

Using Media in Teaching

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Using Media in Teaching

Learning Guide

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SECTION FOUR

Using popular electronic media in teaching

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broadcast the most informative and interesting programmes on science and technology, arts and culture, and development and ecological issues. There are also shows that focus on language issues and books.

- **Talk shows and interviews.** While both television and radio flight a large number of talk shows, on the whole radio (in particular *Safm*) broadcasts the most *in-depth* interviews. These help learners to gain up-to-date information, sometimes from experts, on issues such as health, science, environment and the economy. Listening to interviews also familiarizes learners with questioning techniques.
- **Soap operas, dramas and movies.** While almost all radio stations used to carry soap operas, only a few stations still do. But a large amount of television broadcast time is dedicated to these formats. Some raise interesting ethical and political issues, and teachers could use *short* excerpts from these to raise debates in learning areas such as *life orientation*.
- **Advertisements.** Radio adverts are often extremely inventive since they have to rely totally on words, sounds and music. Many television adverts make use of extremely sophisticated techniques to get viewers to associate products with certain ideas and 'images'. Both qualities make adverts ideal resources for teaching critical thinking and media literacy.
- **Songs and music.** These can be used to develop an understanding of idiom and other modes of language use, They also engage the learner in a way that poems or textbook passages might not, and are often useful in values education.
- **Weather reports.** Climatology is a traditional part of the curriculum, but is often taught in a highly abstract manner. Weather forecasts, particularly those on television that use symbols, can be used to contextualize this content.
- **Sports commentaries and traffic updates** are carried by both radio and television. Although they don't have direct relevance to school curricula, imaginative teachers have used them to activate learner interest in school subjects in interesting ways.

In addition to these popular formats, many radio and television stations carry more consciously *educational* programming. This includes:

- **Programming linked directly to formal schooling.** The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), for instance, broadcasts *Learning Channel* (directed at senior and further education learners) and *Schools TV* (which provides support for Foundation Phase teachers). Both of these are directly related to the formal school curriculum. Some newspapers, for instance *The Sowetan*, even carry the print versions of the lessons broadcast.
- **Programming that is broadly educative and informative.** This includes:
 - SABC education department magazine programmes such as *Take 5*. These *support* schooling but do so in an entertaining and informal manner (and are thus sometimes called 'edutainment').
 - Edu-dramas, such as *Yizo- Yizo* and *Soul City*. These tend to tackle issues of broad public concern, for instance, drug-taking, health, domestic violence, or the culture of schooling, but 'teach' through popular television formats like soap operas.
 - Various kinds of documentaries and magazine programmes, such as the environmental programme *SO/50*, or the information technology programme, *InTouch*. These are not designed for any direct educational use but provide enormously valuable resources that teachers can use in classrooms.

Desired learning outcomes

By the end of Section Four, you will be able to:

- *use a variety of popular electronic media materials and formats to **enrich and supplement your teaching in all learning areas***. You will learn how to use radio and television to engage learner interest, contextualize abstract ideas, supplement textbook knowledge, and engage in values education (Section 4.3).
- *use popular electronic media to assist you in **developing the listening and comprehension skills** of your learners*. You will be introduced to activities you can use to develop learners' ability to listen and process heard information, and a number of writing skills in discursive and imaginative writing. Many of these are integrated with other learning areas. In addition, second language teachers will be introduced to a number of effective radio- and television-based activities (Section 4.4).
- *teach learners how to **produce simple popular electronic media formats*** and, in the process, develop their interviewing and speaking skills, as well as their knowledge of learning area content (Section 4.5).
- ***collect, evaluate, and store popular print and electronic media resources*** in an orderly manner (Section 4.6).



Checking your learning:

How should you use these outcomes? You may find that they don't mean much before you study the section. That's why it is so important to check back regularly. Ask: 'Have I achieved any of these outcomes yet? What do I still need to learn in order to meet these outcomes?' Write down those things you still think you need to learn, and use them to focus your learning.

4.2

The educational opportunities offered by radio and television

Using radio as a learning resource

Radio is essentially an *auditory* medium: it tells stories through words and sounds. It is not surprising, then, that radio is particularly good for developing language skills such as listening in particular, and *speaking*. But it also provides resources for supplementing the teaching of content knowledge.

Radio programming can be used to teach a wide range of knowledge and skills. Radio:

- *models appropriate use of language*. It demonstrates to learners how language is spoken in different ways in different situations. For instance, while the news reader uses formal language, the person hosting a talk show or phone-in programme will be more relaxed and informal.
- *provides a means for learners to practise listening and note-taking skills*. It offers interesting content and, when recorded, can be controlled by teachers and learners in order to maximize the learning that takes place.
- *opens up a wide range of options for multi-lingual teaching* because it broadcasts in most of South Africa's official languages.
- *carries hours of music and popular song* which can be used productively in the hands of a creative language teacher. In fact, as we show, pop songs offer teaching opportunities for teachers of other learning areas too.
- *has been called the 'theatre of the mind'* because it allows listeners so much freedom in using their own imagination. Radio gives you only sounds and voices from which you are free to imagine different kinds of people and places.

In addition to encouraging the use of *imagination*, radio programmes – news programmes, interviews, documentaries and magazine programmes – contain large amounts of new *information* that can add to learners' knowledge on a particular topic, for instance science, local environments and economics. This provides teachers with a rich resource for updating and supplementing teaching across the curriculum.

Making the best use of radio

To use radio effectively, teachers must consciously teach learners to *listen*. Radio requires *sustained* and *active listening* abilities, in the same way as reading a book requires mental activity.

In addition, teachers must keep an eye on radio listings in order to record useful resources for learning. On the one hand, this is relatively easy. In South Africa most radio stations are news and music stations so the number of stations to monitor is limited. In order to access resources to supplement content knowledge teaching, *Safm* is probably the best source. However, regional language stations carry school-linked educational programming and soap operas, while some community and regional stations run talk shows that sometimes have interesting guests and/or debates on controversial issues.

On the other hand, keeping an eye on radio listings is difficult. First, the programming of all stations is seldom listed in one publication. Second, as you will notice in the listing below, details of each programme are never listed. In other words, teachers need to listen with their finger on the record button!

RADIO OCTOBER 3-9

SAFM FM 104.3 – 107.3

TODAY: NEWS at 06.00, 07.00, 08.00, 10.00, 11.00, 13.00, 15.00, 16.00, 18.00, 20.00, 21.00, 23.00

05.00 Early Classics 06.03 Rodney Trudgeon's Sunday Morning Concert 08.07 The Music and the Message 08.40 Word of Mouth 09.07 Bookshelf 09.30 Inner Ear 11.03 Media at SAFM 12.30 The Editors 13.00 Sundays at One 15.01 From Back to Front 16.05 Groundstand 18.03 Ecovatch 18.30 The Evening Church Service 20.07 NPR Weekly Edition 21.02 Music 'Til Midnight 23.59 Link up with World Radio Network

MONDAY: NEWS at 05.00, 05.30, 06.00, 06.30, 07.00, 07.30, 08.00, 09.00, 10.00, 11.00, 12.00, 13.00, 14.00, 15.00, 16.00, 16.30, 17.00, 17.30, 18.00, 18.30, 19.00, 20.00, 21.00, 22.00, 23.00

05.03 Crack of Dawn 05.56 This New Day 06.05 AM Live 08.30 The Tim Modise Show 10.03 The Bruce Millar Show 11.30 Woman Today 12.30 Total Exposure 13.07 One o'Clock Live 14.03 Rodney Trudgeon's Classical Hit Parade 15.02 PM Live with Rafe Lavine 17.05 PM Live 19.00 Appleton Market Update 19.30 Well Versed 19.40 Future Watch 20.00 The Pursuit of Health 20.30 The Law Report 21.04 The Jon Gericke Show 23.59 Link up with World Radio Network

TUESDAY: NEWS at 05.00, 05.30, 06.00, 06.30, 07.00, 07.30, 08.00, 09.00, 10.00, 11.00, 12.00, 13.00, 14.00, 15.00, 16.00, 16.30, 17.00, 17.30, 18.00, 18.30, 19.00, 20.00, 21.00, 22.00, 23.00

05.03 Crack of Dawn 05.56 This New Day 06.05 AM Live 08.30 The Tim Modise Show 10.03 The Bruce Millar Show (including The Green Update and Techno News) 11.30 Woman Today 12.30 Patricia's People 13.00 One o'Clock Live 14.03 Rodney Trudgeon's Classical Hit Parade 15.02 PM Live with Rafe Lavine 17.05 PM Live 19.00 Appleton Market Update 19.30 Well Versed 19.40 Word of Mouth 20.02 Pat on their backs 21.04 The Jon Gericke Show 23.59 Link up with World Radio Network

WEDNESDAY: NEWS at 05.00, 05.30, 06.00, 06.30, 07.00, 07.30, 08.00, 09.00, 10.00, 11.00, 12.00, 13.00, 14.00, 15.00, 16.00, 16.30, 17.00, 17.30, 18.00, 18.30, 19.00, 20.00, 21.00, 22.00, 23.00

05.03 Crack of Dawn 05.56 This New Day 06.05 AM Live 08.30 The Tim Modise Show 10.03 The Bruce Millar Show 11.30 Woman Today 12.30 Total Exposure 13.07 One o'Clock Live 14.03 Rodney Trudgeon's Classical Hit Parade 15.02 PM Live with Rafe Lavine 17.05 PM Live 19.03 Appleton Market Update 19.30 Well Versed 19.40 Pick of Woman Today 20.02 Inner Ear 20.30 Microphone-in 22.01 The Jon Gericke Show 23.59 Link up with World Radio Network

THURSDAY: NEWS at 05.00, 05.30, 06.00, 06.30, 07.00, 07.30, 08.00, 09.00, 10.00, 11.00, 12.00, 13.00, 14.00, 15.00, 16.00, 16.30, 17.00, 17.30, 18.00, 18.30, 19.00, 20.00, 21.00, 22.00, 23.00

05.03 Crack of Dawn 05.56 This New Day 06.05 AM Live 08.30 The Tim Modise Show 10.03 The Bruce Millar Show (including The Green Update) 11.30 Woman Today 12.30 Patricia's People 13.07 One o'Clock Live 14.03 Rodney Trudgeon's Classical Hit Parade 15.02 PM Live with Rafe Lavine 17.05 PM Live 19.03 Appleton Market Update 19.30 Well Versed 19.40 Introduction to the Concert 20.00 Thursday Concert 22.01 The Jon Gericke Show 23.59 Link up with World Radio Network

FRIDAY: NEWS at 05.00, 05.30, 06.00, 06.30, 07.00, 07.30, 08.00, 09.00, 10.00,

The Editors: current affairs programme – all teachers

Pat on their Backs: consumer programme

Market Update: business news – economics and management sciences teachers

Future Watch: science and technology programme – natural sciences and technology teachers

Bookshelf: a review of the latest books – language teachers

Inner Ear: in-depth interviews with a range of different experts – all teachers

Using television as a learning resource

Television is essentially a *visual* medium: it tells its stories in images. As a medium, it 'likes' action and movement rather than words and sounds. It presents complete pictures of people and places. It doesn't ask you to imagine. In this sense, it is a passive medium – it does most of the imaginative work for you. This provides educators with both a warning and an opportunity:

- **First**, we must find ways to ensure that learners view television, videos and films *actively*.
- **Second**, we must use the power provided by the 'completeness' of the medium – the combination of explanation and visual illustration.

