

XTRA Weekly Sequence of Instruction and Pacing Guide

Each XTRA Weekly lesson contains five documents:

- News Article
- For the Instructor
- Critical Thinking Questions
- Answer Key
- Extension Activities

The basic lesson format consists of having the students read the news article and answer vocabulary and critical thinking questions about it. A set of extension activities provide additional entertaining projects to help the students explore the subject of the news article. The lessons are organized around a set of basic activities that vary to fit each week's news article. Once you have become familiar with the format of the activities, you will find it takes very little time to prepare for each week's lesson.

MATERIALS

All lessons call for the following materials:

- Copies (1 per student) of the news article, Critical Thinking Questions page, and Parent/Guardian Activity (on the Extension Activities sheet)
- Blank paper (1–2 sheets per student) for the Writing Activity
- Pencils for the Writing Activity
- Index cards (if available) for the Speaking Activity

Many lessons additionally call for art supplies for various Extension Activities:

- Construction paper
- Butcher paper
- Any art supplies on hand, such as pens, markers, crayons, colored pencils, and scissors
- Magazines with lots of pictures

A few lessons will call for other materials that are readily available at most school sites or from the library.

Most lessons require a blackboard or chart paper to make lists or write out instructions for the class.

Additionally, the instructor and students should have computers with Internet access for downloading images and doing research.

To save on preparation time for individual lessons, the instructor may want to gather enough supplies to last for several lessons.

PREPARATION

Following is the suggested sequence for preparing for each lesson:

1. Download the documents for the week's lesson.
2. Read the news article for the week and the For the Instructor sheet.
3. Locate or download and print out images related to this week's theme to show students.
4. Print out the following, to be distributed (one copy for each student):
 - News Article
 - Critical Thinking Questions
5. Print out the page of the Extension Activities containing the Parent/Guardian Activity and cut out the section containing the Parent/Guardian Activity, to be sent home with each student.
6. Print out a copy of the Answer Key and Extension Activities to refer to in class.
7. Gather the supplies listed in the "Supplies Needed" box on the For the Instructor sheet.

LESSON PRESENTATION

Following is the suggested sequence of implementation for each lesson. A Pacing Guide following this section provides recommended schedules and modifications for classes that meet one, three, and five days per week.

1. Do the Warm-up Activity given at the end of the For the Instructor sheet. For most lessons, this involves asking students to share their ideas about the general theme of the article, reading the headline to the students and asking them what they think the article will be about, and showing students photos or other graphic images related to the article's subject.
2. Pass out copies of the article, the Critical Thinking Questions, blank paper, and pencils.
3. Have students read the article and write down their answers to the Critical Thinking Questions. While students are completing this activity, you can review the Answer Sheet and refer to it to help students as they write out their answers.

As an alternative, you may wish to do the Critical Thinking Questions as an oral group activity, having the class discuss and answer each question.

4. Collect the completed answers to the Critical Thinking Questions. Save these to review and comment on or to go over in class with the students as a group. (Refer to the Answer Key as needed.)
5. Pass out blank paper and pencils and follow the directions given in the Writing Extension Activity to explain to the students what is needed in this activity. Get students started. Many of the Writing Extension Activities require students to do research using reference books, the Internet, or other sources. If computers and other resources are not available in the course room, students may need to go to the library to complete the research portion of the activity. When students have completed the writing, collect the papers.

If you are working with ELL students or students for whom the Writing and Speaking Extension Activities may be too difficult, you may wish to

skip these two activities and do only the ELL Activity and any other Extension Activities the students can complete without too much difficulty.

6. Pass out blank index cards (if available) and follow the directions given in the Speaking Extension Activity to explain to the students what is needed for this activity. Have students prepare their talks, making notes on the index cards. Many of the Speaking Extension Activities require students to do research using reference books, the Internet, or other sources. If computers and other resources are not available in the course room, students may need to go to the library to complete the research portion of the activity.
7. When students have finished preparing their talks, have each student come to the front of the class and deliver his or her oral presentation, referring to the index cards as needed.

If time is limited, you may need to have only some of the students deliver their talks.

8. Most lessons contain three Extension Activities in addition to a Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity. One of the activities is designated as an ELL Activity, but non-ELL students will enjoy this activity as well. The art activities require having art materials on hand. Some of the other activities require students to carry out research using books or the Internet. The others for the most part may be completed without any special advance preparation or materials.
9. At the end of class before the students leave, pass out a copy of the Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity to each student to take home and complete with his or her parent or guardian.

