

Sample Chapter Evaluation

Unit 9 of *Ventures Transitions* is titled *The Right Attitude* and addresses the contexts in which certain attitudes may emerge and the consequences they may bring about (Bitterlin et al. 82-91). This unit teaches the grammatical construction of concession clauses while practicing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Within these practices, students learn appropriate communication cues for persuading, requesting information or clarification, and expressing emotion. Furthermore, since a major theme throughout the textbook is using language to express readiness for a professional career, Unit 9 also identifies behavior appropriate for job retention and promotions.

The activities included in Unit 9 firstly introduce the topic with discussions on positive and negative attitudes guided by images and discussion prompts. This semi-controlled activity allows the teacher to set some structure to class discussion and allows the students to contribute their personal experiences freely. Following the topic introduction is the explanation of concession clauses, succeeded by a set of grammar application practice activities that progress from prompting controlled, closed set responses to free responses. The first, most controlled activity uses a question-answer, display technique in which students are given an adverb clause such as “Although Mike has a great job,” (84) and must choose from a set of 2 options the main clause such as “he complains about his work all the time” (84) that best matches. The next semi-controlled activity uses a cued dialogue technique in which students must discuss with a partner about comparisons of the given visual stimuli (85). The third activity provides minimal cuing to elicit a response from students in a small group discussion sharing information about their lives. The progression from structured to unstructured activities and from acquiring to applying knowledge continues to the rest of the unit with more strenuous reading and writing prompts.

There are multiple advantages and disadvantages to this unit of *Ventures Transitions*. The advantages of Unit 9: The Right Attitude include a natural advancement in task difficulty using techniques that provide students with increasingly more autonomy. The tasks activate learning using expressive and receptive language skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. To an extent, the tasks also engage students intimately by evoking emotional responses from the nature of the topic. The articles provided for reading comprehension exercises include information and stories with the intent to encourage and warn students about positive and negative thinking, respectively (86, 88). However, a topic that touches on both positive and negative emotions can provoke sensitive reactions. For a classroom with students from other cultures, there is a lack of cultural awareness that would be beneficial to address especially when discussing sensitive topics. Another disadvantage of the unit from a technical standpoint is that the grammatical practice of concession clauses ends with the lesson and is mentioned neither for the rest of the unit, nor for the rest of the textbook. Nevertheless, Unit 9 effectively teaches advanced learners by explanation of course material and gradual decrease of guidance until students can apply the material correctly in real-life situations.

Work Cited

Bitterlin, Gretchen, et al. *Ventures Transitions*. 2nd ed., Cambridge, 2014.