Television provides teachers with the means to:

- transport learners to foreign lands in travelogues, the news and films – teachers don't need to record entire documentaries;

- bring historical events alive through documentaries or historical films;
- illustrate abstract and complex biological, geographical and scientific concepts in magazine programmes or documentaries.

The combination of moving visual images and sound make television – *when used well* – a powerful educational medium: it is able to turn abstract concepts and ideas into concrete, visual ideas. Consider the micro-photography that is able to show the inside workings of the human body, or the shots of our solar system taken from spacecraft. Images such as these help learners to break down some of their barriers to understanding.

Making the best use of television

First, teachers don't always need to wait for and record full-length documentaries that fit their teaching entirely. Often a short clip of a volcanic eruption or a hurricane recorded from the news will enrich learning. Likewise, a two-minute recording of a television weather report will allow learners to visualize cold fronts and give meaning to synoptic symbols far more quickly than hours of explanation.

Second, because television is ephemeral and distracting – the images and words are there, then they are gone, and there are many messages on the screen at anyone time – teachers need to find ways of 'slowing down' the action and consolidating the message. This can be done by:

- supporting television-based lessons with print-based materials, such as worksheets, textbooks and popular print media;
- using television with one of the message channels - sound or image - switched off. (In this section, we provide ideas on how to do this.)

Third, television is a passive but powerful medium: it sucks viewers in without requiring much critical engagement. Teachers need to develop critical media literacy in their learners if they are using television as a teaching aid. We provide some ideas for teaching media literacy in Section Five.

As with radio, teachers face the challenge of collecting resources from television regularly: this cannot be done the night before you teach! Luckily, television listings are far more detailed than radio listings. (See the example on the next page.) In general, though, magazine programmes seldom advertise their content in the listings. So teachers still need to choose potentially useful programming and watch these with a finger on the record button!

Learning by producing radio and television programmes

In addition to listening, watching and learning from popular electronic media, teachers could involve learners in *producing* radio and television programming.

Producing radio

By bringing a tape recorder and microphone to class, teachers can get learners to produce interviews, news broadcasts, magazine programmes and even radio dramas. This is a powerful teaching technique in which learners will:

- learn new knowledge through the research necessary to interview people or produce inserts for a magazine programme;
- develop language skills, such as interviewing and speaking;
- learn to write as they script news broadcasts, radio dramas and magazine inserts;
- develop imaginative skills as they decide how to represent a particular phenomenon in sound rather than words or images.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 3

SABC 1	SABC 2	SABC 3	
06:00 WIND IN THE WILLOWS R	05:00 BBC WORLD	06:00 CNN	
06:30 Video Power R	06:00 Thula Mabotha: Music programme. Hosted by Cocky "Two Bull". R	09:30 Gardens Wild and Wonderful R	
07:00 Swiss Family Robinson R	06:30 Aloha: Religion	09:45 Today's Health R	
07:30 The Gospel Connexion: Local gospel music. Presented by Tshoganyetsa Mashile and Innocent Modiba. M	06:30 Aloha: Religion	10:00 CNN	
08:00 CCM1 – Contemporary Christian Music on One: Presented by Natasha Stringer and Kingdahl Mahlangu.	07:15 Travel Express: Travel series. Take a trip to New Zealand and Australia.	11:30 Off the Pitch	
08:30 Heart and Soul: Religious show. Hosted by Mphahlele Modisa and Saul Glasser.	07:45 Backyard Pleasures	12:00 In Style R	
09:00 Educator Express	08:15 Hosanna: Religion R	12:30 Signature: Youth magazine	
10:00 Eastern Mosaic: Magazine M	08:45 Issues of Faith: Religion R	13:00 TopSport: Roswika – Development boxing bouts.	Travel Express – human social sciences (HSS)
10:00 Eastern Mosaic: Magazine M	TUBE STARTS	14:00 World of Endurance	
12:00 The Felicia Mabuza-Suttle Show: Talk show R	09:15 Rainbow Kids: Religion	14:30 Due South R	
13:00 Thunder in Paradise: Action series. Kelly travels to the Middle East where she is caught up in a deadly civil war.	09:45 Kitty Cats	15:30 Reality On the Rocks: Documentary series. R (See Pick of the Day)	Educator Express – a teacher development programme
14:00 World's Greatest Stunts: Documentary. Stuntmen and the risks they take. R	10:00 The Babies/Mummy, I Will Stay With You	16:30 Ancient Voices: Documentary series. Mazes and labyrinths have fascinated people for generations. Final	
15:00 FILM: Coming Unglued Jason and Celina love their dad – and to announce the birth of the new important day of his career. Starring Judge Reinhold	10:30 M	17:30 The Ways of Our Fathers: Documentary series. A look at ancestors as the guardians of community values and how they serve as intercessors between the living and divinity.	Newsmaker – current affairs programme
16:30 Reel Planet: A behind-the-scenes look at the latest feature films, television series and music releases, and gossip about the lives of the stars.	11:30 Newsmaker: Interviews on current news topics.	18:00 NEWS HEADLINES	
17:00 Crux: Religious magazine from a woman's perspective.	12:30 Naak 'n Las: A R	18:03 SURVIVAL: Nature series. Red Kangaroos – A Desert Divided. A feature about a young red kangaroo and his mother.	
17:30 Unqambothi/Sweet Melodies: Music	14:30 Laduma: Live topSport	19:00 PARTY OF FIVE: Drama series. Charlie has to come to terms with Daphne's job as a stripper. Just as Bailey's about to move in with Annie her past catches up with them. Julia and Griffin go away. Claudia is invited to lunch by Sarah	Crossing the Divide – life orientation, HSS
18:00 QUANTUM LEAP: Sci-fi series	17:05 Blow by Blow: Boxing	20:00 EXPRESSIONS – EMPIRE AND ECLIPSE: Documentary series – Part one. The Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 tore Afrikaans and English South Africans apart and marginalised black South Africans. Filmmaker Anthony Irving investigates one of South Africa's most notorious wars while commemorating its centenary.	Reel Planet – a film review programme – language and communication teachers
19:00 HANG TIME	18:30 SPECIAL CROSSING THE DIVIDE: Cultural series. A series that brings people of different religions and communities to each other's lives.	20:00 Rhodes: Drama series	
19:30 NEWS Z	19:00 NEWS M	21:00 Men Behaving Badly: T	
20:00 MURPHY BROWN: Comedy series. Candice Bergen stars as Murphy Brown, the outspoken, co-anchor of a news show.	19:30 UNION SQUARE: Sitcom. Michael is upset when Jack and Gaby are cast as lovers in a student film that requires them to have a passionate kiss.	22:00 On Camera	
20:30 FILM: On Golden Pond (1981) A married couple visit their New England lakeside home for the 48th summer. Their middle-aged daughter joins them for a holiday of bonding across the generations. Starring Katharine Hepburn, Henry Fonda and Jane Fonda.	20:00 PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH: Join Dali Tambo as he interviews	23:00 Ancient Voices R	
22:20 Ultimate Stuntman: Documentary R	21:15 GROEP SONDER GRENSE: Documentary series. A history of Afrikaans-speaking South Africans presented by Fred	00:20 PM Shopping	
23:20 Channel O: Music	22:15 On Camera	00:50 CNN	
	23:00 Frank Sinatra: Music. More soothing sounds for late-night listening from Old Blue Eyes.	04:00 BBC Learning Channel Open University. Live	Groep Sander Grense – life orientation, HSS
	00:00 BBC World: Catch up on news from around the world.		

Producing television

As with radio, involving learners in producing their own television programmes is a powerful learning experience. Unlike radio production, though, television production requires more expensive resources and is also a far more complicated process.

However, teachers could draw on the popularity of television *formats* – game shows, soap operas, and news broadcasts, for instance – and *simulate* the production of these in class as a means of teaching. If a video camera is available, these could be recorded, but recording should not be the main point of the exercise. This would allow learners to:

- revise content knowledge learnt (in a game show or quiz format, for instance);
- practise verbal skills, such as acting, interviewing and reading (in soap operas, magazine and news formats);
- develop literary understanding, language skills and imagination as they translate novels or plays into soap operas, and script and 'storyboard' these.

Supplementing teaching across the curriculum

4.3

We have suggested that teachers can use both the *form* and *content* of popular electronic media to enrich their teaching. For instance:

- Many radio and television programmes carry *content* that is directly linked to the content knowledge that is taught in different learning areas.
- By involving learners in *producing* radio and television programming, teachers draw on the popularity of the medium's *form* to teach learners interviewing skills, or to give them practice in their speaking and research skills.
- Both *content* and *format* can be used to evoke interest in learning, and to ground learning in the context in which learners live.



In Week 7; should have completed 37 hours of study.

There are constraints on the use of electronic media in South Africa: many schools don't have their own radios, tape recorders, television sets or video recorders. However, this hurdle isn't insurmountable. First, some 90% of South Africans have access to radio at home. Many teachers have access to tape recorders. Over 60% of South Africans have access to television at home. A fair number of teachers have video recorders at home. This makes it possible for organized and dedicated teachers to use *home* listening and viewing activities as a spur to classroom teaching. Second, it is also possible for dedicated teachers to take their own television set and video player or tape recorder to class so that learners can watch or listen to a programme recorded at home. Third, more and more South African schools – often through the initiative of individual teachers – are raising funds to buy radios, tape recorders, television sets and video recorders. This means that many teachers will have more opportunities to use radio, TV and videos in their lessons.

But how do we use popular electronic media *educationally*? Lessons that are based on these media need to be just as well planned as lessons that use a newspaper, magazine or any other medium. Here are some ideas.

Learning from radio

A musical history: Using popular songs to activate learner interest

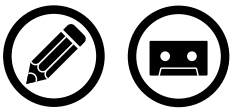
Music is one of the biggest interests of all young people. It is also one of radio's most common formats. A problem teachers often face, though, is that their taste in music differs from that of their learners. We believe this is not a major problem, but it does point to the fact that teachers should spend some time learning about the music the young people in their classes listen to.

So, use a variety of musical forms with your learners, but first think about these things:

- What is your *reason* for using music?
- Consider the age of your learners and the kind of music that is appropriate for them.
- Consult your learners about the kinds of music they are listening to (do not assume that you know). This activity could backfire on you if you use dated or 'uncool' songs.
- Think about the language ability of your learners. Don't use songs that have too many new or difficult words.

- Make sure you have a *clear* recording of the song.
- It is a good idea to have the words written out so that learner can refer to these during activities.

Music is particularly powerful in teaching language and literature - and many teachers have used it in this way - but, as the following activity demonstrates, it can be used to teach other things too. The extract below comes from a South African history book called *All that Glitters*. In this book the author, Emilia Potenza, uses the classic Hugh Masekela song, 'Stimela', to teach learners about migrant workers on the South African gold mines.



Spend about 60 minutes on this activity. Hugh Masekela's 'Stimela' comes from the CD, *Waiting for the Rain*. The worksheet is from *All that Glitters* by Emilia Potenza, published by Maskew Miller Longman, Cape Town, 1996.

ACTIVITY 24

Turn to Part 3 on your audiotape. Listen to the song and comments by Emilia Potenza about why she used this song. Then work through the worksheet below.

