interaction one would have with a stranger.

This is a 50-minute lesson. As seen in the breakdown, activities within the lesson don't exceed 10 minutes, unless the students need more time with their tasks. Materials required are the vocabulary handout and map worksheet. Vocab handouts are great supplement for any lesson, and have proven to be critical at introducing new content at my school. The words and phrases students are introduced to serve as building blocks for the tasks of the day. The second handout is a worksheet that provides a map. My ss have a school trip to Okinawa so I created a fictional map similar in layout to a location ss plan to visit. The map includes streets and locations which were introduced in the vocab handout.

The focus of the lesson is to improve speaking skills by giving and asking for directions with friends in the target language. Reading and writing are supplemental to the speaking tasks here. Students are bogged down with reading and writing in their other English courses throughout their curriculum. Enjoy English with AETs is their rare opportunity to speak out and use the language they've been studying for years. Some issues you may notice are that students don't understand basic English syntax. Please utilize the JTE in this regard, as grammar is their responsibility. Some students do better with visuals, so use the map as much as possible. You can use a marker like a ¥1 coin to move around the map to help ss identify directions. I've taught this lesson three times and it's proven to be effective each time. You can customize your map's intricacies to meet your ss' needs.