PACING GUIDES

The following Pacing Guides offer suggested lesson plans tailored to classes that meet one day a week, three days a week, or five days a week. The plans are geared to a typical two-hour class period.

One Day per Week

- Warm-up Activity.
- Critical Thinking Questions.
- Share with students the additional facts related to the subject of this week's article listed on the For the Instructor sheet.
- Distribute Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity.

Three Days per Week

Day 1

- Warm-up Activity.
- Critical Thinking Questions.
- Share with students the additional facts related to the subject of this week's article listed on the For the Instructor sheet.
- Distribute Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity.

Day 2

- Have students share anything they have brought in as part of the Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity. Complete any related classroom activities (such as posting artwork or tallying answers to the "Conduct a Poll" Extension Activity).
- Return completed Critical Thinking Questions from Day 1 and go over each question, discussing it with the class by having the students share their answers and by suggesting other answers.
- Writing Extension Activity.

Day 3

- Return completed Writing Extension Activities from Day 2 with your written comments.
- Speaking Extension Activity.

Five Days per Week

Day 1

- Warm-up Activity.
- Critical Thinking Questions.
- Share with students the additional facts related to the subject of this week's article listed on the For the Instructor sheet.
- Distribute Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity.

Day 2

- Have students share anything they have brought in as part of the Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity. Complete any related classroom activities (such as posting artwork or tallying answers to the Conduct a Poll Extension Activity).
- Return completed Critical Thinking Questions from Day 1 and go over each question, discussing it with the class by having the students share their answers and by suggesting other answers.
- Writing Extension Activity.

Day 3

- Return completed Writing Extension Activities from Day 2 with your written comments.
- Speaking Extension Activity.

Day 4

- One longer Extension Activity (Fine Arts, Poster Boards, Storyboards, Create/Conduct Your Own Poll, Advertisement, Jeopardy, Dramatic Play, Debate) or two shorter Extension Activities (Read Aloud, Rewriting Headlines, Interviewing, Spokesperson, Surfing the Net, Time Travel).

Day 5

- One longer Extension Activity (Fine Arts, Poster Boards, Storyboards, Create/Conduct Your Own Poll, Advertisement, Jeopardy, Dramatic Play, Debate) or two shorter Extension Activities (Read Aloud, Rewriting Headlines, Interviewing, Spokesperson, Surfing the Net, Time Travel).

Frequently Asked Questions

XTRA Weekly Lessons

Q. How much classroom time is needed for each lesson?

A. A basic lesson (Warm-up Activity, Vocabulary and Critical Thinking Questions) can be completed in a two-hour course period. The Extension Activities provided can be used to expand each lesson to cover up to five two-hour sessions.

Q. What day of the week is each new lesson posted?

A. Each new lesson is posted on Monday during the school year, with the exception of traditional school holiday breaks. The first lesson for each school year will be posted in mid-September and the last of the 32 lessons will be posted in mid-May.

Q. Do the lessons come with an answer sheet?

A. Yes, the downloaded package contains an answer sheet for each lesson.

Q. Can the lessons be used for ELL students?

A. Each lesson includes an activity tagged as appropriate for ELL students.

Q. Can the lessons be used for homework?

A. Each lesson contains a Parent/Guardian Involvement Activity that can be assigned as homework.

Q. Are the materials only appropriate for a traditional classroom format?

A. No, the lessons can be modified for presentation to individuals or small groups, and are also appropriate for homeschooling and after-school environments.

Q. What age range are these materials most appropriate for?

A. Each lesson contains two sets of news articles and lesson activities. Level I is geared toward grades 3–5, and Level II is geared toward grades 6–8; however, all lessons can be easily adapted for younger or older students.

Q. How much should I expect to spend on materials for the lesson activities?

A. The lesson activities are designed to be carried out using materials typically on hand at schools, so you should not need to spend any additional funds to conduct the lessons.

Q. Do you offer any materials for use during the summer break?

A. We do not post new lessons between mid-May and mid-September, but each week's download contains two sets of news articles and lesson activities. Although each set is geared to a specific grade range (grades 3–5 and 6–8), the lessons for the level you have not been using can be easily adapted to serve as extra lessons during any breaks in the school year.

Q. How can I avoid paying sales tax on my purchases?

A. If you're purchasing from a TpT for Schools account or using a Purchase Order and have a valid tax exempt form, please submit that form to your Account Manager or send it to the TpT Purchase Orders team (PurchaseOrders@TeachersPayTeachers.com). Sales tax will not be applied to purchases made using a PO, or purchases made through a TpT for Schools Account.