- a Discuss the activity with a fellow teacher. Do you think it will work with your learners? Why or why not?
- b Can you think of another song you could use in your teaching? Design a similar kind of worksheet for your lesson.

'Stimela – the coal train'

Many songs, novels and poems have been written about migrants on their way to the mines. You may know some of these quite well.



Migrants on their way to the Rand



1. Read these words of the song *Stimela* composed by Hugh Masekela, the world-famous South African jazz musician. If possible, try to get hold of a tape or CD that includes this song and play it twice for everyone to listen to.

SOURCE 3

STIMELA (THE COAL TRAIN)

There's a train
that comes from Mozambique, Angola,
Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Namibia,
Lesotho, Swaziland
5 and the whole hinterland of South Africa.
This train carries young and old African men
who were conscripted to come and work on
contract
in the gold and mineral mines of Johannesburg
and its surrounding metropoli
10 sixteen hours a day
for almost no pay.
Deep, deep, deep down in the belly of the earth
when they're digging and drilling for
that shiny, mighty evasive stone
15 or when they dish that mish-mash mine food
into their iron plates with the iron shovel
or when they sit in their stinky funky, filthy,
flea-ridden barracks and hostels
they think about the loved ones
20 they may never see again:

they think about their land and their herds
that were taken away from them with the gun
... and the galling and the cannon.
And when they hear that chook-chook train
25 a juggin and a pumpin and a smokin and a pushin
and pumpin,
a crying and a steamin and a jiggin
they always curse
and they curse the coal train
the coal train that brought them to Johannesburg.
30 Stimela!



2. Working with a partner, first discuss and then write down your answers to these questions:
- Why do you think Hugh Masekela wrote this song?
 - Where was the train coming from and where was it going to?
 - What is the effect of the use of 'whole hinterland' (line 5)?
 - What does the word 'conscripted' (line 7) mean?
 - Why do you think Masekela has used this word to describe the men who come to work on the mines? What comparison is he suggesting?
 - What does 'to work on contract' (line 7) mean?
 - Discuss the effect of the repetition of 'deep' (line 12).
 - What do you think each man was feeling in his 'belly' (line 12) as he travelled on the train?
 - What does Masekela refer to as 'that mighty evasive stone' (line 14)? Why does he describe it in this way?
 - In your own words, explain what the song tells us about the living and working conditions of the workers on the mines.
 - Explain how, in the case of the Pedi or the Zulu (or any other African kingdom that you may know about), people's 'land and their herds ... were taken away from them with the gun ...' (lines 21 and 22).

You will notice that a running theme in this module – the idea of teaching across learning areas – emerges in this lesson too. Although Potenza is using the song's content to evoke an interest in *history*, she also teaches skills traditionally associated with English (or language) teaching, such as comprehension and poetry,

Rush hour:

Using traffic updates to evoke interest and contextualize learning

The *Using Popular Media* videotape carries a good example of a teacher using a few minutes of a television soccer commentary to arouse a class's interest in map reading first thing on a Monday morning! Road traffic updates – which are featured on many local radio stations – have also been used to evoke learner interest in map reading. Let's see whether you can work out ways in which you could teach map reading (or any other topic) using the following traffic update,

ACTIVITY 25

Turn to your audiotape and listen to the traffic update in Part 3,

- Listen to the road traffic update recorded from the radio, Switch off as soon as you hear the 'stop' jingle,
- Plan an activity-based lesson using a traffic update for learners in your learning area,
- Ask a fellow teacher to assess your lesson,

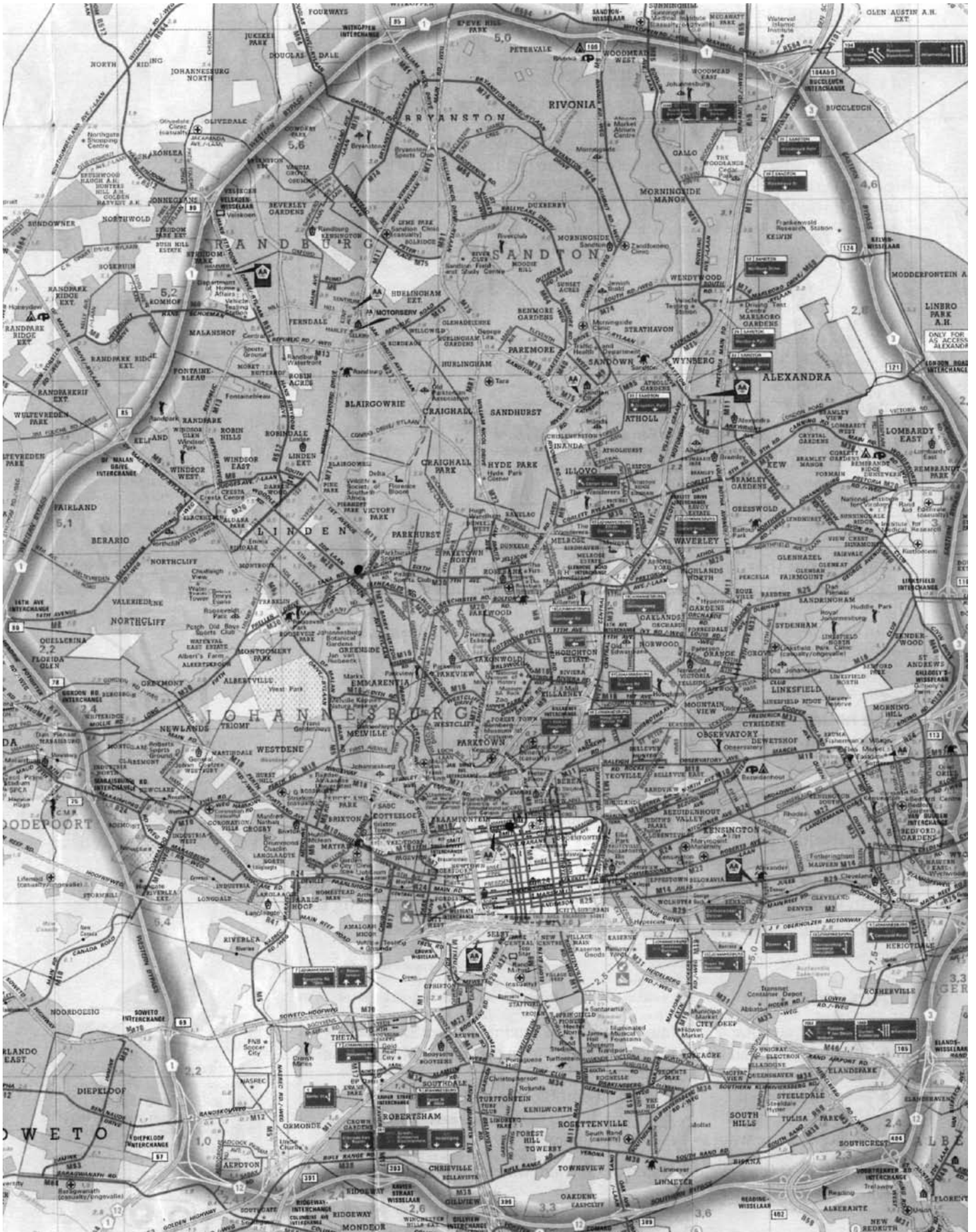
Now turn the tape back on, Listen to teachers who have used this kind of activity in their teaching.



You might want to re-watch Jane Roach's TV soccer lesson on the videotape.



Work with fellow teachers on this activity. Stick to the instruction that you first design the activity before listening to teachers talk about their use of traffic reports. Spend about an hour on this activity.



Ideas from other teachers

Here are some ideas that teachers who did this activity came up with:

Teacher 1: *'The class could listen a couple of times to the traffic report, then identify all the places mentioned on a map. They could do things like:*

- *plan alternative routes to the CBD based on the traffic information;*
- *explain the directions to the Taxi Driver Association (my second-language learners would benefit especially from an activity like this).'*

Teacher 2: *'We could use the traffic report to introduce issues to do with cities, such as traffic congestion, road safety, and planning issues. This would probably make these things seem more real than just reading about them in textbooks. My learners could:*

- *listen to traffic reports for two or three weeks and plot where major traffic congestion occurs, and where accidents occur, and see whether any pattern emerges;*
- *do research as to why this occurs (they could read newspapers or speak to traffic officials to see whether it is a long-term problem and why);*
- *then plan alternative (new) transport routes into Johannesburg. They could choose whether these would be road or rail, or even an underground railway.'*

'Going up in smoke':

Using electronic and print media together

Lerato Rulashe felt something was lacking in her Grade 6 environmental studies lesson. She had been teaching concepts such as the connectedness of the many natural systems in the biosphere - how one system, when disturbed or damaged by the impact of human activities, so often causes serious and unforeseen damage in other systems, the effects of which maybe felt a great distance away from the original problem. She also wanted to nudge the learners towards the values of caring for nature and working cautiously with natural resources. But these concepts seemed to have little meaning for her class.

She was trying to think of a way to bring these issues to life when she heard a news item about a plane crashing in Sumatra as a result of a vast cloud of smoke that had spread over much of South-East Asia from out-of-control fires. Realizing that this could be what she was looking for, she looked in the newspaper and found a small report about the incident. Over the next few days, more reports appeared. Looking for a photograph of the smoke, Lerato went to the local library to look for back copies of newspapers. She didn't find any photographs, but in the previous day's paper she found a report on the fire itself.

Lerato was disappointed about finding no photograph, but then she had an idea. She popped an audio cassette into her music centre at home and waited to hear if the daily current affairs programme on the radio would run a feature on the fire or the plane crash: she was looking for what she playfully called a 'sound photo'. Her patience was rewarded a day later when she managed to record the extract featured on the *Using Media in Teaching* audiotape.

The effect on her class surprised her. The learners were immediately gripped by the farmer's account of the plane crash, and wanted to know more about how the fires had started. She then played back the part of the broadcast that featured the expert discussing the factors that had contributed to the disastrous fire.



On Part 3 on your tape. Listen to the broadcast Lerato played her class.

Lerato then handed out copies of the worksheet below:



Do this activity alone or with fellow teachers, before you do it with your class. Spend about 45 minutes on it.

See whether you can collect other radio and newspaper resources that can be used in a similar way.

UP IN SMOKE

Nature body: SE Asian haze a global disaster

JAKARTA — The fires ravaging Indonesia and covering South-east Asia in a blanket of thick smoke are an international catastrophe, the head of the World Wide Fund for Nature said here yesterday.

Dr Syed Babar Ali, who arrived in Jakarta late on Wednesday, said the scale of the fires "is so big it is an international catastrophe going well beyond the borders of Indonesia". But he admitted experts have no solution.

Agus Purnomo, who heads the Indonesian section of the WWF, also called for "immediate use of the army" saying "they are equipped and more trained than the civilians".

However, Indonesia's Forestry Minister Djamaludin Suryohadikusumo said more than 8 000 firefighters have brought many fires under control. Neighbouring Malaysia, where air pollution soared to hazardous levels when the smoky haze drifted north, has also sent more than 1 200 firefighters to Indonesia.

Citizens of six nations wheezed, coughed and prayed for rain yesterday as the firefighters tried to put out blazes.

Millions have been urged to stay indoors or to wear protective masks. So far Indonesia has said two of its citizens have died after complaining of breathing difficulties. Another 35 000 have sought medical attention for the effects of smoke.

In Malaysia, a coalition of environmentalists and physicians say at least 8 170 people have been hospitalised. Another 15 000 have sought treatment as outpatients in recent weeks.

A health alert has been declared in parts of the Philippines and the haze has also enveloped the tiny oil-rich Sultanate of Brunei.

In southern Thailand, a three-day break in heavy seasonal rain allowed the haze to descend over the beach resort of Phuket where poor visibility forced a Thai Airways aircraft to divert to another airport. Air pollution levels were double that of legal safety limits in some Thai provinces.

However, the greatest toll has

been in Irian Jaya, the Indonesian-controlled western half of the island of New Guinea, about 2 000 km east of Jakarta. Officials said 265 people have died of famine as well as from disease from contaminated water. Attempts to bring in supplies by aircraft have been stopped by heavy smoke.

Hundreds of fires, many of them lit to clear land, have been burning for months, blackening more than 300 000 hectares and polluting the air. Meteorologists say El Nino, an abnormal weather pattern over the Pacific Ocean, has triggered the worst drought in half a century and delayed monsoon rains needed to clear the air. — Sapa-AP.

Plane crash in smoggy SE Asia

JAKARTA — An Indonesian airliner crashed as it approached an airport on the smog-hit island of Sumatra yesterday and burst into flames, killing all 234 people on board in the country's worst air disaster, officials said.

The domestic Airbus 300 Garuda airlines flight from Jakarta came down in trees as it approached the town of Medan in a hilly region shrouded in thick haze from forest fires that have spread smog over south-east Asia.

An official from the state airline told a media briefing at the company headquarters here that flight GA-152 from Jakarta to Medan had 222 passengers on board and a crew of 12 and none of them survived.

The cause of the accident is being investigated, the official said. Transport Minister Haryanto Dhanutirto told the state-owned Televisi that "it is true that in Medan and around it, (the sky) is full of smoke" but declined to say if the haze caused the accident.

Haryanto also cited witnesses as saying the plane was flying very low and hit trees before the crash.

Another private television station, the Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia (RCTI), said debris and bits of the plane, some still burning, were strewn over ricefields near Buah Nibar, south-west of Medan.

RCTI said the bodies will only be evacuated to Medan early today because of the thick haze.

An Indonesian television station reported the plane exploded in mid-air.

The Airbus crashed at 0730 GMT while it was approaching Medan from Jakarta, Lieutenant Hando of the Medan police said.

It is the fourth crash in Indonesia this year but the largest in the country's aviation history.

— Sapa-AFP.

Reproduced from Natal Witness, 26-28 September 1997

- 1 Look up the following countries in your:
 - Indonesia
 - Malaysia

and the following cities:

- Jakarta
- Medan

- 2 Draw an outline of the area covered by the smoke on the sketch map provided.



3 Write in the blocks four things that contributed to this out-of-control fire:

4 Write in the blocks four results that the fire has produced:

- 5 For Thursday, your homework is
- to watch the television news for any items on the fire in Indonesia; and
 - to create a poster on one of these topics:
 - Caring for the natural environment
 - The danger of starting fires
 - One world – all its parts connected

What did we think of this lesson?

First, it is important to tell you that Lerato extended this lesson by investigating El Niño and the greenhouse effect with her class in the days that followed. She used the excitement created by this disaster to introduce her class to many new environmental ideas in the syllabus.

But why was Lerato's lesson so successful? Part of the reason resulted from her use of newspaper reports and a radio broadcast *in conjunction*:

- The radio extract provided the excitement (even the stirring signature tune helped to make up for the lack of a photograph) and all the initial information that was needed to capture the learners' imagination and arouse their curiosity to know more.
- The newspaper reports underlined how important an event this was (covered in more than one medium), and provided further information, including details such as the spelling of place names.

Finally, you will notice that Lerato uses the idea of home viewing in her follow-up lessons. She didn't have access to a TV set at school, so she asked learners to watch a *particular* news cast on *particular* nights. She also provided them with guiding questions to focus their viewing.



These ideas are adapted from:
Developing English Classroom Resources. 1996. English Language Educational Trust, 6th Floor, Wesley Centre, 74 Aliwa! Street, Durban, 4001.

USING RADIO EFFECTIVELY

It is important to remember that radio is not an educational medium *in and of itself*. It is not designed to develop learning in a logical and sequential way towards higher-level learning. So, while it does provide excellent learning opportunities, it requires effort from the teacher to turn the *educational opportunity* into better learning. How can we use radio most effectively?

Things to do *before* the lesson

Try to pre-record radio programmes on audiotape. This gives you an opportunity to decide which part of a programme you really need to use. In most cases, you should *not* play an entire programme to learners. Learners usually find it difficult to maintain concentration for much more than five minutes when listening to an audiotape in class.

Be clear about what the *learning outcomes* for the lesson are, and design an introduction, clear questions or activities, and a conclusion that will assist your learners to achieve these outcomes.

Things to do *during* the lesson

First, don't simply switch on the tape recorder in class and hope that learners will learn something from what- ever you have taped! You need to prepare learners for what they will hear, and what task or activity they will need to do afterwards. For instance:

- *Consolidate what they already know.* Start by asking learners to discuss in groups what they already know, or think they know, about the topic they will listen to.
- *Contextualize the material.* For example, if they are going to listen to an interview, tell them what it is about, and something about the people who are talking. Tell them what station and programme the interview comes from and, most importantly, tell them why they will be listening to the extract.
- *Provide questions to guide listening.* If the activity involves a worksheet, it is usually best to give these out before playing the tape so that the questions can help the learners focus while they are listening.
- *Introduce any new ideas that are key to understanding the excerpt.* Many talk shows and magazine programmes develop ideas to some depth. In fact, in some cases the teacher would need to introduce the programme to enable learners to understand, for instance, business programmes or an interview with an expert in archaeology.

Sometimes such preparation can kill off the interest the new medium may evoke. In other words, all this explanation might bore the learners to distraction! We'd suggest that you vary the way you use radio and that, on occasion, you might introduce an excerpt without any explanation. This is particularly true of short excerpts, such as the traffic update, where the key reason for using it is to evoke interest. Where you want learners to learn significant content knowledge from radio – let's say from an interview – preparation is essential.

Second, if you are using the taped material for any form of listening comprehension, or if the learners will need to grasp and remember what they hear so that they can do an activity, allow them to listen to the material at least *twice*.

- Tell them to listen the first time for *general meaning*, possibly with their eyes shut to help them concentrate on what they hear.
- Once the learners have a general idea about the recorded material, they can listen a *second time* for more detailed information. Give them new questions and let them listen to the material again.

Things to do *after* the lesson

- Extend the listening activity by asking learners to do something with the information they have heard. They could draw a poster, or write a letter or a report which reflects their understanding of the topic.

Learning from television

Television, because it combines both visual and auditory means of explaining concepts, can be a very powerful educational medium. The problem is that too many teachers use it as a child-care mechanism: they play videos at the end of a week to fill time! In the lessons we describe below, teachers do something different. You will notice that while they draw from a range of formats – weather forecasts, documentaries, advertising, news and current affairs programmes – they all do three things:

- They select appropriate and short excerpts from programmes rather than playing the entire programme to learners.
- They often support the television clip with printed media, either text- books or newspapers.
- All of them use worksheets and questions to guide the viewing of learners.

Our main focus in this section is on using television as a *spur to learning* rather than as a 'textbook' that carries substantial content. However, the final activity – Mrs Maphangwe's lesson on volcanoes – does explore some general principles for using longer portions of content-carrying video in class.

Working out the odds:

Teaching mathematical probability through TV game shows

Many game shows on television rely on chance, on the throw of a dice or drawing a particular letter from the alphabet. But are there ways in which we can become better players by working out how good our chance is of picking a particular letter?

Statistics and probability play an important part in our lives, and competence in these will help us make wise decisions. This activity aims to introduce the mathematical idea of *probability* to learners. Read through this teacher's lesson plan.



You should now begin Week 8 of your studies. In other words, you should have spent about 42 hours on this module by now.

This game is based on a free Internet teaching resource designed by Philip McGoldrick of the I. E. Radar Centre, Sand Springs, Oklahoma, USA.

GRADE 9: MATHEMATICS – INTRODUCING PROBABILITY

What does the teacher do?

Step 1. Introduce lesson by:

- Showing a short clip from a game show
- Or playing 'Hangman' or 'Scrabble' with the class.

Step 2. Then ask:

- Are there some letters that we use more than others?
- Are there some that we hardly use at all?
- Do you think there may be mathematical rules that could improve our chances of winning at these word games?

What do learners do?

Step 3. Learners choose a magazine or newspaper to research the use of letters.

- Choose a page at random and begin counting the letters.
- Fill out the table provided in Worksheet 1. (Caution: don't jump around the page.)

Step 4. Learners add up total:

- Grand total should be about 300 (more or less, if desired).
- Use a calculator to calculate (to 1 or 2 decimal places) the percentage probability of finding each letter.
- Check accuracy by adding up percentages that

Resources needed

Teacher should have:

- A short clip of a game show such as SABC's A Word or Two

Each learner should have:

- A magazine or newspaper;
- Worksheet 1 and a pencil;
- A calculator.

The aim of this activity is to get learners to realize that it is more likely (there is a higher probability) that we will use the letter 'a' when we speak in English, for instance, than the letter 'q'. (In Zulu the probability changes: it is more likely that we will use a 'q' or 'z' in Zulu than in English.) By doing these activities, learners begin to learn about the mathematical concept 'probability'. By linking your teaching to newspaper searches, or developing strategies for playing word games, such as 'A Word or Two', 'Scrabble' or 'Hangman' (in English and in another language), you heighten learner interest and show how the concept can be used. You might want to link this with 'Lotto': show that numbers (or letters) drawn randomly have an equal probability of appearing. This probability 'rule' is different from the probability of letters appearing in language.

should total between 99% and 101%.

Step 5. The students now have enough information to answer and discuss the questions on the worksheets.

Concluding the lesson:

- Compare and discuss learner results. Note the similarities and try to account for the differences.
- Ask learners to complete Worksheet 2 to review some of the statistical consequences of the study.
- Extend learning by asking whether they think it would be wise to value the same letters if they were taking part in a game show in isiZulu, or playing 'Scrabble' in Afrikaans.

Worksheet 1: Working out the odds

- 1 Find a page in your newspaper at random.
- 2 Count at least 300 letters.
- 3 Put a tick in the appropriate column as you come across a particular letter.
- 4 Add up each row.
- 5 Work out what percentage of the total each letter constitutes.

Letter	Ticks	Total ticks	Percentage
A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			
J			
K			
L			
M			
N			
O			
P			
Q			
R			
S			
T			
U			
V			
W			
X			
Y			
Z			

What are the top ten letters?

1	%
2	%
3	%
4	%
5	%
6	%
7	%
8	%
9	%
10	%

What are the bottom five letters?

22	%
23	%
24	%
25	%
26	%

Worksheet 2: Developing a strategy for playing "'

- How many vowels are in the top ten?
- Which consonants would be the most useful in English?
- Which vowel might be the least useful?
- What percentage of all the letters surveyed were vowels?
- See if you can make ten different words using only the top five letters.
- Is the letter K useful when playing the games of 'Hangman' and '?'.
- I and O are the most useful vowels. True or false?
- The top ten letters account for about 75% of the letters needed to write in the English language. True or false?
- The English language could get along fine without the letters J, Q, and X. True or false?
- If you were producing stickers with letters of the alphabet for use in labelling personal items, such as books, pens or bags, which of these letters would you need most? (Circle 5 answers) ABC DE F G H I J
- In the game of 'Scrabble', which of these letters would you expect to be worth the most points? Hint: the harder it is to use, the more points it is worth. (Circle the best answer) HVS
- In 'Scrabble', which of these letters would you expect to be worth only 1 point? (Circle the best answer) Q N K

ACTIVITY 26

Complete Worksheets 1 and 2. In other words, work through this activity as if you were a learner. Discuss your experience with a fellow learner and:

- List what you think are the key skills and understandings that are learnt through this activity.
- List the difficulties you think you might find in using this game. How would you overcome these?
- Can you use this idea to develop any other, similar, teaching activities?

This is an interesting activity. It introduces learners to the concept of probability through an entertaining and imaginative research experience, without approaching it in an abstract or highly technical way. In the process, learners also gain practice in using calculators and working out percentages. In addition, they gain some understanding of the frequency of vowels and consonants in the English language.

Although it takes a game show as its inspiration – as the means through which learners are engaged – the television clip really isn't that important. The activity could proceed without it.



This is a complex activity, so practising it before you do it in class is essential.

Spend about 1½ hours on this activity. Discuss your experiences with other teachers and adapt the game accordingly. Then use it with your learners.

But the teachers could extend the activity by challenging learners to develop a game show where, for instance, players should have either a 90% or 10% chance of winning. Ask them how many letters, and which letters, they would include in either case.

The teacher who developed this lesson has already added an interesting extension that will demonstrate that the probability of certain letters occurring differs from one language to another.

Weather forecasts:

Using television and newspaper weather reports in conjunction

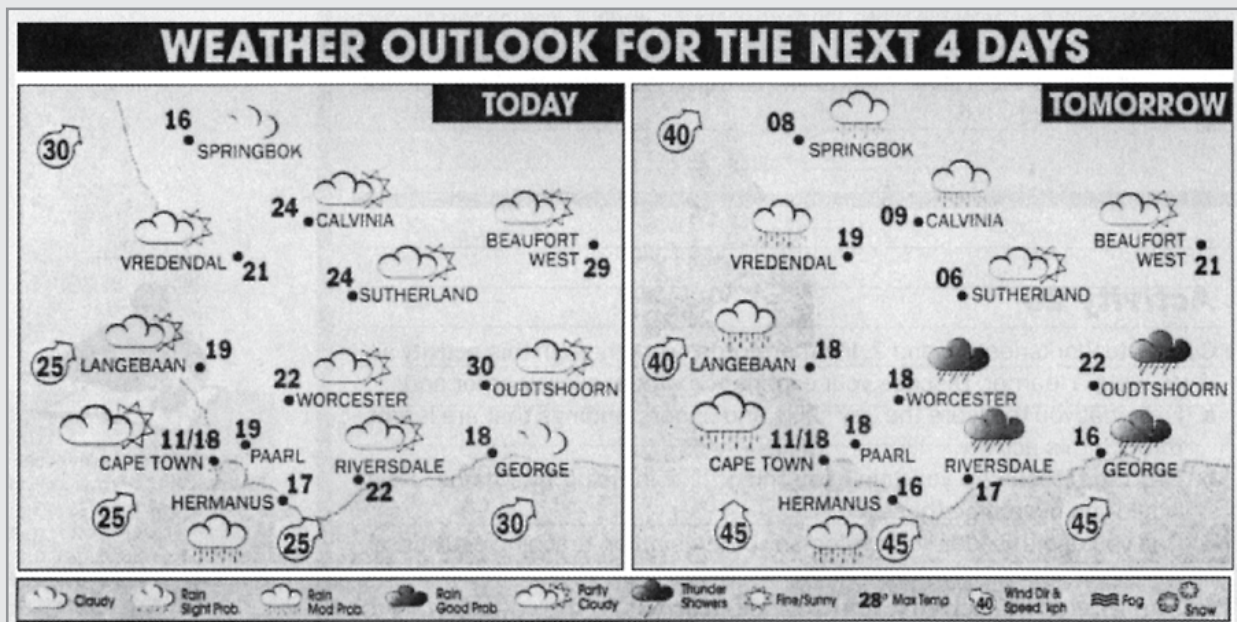
Synoptic charts and symbols are all a traditional part of school learning. They are also concepts that learners have difficulty grasping. Yet the kind of weather we can expect is of great importance to all of us. This is why radio, television and newspapers all carry weather forecasts and reports.

Instead of plunging first into the abstraction of textbook explanations of the weather, some imaginative teachers have introduced weather map reading by showing video clips of television weather reports, and backing these up with weather maps from a newspaper. Read through this worksheet designed by a Cape Town teacher for a Grade 5 class.

Grade 5: Understanding the weather

Watch the television weather report. As you watch, note the following:

- 1 What kind of weather did the Western Cape experience yesterday (according to the report)?
- 2 What kind of weather is predicted for today?
- 3 Draw the symbols for wind direction and a cold front on a piece of paper.
- 4 Now examine the weather page in the newspaper you have been given.



- 5 Check the symbols you drew. Are they similar to those used on the weather map?
- 6 What will the temperature be at Cape Point today? Is it colder or warmer than the temperature in the city? Why?
- 7 Look at the symbols used to describe the week's weather. Can you match the words below with the weather symbols for the week's weather?
 - windy, partly cloudy, sunny, rainy, cool, very cold, foggy

- 8 Who do you think would find information about the tides useful?
- 9 At what time is high tide?
- 10 Draw your own picture to tell the newspaper reader about the surfing conditions in Cape Town.

ACTIVITY 27

Watch the weather report after the main TV news broadcast in the evening. If you have a video recorder, record it. Scan through your local newspapers and cut out both that day's weather report and forecast, and the next day's weather report. (Look through a number of newspapers. Some provide detailed reports and forecasts, using synoptic maps and symbols, while other newspapers don't. You need the reports that include synoptic maps and symbols.)

Now:

- a Do the activity in the lesson above using the TV and newspaper resources you have found. How well does it work? What needs to be changed?
- b Design a lesson to teach weather using these resources. Base it on the activity above, but adapt it to your region and circumstances.
- c If possible, ask a fellow teacher to assess your activity.



Spend about one hour on this activity. Discuss your experience carefully and learn from it!

A regular news and weather watch

Dale Honicot, a Grade 6 class teacher in Johannesburg, does something similar to bolster her teaching of environmental studies. She records the late night television news every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. She asks her learners to watch the news on each of these days, and integrates this activity into her teaching style throughout the year. This is how she describes her approach:

'We spend the first period of every Monday, Wednesday and Friday looking at the five-minute news summary from the day before to refresh the children's memory of the full news that they were asked to watch. They soon got into the idea of looking at the news three times a week. It's amazing what sort of issues watching the news brings up. The class take notes and record what they think is important. We sometimes complete a worksheet, and once every two weeks we have a news test.'

'On the map at the front of the class, we:

- *locate all the places that are mentioned in the news. The class soon developed a very sound knowledge of places in the world, just from watching the news programmes.*
- *cut out pictures of world leaders from newspapers and paste them on the world map. We have developed card games with countries, maps and leaders on the cards. These have proved to be very popular with the class.*
- *record temperatures and rainfall in four different cities world-wide (starting, of course, with our own city, Johannesburg). We use the weather report following the news three times a week, as well as The Star newspaper.*

'Over the year, learners come to observe patterns and developments that have taken place in the news stories. They are able to accumulate evidence that supports a process or cycle. As the news unfolds, they piece together the bigger picture, making predictions of what might be the eventual outcomes of certain events. The process helps them to develop important skills, such as seeing relationships, relating cause

and effect, forming opinions, predicting outcomes, evaluating actions and making judgements. These are all learned within the context of the real world.)

'Beware the small print ...': Using television food adverts and packaging to teach nutrition

Mrs Thompson teaches Grade 8 natural science. When she was teaching the topic of nutrition, she decided to look at the kinds of food that were advertised on television.

'I wanted the class to think critically about some of the adverts they watch on television. I asked them to note down the types of food adverts that were shown when their [avourite programmes were on. We realized that most food advertisements encouraged them (that is, young people) to buy sugary cereals, sweets, salty snacks, fatty fast foods or other junk food.

'I asked them to bring empty packets or boxes of these foods to the classroom. They examined the nutritional facts on each box or packet to see how healthy these foods were. Then they calculated what percentage of these 'unhealthy' foods made up their diet. I asked them to design adverts that advertised healthy eating habits. Some of these were really amazing. I think the activity helped them to think more seriously about the kinds of things they eat, and the role advertising plays in shaping their preferences.'

Using television documentaries: Bringing the world into our classrooms

All the activities described so far use popular electronic media as a spur to learning, to evoke interest. But television also offers a rich source of more directly educative formats, such as short inserts in magazine programmes or longer documentaries. Traditionally, teachers have used these badly. In many cases they show entire documentaries, often without any guiding questions, and find that half the class is asleep by the end!

Mrs Maphangwe – whose teaching we videotaped – uses a television documentary to teach her class about volcanoes. She is able to use the advanced graphic techniques used in the video to show her class a moving model of how volcanoes are formed beneath the earth's crust. This is something that no textbook can do. Turn to your videotape and watch how she uses this video to supplement her lesson.

ACTIVITY 28

In part 7 of the video. Watch Mrs Maphangwe teach the lesson on volcanoes. View it twice and make notes.

Did you notice how Mrs Maphangwe *maintains control* of the medium throughout, pausing the video player when she needs to draw the learners' attention to a detail or to give an instruction? She also switches off the sound for a while, telling the learners to concentrate on what they see during one sequence. She does not simply play the tape through from beginning to end while the learners sit passively.



Spend 30 minutes on this activity.



Most of these ideas were adapted from: *Teachers on Teaching with Video; A Resource Guide for Teachers*. 1994. San Francisco: KQED Centre for Education and Lifelong Learning.

USING TELEVISION AND VIDEO EFFECTIVELY

Strategies that work *before* viewing

- Preview the programme or video yourself, before you show it to your learners. Never be tempted to use such a resource 'blind'; and preferably don't use it 'live' either (i.e. as it is broadcast). Even most of the *School TV* broadcasts during school hours should rather be recorded for use later, when they can be fitted into your teaching programme.
- Be clear about what the learning outcomes for the lesson are.
- You do *not* have to show the whole video. Often it is more effective if you choose a specific part to show the learners.
- Design clear questions or activities that relate to the video extract.
- Make sure the television set and video playback/recorder are working, and that the tape is ready to play at the correct place.
- Stand next to the television screen so that you can pause and rewind when necessary. Be in *command* of the technology and the medium!
- Show learners that you are the facilitator of the process, and will not be settling down at the back of the room to 'relax'.
- Ask learners to discuss in groups what they already know about the subject, and what they think they know.
- Set the lighting in the room. If the room is too dark, learners will be inclined to watch passively. There should be enough light so that learners can jot down points and answer the questions that you have set them (see below).

Strategies that work *during* viewing

- Set the learners a task to do while watching. You could write some pointers on the board to focus their viewing, for example, 'Note the uniforms which the different armies are wearing – you'll be asked about these later'. But don't expect miracles – if you expect learners to answer questions while the video is on, they should require only short answers.
- Consider using one short segment at a time – *direct* the learning experience!
- Control the pace of the viewing experience and the amount of information imparted. Otherwise it is just the same as hearing a half-hour lecture on the topic.
- Be prepared to interrupt the video using the PAUSE button to clarify what learners are watching, explain new vocabulary, or ask a question. Remember to press the PAUSE button *before* you speak, so that you don't compete with the video sound. This is an important tool to help you remain in control of the medium, but beware of using it too much in some videos; it can break up the 'narrative flow' of the video to the extent that learners will lose a sense of what's unfolding on the screen - and find this irritating.
- You can also pause the video when the video itself poses a question - get learners to predict answers.
- Increase observation and listening skills by rewinding and watching a segment two or three times.
- Try viewing *without the sound* when appropriate (see the *Using Popular Media* video).
- If the narrator uses difficult words for the level of your learners, you can turn off the sound and provide your own commentary. Prepare this beforehand.
- Teachers often feel reluctant to screen a video a second time. This is understandable, but if you have adopted a 'businesslike' approach to the whole experience, and the learners don't see it as just an 'entertainment break', it makes perfect sense to get them to watch a video that conveys a lot of information a second time. For younger viewers especially, a second viewing can help them to focus on content that was missed. Consider introducing some more demanding questions before doing so.

Strategies that work *after* viewing

- Leave enough time at the end of the video to discuss the questions that you set at the beginning.
- In pairs, learners can explain to one another or discuss aspects of what they viewed.
- Ask learners to write in two minutes their personal feelings about what they have just seen.
- In groups, learners can brainstorm ideas about any problems posed by the video.
- Set worksheets or integrated learning activities based on what the learners have viewed.

Using television to explore attitudes and values

One of the major issues confronting our society is violence. Parents and teachers often ask the question, 'How does watching violent acts on television affect children?' Literally dozens of research studies have investigated this very question. Unfortunately, it is extremely difficult to prove or disprove that television violence leads to an increase in violent behaviour, partly because of the many other factors in today's world that could also be contributing to real increases in violent behaviour. Rates of violent behaviour such as rape, muggings and murder have been known to increase in communities where television is non-existent, or a very minor factor. However, while a significant number of research studies cast doubt on any link between television violence and violent behaviour, many research studies do indicate such a link (one of the more telling of these found that after television was introduced to an isolated community in Canada in the early 1970s, violent acts between children increased by 160%).

How much violence is there on television? By the time he or she is 12 years old, the average American child will have watched approximately 100000 acts of television violence. Given the significant slice of broadcast time featuring American series on South African television, this figure is sobering.

An introductory lesson on television violence

Mrs Alice Moya teaches Grade 8 arts and culture at a school near King William's Town in the Eastern Cape. She is concerned about the amount of violence that children watch on television.

'I think it is really important for children to think about the violence which is shown on television, and not simply to take it for granted. Violent scenes in television programmes can affect how learners view themselves, their world and other people. TV characters who punch, kick or kill are harmful role models for learners.'

'I showed my class a short snippet of a programme with violence in it and asked them to think about why violence was used in this programme and how they felt about it. We discussed how TV often makes hurting or killing someone seem almost funny, or thrilling, and that real life isn't like this. We also discussed the consequences of a violent act. What sort of punishment was appropriate. How violence affects the victim, both physically and psychologically.'



Spend about 60 minutes on the preparation part of this activity and the later reflection on ways of improving the lesson.

ACTIVITY 29

- How could Mrs Moya get her learners to think more critically about violence on television?
- Design an exercise which gets learners to collect information about the number of violent acts that they witness in one night of TV viewing.

Learners should categorize the violence they observed into different types.

- c Try this exercise yourself. Then consider ways of improving the activity you devised.

The following questionnaire was devised by a group of teachers in America to find out what children felt about the violence they watched on television. We thought it could be used to stimulate discussion in South African classrooms.

Questions for young viewers

- 1 How is violence different in cartoons, the news, movies, sport?
- 2 Why do you think TV programmes show so much violence?
- 3 How do you feel when you see violent acts on TV?
- 4 Do you think you would feel the same if you saw the same violent acts in real life?
- 5 Do you think you would feel the same if you saw the same violent acts being committed in your own home?
- 6 Do you think there should be less violence on TV? Give reasons for your answer.

Adapted from KQED Center for Education and Lifelong Learning, San Francisco, 1997.

The second question in this questionnaire raises an issue that is worth pursuing with learners: what *kinds* of violence are we talking about when we refer to 'television violence', and how might they affect us? This is likely to get learners thinking about violence in a more sophisticated way. For instance, is a simple general increase in violent behaviour the only likely effect we should be thinking about?

Here is how you can use clips from television programmes to construct a useful teaching resource that will get learners thinking about violence in more complex and productive ways.

Violence on television: comparing formats

Assemble a series of sequences on videotape that depict violence in a variety of contexts. We would suggest recording the sequences in the following order (it would be best to insert a cassette in the video recorder ready to press the record button when a violent sequence seems about to start in the programme):

- 1 'Baddie' violence 1 (from a crime series – a criminal beats somebody up or shoots someone)
- 2 'Baddie' violence 2 (in a war story or video – this one is optional)
- 3 Violence on the news (here you will need patience – it may take a few days before you can capture a suitable sequence; you are more likely to see the results of violence, which will do, than an actual shot of a violent act, mainly because television crews usually reach a scene' of violence after it is over – an exception might be a public demonstration being 'covered by the media' that turns violent)
- 4 'Goodie' violence (the 'good guy' /hero/cop knocks out or shoots a 'baddy')
- 5 Cartoon violence (some programmes for children feature animated cartoons which show a cat, say, being blasted to pieces by a mouse pulling the trigger of a gun - though the cat will 'pull itself together' a few seconds later to chase the mouse again)
- 6 A campaign advertisement against domestic violence, such as wife- battering or rape (if there are no campaigns running on television when you compile this series, try recording off the radio, since such campaigns tend to be more numerous in that medium. Simply set your video recorder to a radio frequency. The

suddenly blank screen with just the soundtrack will add to the power of such a sequence.)

Items 1 and 4 will be easy to capture on tape; the others may take a little patience, but the complete series will be a useful resource that you can use more than once.

In class:

- 1 Introduce the topic of television and violence with a brief class discussion on the questions: 'What do you think about violence on TV? Do you think it can have a bad influence on people's behaviour?' This is just to get learners started.
- 2 Screen the series of television 'clips', after instructing the learners to try to identify the different *kinds* of 'television violence' in what they are about to see. Don't interrupt the series or comment while it is on.
- 3 Ask the class what *kinds* of violence they saw, and write two- or three- word descriptions on the chalkboard as they answer.
- 4 Ask the learners to discuss in groups of four or five what they think might be the possible *effects* of the different *kinds* of violence they have seen.

Here are some comments that we have heard on this issue. These opinions could be used as a worksheet before, or after, a class debate on the subject.

I don't think violent movies or TV lead to violent behaviour. We *know* it's just on tape or film. I can enjoy relaxing in front of a cop movie at the end of a hard day at work without ever resorting to violence. I think the idea that watching a lot of violence on TV leads to violent behaviour is just a convenient excuse that criminals come up with in court to get lighter sentences.



So *much* violence *must* 'rub off' on the people watching it. Maybe they won't rush out from watching a violent movie and beat up an old lady, but viewing so much violence in our homes can't be positive in its effect. It must increase people's tolerance of violent behaviour in themselves. They'll be that much more inclined to resort to violent behaviour when they're frustrated. Look at all the people who go berserk and shoot everyone around them because of some argument.



I think people would be less theoretical in their arguments if violence were to touch *their* lives. Then they'd want to do whatever they could to reduce the incentives for violent behaviour.

Some of the most violent people in South Africa probably don't see nearly as many violent videos or programmes as many 11 year olds.



Many things are contributing to increases in violent behaviour all over the world. All the violence we see on TV may, or may not, be one of them. We fail to

Why is it that *most* violent crime, and violent behaviour in the home, is perpetrated by men – against women, against one another, against children? There must be many reasons, and today that may include uncertainty about their status. But one reason could be that even the *heroes* in the movies so often sort out problems with their fists or a gun.



socialize many of our young people to respect others' rights, to see the *wrongness* of violence. We neglect spiritual values, and we don't teach young people *alternative* values or ways to act when they're angry or frustrated. Many families are under strain. Poverty and increasing unemployment lead to frustration. Our society is awash with guns. Too many people are crowded into urban areas ...

It's too easy to call for banning or controlling violence on TV. Films and TV only reflect the violent society out there; they don't cause it. Don't most people *like* violence as a way to get back at 'baddies'? We enjoy it when the hero 'gets the criminal', and when we hear of awful crimes, we want to do the same to those who perpetrate them.



Yes, but the media do nothing to *temper* people's liking of violence in a world where violence is becoming a social disease. The media *feed off* violence. We live in a world where the fact that we know serious violence will be publicized *adds* to the temptation to give in to violent impulses.



I agree that movies and TV reflect largely what people want to see – film makers wouldn't continue making violent movies or TV series for long if people didn't want them. Hollywood has 'dropped' *many* of their popular 'formulas' for films over the years when they fell out of fashion, or when the public started to want something different.

I wonder whether showing so much violence on the screen doesn't lead to a lot of young people growing up to be quite *passive* in accepting violence as part of life. They get the idea that violence is what *other* people do to you, and you're just lucky if *you* can escape it.



Some people want to cut all violence from television, including cartoons. But this under-estimates children's ability to 'decode' television. Even young children are well aware that cartoon characters are not true to life – that people and animals don't really get shredded, gather themselves and come back to life. They know very well (though they couldn't say it) that these stories are about conventions of conflict, ingenuity and escape, not murder.



4.4

Using radio and television to improve listening and understanding



You should, by now, have spent at least 48 hours on this module. Working to a 20-week schedule, this means you should now start Week 9.

All the activities in Section 4.3, while focused on developing content knowledge, also acted to improve the listening and speaking skills of learners. But popular electronic media can also be used to address these skills far more directly.

South Africa's new educational policy emphasizes that learning should enable learners to live and work more successfully in society. *Listening* and *understanding* are two critical skills needed to do this. As a consequence, teachers need to find effective ways of developing these skills, and doing so across the curriculum. The effect of work in these areas will be minimized if these skills are practised only in the language classroom:

Here are some ways in which teachers can use radio and television to improve the listening and comprehension skills of learners.

Using radio to develop listening skills and language competence



In part 4 of the video rewatch Olivia Mbi's lesson, which has some similarities to the 'Newspaper hunt 3' activity in Section Five, but is designed chiefly as a radio-based listening comprehension, and with less detailed questions. Notice the way she manages the use of the medium. Do the 'Listening to the news' activity. Spend about 40 minutes on the viewing and the activity.

What's in the news: Developing listening skills

Olivia Mbi introduces her radio-based lesson by asking learners if they listen to the news on the radio, or watch it on television. She asks them if they think there are more 'good news' stories or 'bad news' stories. She then asks them to listen to the recording of the news broadcast, which she plays once. Afterwards, she asks the learners if there were any difficult words that they did not understand.

Then she lets the learners listen to the broadcast a second time. But before they do, she gives them questions to respond to:

- How many news stories were there?
- Write down the names of people and places referred to in the news broadcast.
- What events happened in those places?

Later on in the lesson, she asks learners to complete the worksheet on the next page.

Listening to the news

- 1 Write your answers in the columns here:

Names of people	Places referred to	Event

- 2 What kinds of news stories did you hear? Tick the boxes below:

Politics	Economics/business
Military/war	Environment
Crime	Sport
People	Weather
Disasters	Other

- 3 Go back to the list and write down the order in which the news stories were broadcast. For instance, were stories about sport broadcast first? Were stories about crime first?
- 4 How many stories were about local news?
- 5 What events were happening elsewhere in Africa and the world?
- 6 How do you think radio stations in a country choose which stories to broadcast as news? For instance, are people in South Africa interested in a local news story from Alaska? Why or why not?

Why do you think Olivia played the news broadcast twice to the class?

There are a number of reasons why this is a good practice. **First**, playing broadcasts twice allows learners to hear the language being spoken more often. **Second**, listening a second time allows learners to focus on information retrieval. There is a lot of evidence that we hear more the second time we listen. It would have been even better if Olivia had asked the learners to keep their eyes closed, as this would have made their hearing more acute than usual, and their concentration greater.

We also liked Olivia's worksheet. She limited the questions she gave the class before they listened a second time, but her worksheet asks for more detail, extending the learners. Some learners will be able to answer the additional questions, while others won't. It seems Olivia prioritizes the development of listening skills rather than media literacy in this lesson, but the activity does contribute to the latter. Question 6, for example, which rounds off the activity quite well, is an important newspaper literacy question that requires a higher-level response. Learners will not be able to answer it directly from listening to the radio broadcast, but will have to think about the answer and call to mind what they might know about radio news.

There are ways in which Olivia could extend the learning that comes out of an activity like this one. For instance, she could have moved on to map reading (looking up Jakarta in an atlas) or a discussion of human rights (the broadcast mentioned police moving in on protesting students). One interesting addition might have been the use of newspaper reports on some of the same events as those reported in the radio news. Did you notice the difficulty one of the learners experienced in saying the name 'Jakarta'? This illustrates the advantage of having a print medium available as an extra resource.



Spend about 60 minutes on the preparation part of this activity and on the later reflection on ways of improving the lesson.

ACTIVITY 30

Develop an activity along the same lines as the one above that can develop listening skills within a learning area which you teach.

- a Tape a news broadcast or a current affairs programme, such as *AM Live* or *PM Live (Safm)* from the radio. You may have to tape a few programmes before you get one that is suitable. Remember, you don't have to use the complete broadcast.
- b Design a set of questions or activities based on each of the items in the broadcast. Make sure that you have questions that can develop knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.
- c Tryout your worksheet with learners.
- d Think about ways in which you could improve this activity.

Speaking in many tongues:

Radio as a means of developing multi-lingual skills

While proficiency in English is an increasingly important skill in the work- place, the promotion in South African classrooms of multilingualism needs little justification. One of the obstacles to acquiring a second or third language is not hearing it spoken by a native speaker or a fully proficient speaker. In South Africa, the fact is that learners are seldom taught languages by mother-tongue users of that language. In historically black schools, for instance, English is taught mainly by people for whom it is a second or third language. In historically white schools, isiZulu, isiXhosa and Sesotho (and other indigenous languages) are also often taught by people who don't have these languages as a mother tongue.

Yet there are radio broadcasts in all official languages and these provide a rich source for learning other languages, and how to speak them with the correct pronunciation and emphasis. The range of formats is also large: from news through music to soap operas. Here are some tips about how to use these formats effectively:

- Short excerpts need to be recorded and played on a regular basis, preferably every day. Language is learnt best in conditions where it is heard often, and then practised.
- Excerpts should be played twice as we have described, and a few content questions set as a follow-up.
- Because of the value of this 'drip-feed' approach rather than infrequent 'banquets', the simpler the approach the better, so that time can be found for such activities without encroaching on other work.
- Variety of content is important, so it is best to record excerpts from an assortment of radio formats (talk shows, magazine programmes, news, drama, and so on).
- Back up the listening with activities in which spoken language is practised.



Turn to Part 3 of your audiotape. Listen to Zubeida Desai speak about ways in which multilingualism can be encouraged in SA classrooms. *Multi-lingual Teaching*, a publication by ELTIC, is another rich source of lesson ideas and theoretical understanding about multilingual teaching. (See the reference in 'Selected reading' at the end of the module.)

Using television to develop listening skills and competence in a second language

Television holds almost endless potential for stimulating intense discussion, so that the usual emotional barriers to using a second language (embarrassment, a sense of inferiority, possible resentment of the language) are quickly forgotten. Used in the normal way, television's strong visual element tends to distract learners from listening to the soundtrack. But, by switching off either the visuals or the sound, teachers can realize television's tremendous potential for stimulating learners to listen carefully to the target language and to use it themselves.

If the target second language is English, there is no shortage of suitable material for the activities we suggest below. Situation comedies (sitcoms) are often the best choice because the action tends to rely on dialogue, and because they involve

humour. However, if you want to provide models that approximate South African Standard English, select carefully. No South African English varieties have any historical roots in the American dialects that tend to dominate South African television programming. Thus, we suggest using (some) South African-made programmes or British-made ones.

Unfortunately, television programmes in South Africa's other languages are not nearly as common, thus it is good to record unusual material in these languages whenever you can.

In this section we will briefly describe five activities based on the idea of an 'information gap' of some sort creating the stimulus for both careful listening and engaged discussion.

Video minus sound

Version 1: Play a video sequence involving plenty of interaction for a few minutes with the sound switched *off*. Stop the video at an appropriate point, and ask the learners to discuss *in the target language* (in pairs, small groups, or as a whole class if the class is 20 or less) what they think was going on and/or what was being said. Rewind to the beginning of the sequence during the discussion. Then replay the sequence with the soundtrack *on*. Let the learners discuss where they were right and wrong in their earlier suggestions.

Version 2: Tell the learners to listen carefully to the dialogue in the scene they are about to see. Play a sequence involving plenty of interaction for a few minutes with the sound *on*. Stop the video at an appropriate point (about a minute or less before the end of the sequence), and tell the learners that they will have to supply the next few things that the characters say. Play the last part of the sequence with the sound switched *off*. Then instruct the learners to write down the dialogue they think would have accompanied the visuals they have just seen (again in the target language). They can write this in play form and, if the characters are not named in the first part, they should describe them simply, for example:

Man in suit: Don't just stand there...
 Girl: I can't move.

Allow five to ten minutes for this, during which you may need to replay the last part again once or twice (without sound of course) so that the learners can check whether what they have written 'fits' the visuals. Then ask learners to read out their versions of the dialogue to their partner (in pairs), or in groups. Allow discussion of the various versions for up to ten minutes, then play the last minute of the video with the sound *on*. Further discussion is optional.

The first version above gives practice in listening and speaking, while the second version gives practice in listening, writing and speaking. Using video to create incomplete communication like this always generates lively interest and discussion and, provided that the learners have some competence in the target language, their reluctance to use this language for speaking will be temporarily overcome.

Video minus visuals

Version 1: Choose a sequence carefully – not only should it involve plenty of interaction, but the situation should not be immediately obvious from the soundtrack. A sequence of a minute should be long enough. Play the entire soundtrack of the sequence with the controls adjusted so that the screen is *blank* (or with the screen covered). Ask the learners to jot down, in the target language, what they think was going on, where the participants were, what sort of people were speaking (their social class, moral character, etc.). After about eight minutes, tell the learners to compare their descriptions (again in pairs or small groups) using the target language only. Before the discussion 'runs out of steam', replay the sequence *with the visuals only*, so that everyone can try out their versions against the visuals. Finally, replay the sequence with both the visuals and the sound switched *on*.

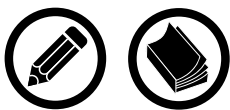
The 'Version 1' activities are designed to be completed within a single half hour school lesson (provided that the equipment is set up beforehand). The 'Version 2' activities should take between 45 and 60 minutes.

Version 2: A more complex, but rewarding version of this activity involves arranging class seating so that all the learners face each other in pairs, but with only one partner (A) in each pair able to see the television screen - the other partner in each pair (B) should have his or her back to the screen, and only be able to hear the sound-track.

Play part of the video sequence that should involve a discussion among a few people. Stop the tape, and tell the Bs to describe, in as much detail as they can, their impression of the people talking. The As must listen without interrupting. When they have finished, the A partners give their own impressions, based on what they have seen as well as heard, then the pairs discuss their different ideas.

Continue the tape for another minute now that the Bs have heard their partners' impressions. Repeat the exchange of impressions between partners. Then continue the video, this time letting everyone turn to see the screen. Allow partners a last discussion of their impressions. Later, or in the next lesson, do a similar activity with the As and Bs reversing roles.

The first of these activities affords practice in listening, writing and speaking the target language. The second does not require writing, but the listening part of this activity includes making conscious the unconscious inferences which we all make from people's voices, tone, and so on - of particular significance in learning a second language.



Spend about 30 to 40 minutes designing your own lesson. The book from which we drew some of these ideas describes a number of such activities. They can be used with any language, provided that you have video excerpts in the target language. The book is Cooper, R. et al. 1991. Video. Oxford University Press.

ACTIVITY 31

- a** If your school is equipped with a TV set and video player, attempt any one of the above video-based activities with a class.
- b** Take note of details during the activity which might lead to the lesson's improvement (i.e. its smoother running, improved choice of video sequence, etc.)
- c** If you teach a second language to more than one class, try the activity again, including the improvements. If possible, ask a colleague to observe the activity and give you feedback.
- d** Design another activity using video to stimulate learners to listen to and use their second language. Or just use the idea of an 'information gap' for the same purpose – for instance, cover a picture (not smaller than 30 cm x 40 cm, and preferably a fairly complicated image) with 'Post-it'™ slips of paper or small slips with blobs of Prestik™ on the back. The class may ask up to 15 questions requiring 'yes'- or 'no'-type answers about the image. Each time a learner guesses correctly (for example, 'Is it an animal?'), remove a slip of paper to reveal more of the picture, starting with the less 'informative' parts of the picture.

Finally, here is a video-based second language activity that requires you to prepare a worksheet.

Acting from a transcript

Transcribe about 15-20 lines of dialogue from a video sequence you have recorded. *Do not indicate who is talking, but start a new line every time the dialogue passes from one person to another.* Design a simple comprehension activity based on this, with questions like the following:

- 1 How many characters do you think are participating in this dialogue?
- 2 How would you describe some or all of them?
- 3 Do you notice any idiomatic or colloquial expressions?
- 4 What does the conversation refer to? etc.

- Give out copies of a worksheet containing both the transcription and these questions to all the learners. Ask them to read the dialogue and answer the questions.
- When they have completed this task, ask them to divide themselves up into groups consisting of the number of characters they think are featured in the dialogue. This will often not be completely clear, so different groups may vary in size. You will also need to allow time for some discussion, as individuals who attempt to form groups may not agree on the number of characters. Encourage this discussion, as long as the learners use the target language.
- Each group must then act out the dialogue, *paying attention to gesture and facial expression, as well as tone of voice* (one after another, with the class as audience, if the class is not too large, otherwise at the same time).
- Finally, play the video sequence once or twice to the class (sound and visuals). Extend the learning by rounding off the lesson with an informal discussion of the different interpretations and what led to them.

4.5

Learning by producing radio and television programmes



You are in Week 10. You should have worked for at least 52 hours on this module so far.

Radio interviews: Developing questioning and speaking skills

One of the simplest production activities teachers can use to develop a range of language skills is the simulated radio interview. One of the best ways of finding out about a topic is to ask someone 'in the know' a lot of questions. So, at the same time as learners are researching content, they can have fun and learn an important communication skill, one that is required by increasing numbers of people today. A simulated radio interview provides the opportunity for learners to:

- develop basic research skills and some understanding of the topic being studied.

This is necessary preparation for the interview.

- ask questions in a focused manner. This forces learners to 'summarize' a long list of possible questions into a shorter list of 'essential' questions.
- improve their speaking and presentation skills. Both the interviewer and interviewee have to express themselves clearly during the interview.

In some instances, you could choose to drop the idea of interviewing real people. Instead, learners could be assigned roles. They research the role and are then interviewed as if they were a street hawker or a president. This introduces a more imaginative dimension to the activity. Do the activity that follows with fellow teachers. It is always useful to 'test' an activity before you try it with learners.

ACTIVITY 32

This is an activity you can do with your class. It should be done in pairs.

- Each pair chooses an interesting person to interview. They could choose someone from the following list: *a street hawker, an overseas musician, a Member of Parliament, a radio or TV personality, a tourist visiting South Africa, or a person of their choice.*
- Each pair prepares ten questions they would like to ask the person they have chosen.
- Each pair conducts his or her own interview, with one partner interviewing the other. Choose a few pairs to present their interviews in front of the class. Keep a record of those chosen (possibly with assessment comments), so that others can be selected on another occasion.
- After the interviews, discuss in a constructive way how the interviewers' questions could be improved.

What did we think of this activity?

Although the activity uses the 'interview' to entice learners into learning, it has a number of weaknesses.

First, the teacher provides no time or guidance for research. Learners simply have to use what they already know about these characters in their interview. They don't learn how to interview, nor do they learn anything more about the topic being taught. It is a useful idea to allow learners to listen to an interview in order to *learn how* interviews work and what good questioning technique is. There should also be some form of print-based consolidation work planned.

Second, the teacher doesn't attempt to make the activity realistic. It isn't difficult to get the basic equipment required to record the interviews. Real equipment makes the activity seem far more like a 'real' radio programme. Recording interviews on audiotape introduces an element of excitement, and may act as an incentive to put more effort into preparing for interviews and conducting them. Having an interview on tape also means that it can be played back, giving the interviewing pair a chance to listen to themselves critically and aim at improving their performance.

Another way of inserting some realism into the activity is by basing the interview format on something familiar to learners – maybe the TV talk show *Two Way*, or radio programme *The Inner Ear* – in order to evoke learner interest.

Learning to ask questions

Radio journalists are trained to ask questions that will get the maximum amount of information from an interview in the minimum amount of time. Before conducting any interview, good journalists will always prepare themselves by thinking about the person they will be meeting (and if the person is prominent, by familiarizing themselves with what that person has achieved). They will also put some thought into preparing most of the questions they need to ask.

Here are some guidelines that you could think about when conducting interviews or asking learners to interview people:

- Decide *what information* you want to get from the interview.
- Decide who will be the *best person/people* to interview.
- Think carefully about the *questions* that you will ask. Make sure that they are likely to produce the answers you are looking for. Write these questions down neatly so that you can read them at a glance.
- *Record the answers* that you get.

Here are some additional points to remember about conducting interviews:

- Ask questions that are clear and directly related to the subject matter.
- If a person doesn't answer your question sufficiently, then probe further. This is perhaps the most important part of interviewing, and it is worthwhile practising it with a fellow learner.
- Ask one question at a time, otherwise the person may get confused. Don't ask, 'Why did you decide to become a nurse, and what are the conditions like at the hospital?' at the same time.

Start off with simple questions that supply you with basic factual information, e.g. the person's name, how long he or she has lived in the area.

Could you please tell me your name?

Cedric Baloi.

So why did you first become involved in the farmer's co-operative?

Move on to more general questions that allow the person to expand on certain issues.

Avoid questions that only require a 'yes' or 'no' answer. Rather ask questions that encourage the speaker to explain something in more detail.

I suppose it was the harsh laws of the land at that time which led to your involvement?

Yes.

Can you remember in what year the first drought came? How did this affect the community?

Try to find out details such as dates and what actually happened at that time.

Let one question lead to another. Don't let the person talk at length about something outside the topic.

So you say it was the strike that brought people together.

That's right. It was also the time we had a very good soccer side in the village.

I remember one game when I scored two goals . . .

'Err, coming back to the strike, if you don't mind . . .

You may need to bring the person back to the topic before he or she gets carried away.

Developing radio magazine programmes: Integrating speaking skills with other skills

Magazine programmes provide learners with the means to practise similar skills to those developed in interviews. But, because learners need to plan a longer programme around a theme using many different formats – interviews, songs, news, etc., they also develop social skills such as co-operative problem solving and planning, technical production skills, and an increased awareness of how such media presentations are put together.

Of course, activities that require learners to produce media need to be well planned and managed by the teacher. Look at the worksheet below which was designed by a group of teachers from the Northern Province. It was aimed at a class of Grade 9 learners. Then do the activity that follows.

ON THE AIR WITH RADIO NINE

- 1 You are required to produce a 15-minute radio programme. Your programme should focus on the theme 'the local community'.
- 2 Record this programme on a cassette tape and present it to the class.
- 3 Work in groups of six. Each group member must appear in the programme. You must all be involved in recording or producing the programme (i.e. not just as a speaker).
- 4 Include four of the following in your radio programme:
 - an environmental issue
 - a health issue
 - something about your school: past, present or future
 - an interview
 - a news item from the local community
 - a viewpoint or opinion section

Some of these elements could be run together; e.g. an interview about an environmental issue.
- 5 All items need to be well researched. This research should include:
 - reading the information in your textbook to prepare you to ask intelligent questions in your interviews.
 - reading at least one other reference book or newspaper.
 - interviewing experts and local community members about issues relating to 'the local community'.
- 6 There must be voice or music links between all the items in the programme.
- 7 Watch the time. No item in the programme may be longer than three minutes. Marks will be deducted for programmes that are more than 30 seconds longer or shorter than the required 15 minutes.

Stay tuned!

ACTIVITY 33

- a List what a teacher would need to prepare before setting the class this activity.
- b List the skills that learners will develop or practise in doing this activity. Divide these into:
 - speaking skills
 - group skills
 - practical skills
 - knowledge-based skills
- c Explain how this activity could get learners to explore their values and attitudes.
- d What learning area or areas could the activity be used in?
- e Think about how you could adapt this activity for use in your classroom.



Spend about 90 minutes on this activity. Work with a fellow teacher if possible.

What we thought about this activity

We thought this an excellent activity. The instructions are brief and straightforward, and leave the learners in no doubt as to what is expected of them. 'Behind the scenes', a fair amount will need to be prepared and not left to chance. This can be done by the teacher, but it would be best if the teacher organized the learners to take responsibility for as much as possible. The teacher should sit down with the learners and go through all the practical requirements:

- Tape recorders and microphones. (How many are needed? How many are available? Do they all work? Are there conveniently situated power sockets, otherwise batteries will have to be bought?)
- Tape cassettes. (How many will be needed, i.e. how many groups, if they are going out to conduct interviews at the same time? Who pays for them? Don't be tempted to buy the cheapest – the tapes tend to jam up in the cassette player.)
- Timing. (If there are only one or two recorders, and five or more groups, a lot of learners may be left idle while waiting to use the equipment. In this case, the ideal would be to borrow more recorders; another solution might be to have other work for learners to do while they wait. Noise and venue are also factors to consider. Recording requires absolute silence in the background. Will groups be able to record their programmes in the afternoon when most learners have gone home?)
- Music links. (Someone needs to supply a music centre or hi-fi that can record from a CD player. The music needed should be on a CD. Some schools have tape recorders equipped with simple 'fade' switches designed to record smooth transitions from voice recording to music and back but, with a little practice, a reasonable result can be obtained from using a hi-fi or music centre.)

This activity would develop a range of skills:

- *speaking for broadcast* (speakers would need to speak clearly, impart their message or information clearly, let their own personalities emerge in their speaking, and avoid spoiling everything by saying 'Ahm' or 'you know' before every second word);
- *group skills* (group problem solving, subordinating one's own wishes for the sake of achieving consensus and a common goal);
- *practical skills* (using sound equipment to produce a reasonable presentation);
- *knowledge-based skills* (media literacy through actual radio production – one of the best ways to develop such literacy; also gathering information, finding out 'what's going on' and what's important in the way of issues, setting up interviews, identifying and approaching people to be interviewed, thinking up good interview questions).

In the area of values and attitudes, in addition to teaching the need for co-operation, the activity focuses on a range of topics which is likely to engender discussion and thought about health, environmental and community issues. This can be drawn on by the teacher as a follow-up to the presentations.

Finally, we can see an activity like this being adaptable to several learning areas, depending only on the topics set being relevant. The most obvious, however, are Communication, Literacy and Language; Human and Social Sciences; and Arts and Culture.

A dream of a project: Adapting a setwork for radio

Many language teachers have discovered the value of turning learners into radio producers as a way to bring literary setworks to life. Involving learners in translating

a short story, or a scene from a novel or play, into a radio production (even longer works can be radio-dramatized) generates a situation in which the learners themselves create a context in which the literature makes sense, both as entertainment and as a form of storytelling.

James Cupido, a Western Cape teacher, was having difficulty helping his Grade 10s relate to the strangeness of the story in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, not to mention the usual difficulty of the late- sixteenth century verse. Listening to a play on the radio one night, he had the idea of setting his class to produce a version of the central story of the four young lovers for 'radio', using the school's seldom-used tape recorder.

Once he had hit on this idea and thought about it for a few minutes, he became increasingly excited. The whole play is constructed by Shakespeare as a dream, with a central story being acted out in a forest, and interspersed with the appearance of strange beings and seemingly impossible switches of character (one person seems to become another in mid-story). All this seemed to put the learners off, but if they could be given the job of *producing* a version of it, they would surely come to see that the play was as up-to- date as last night's dream or last week's teenage love affair. In addition, because it was a dream, it was not tied too strongly to any particular period of history.



Turn to Part 2 of your audiotape. Listen to a group of teachers who have used this kind of technique in their teaching. Note down ideas you could use in your classroom.



A scene from the 1999 film version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* starring Kevin Kline as Bottom and Michelle Pfeiffer as Titania.

A proper stage production seemed out of the question, but a radio play that condensed the central story into about 40 minutes seemed a reasonable undertaking. After delving into the play to get a sense of how the production could be scripted, and after some planning, James put his idea to the class. He told them that they could set the story in any period they wished, and use only the amount of dialogue from the play that would be necessary to carry the story. Although a few learners were sceptical or not very interested to begin with, the class very soon experienced James's own growing excitement.

One learner suggested setting the play in modern-day Cape Town, and another thought the popular 'Glen' on the slopes of Table Mountain would make a good imaginary setting that they could all relate to (this was greeted with much laughter). A third learner suggested recording the play in the class's own language. James saw a danger in this idea (that the learners would concentrate on the story only), so he suggested combining Shakespeare's dialogue (the best bits) with their own

This teacher is ambitious and was working with a strong and interested group of learners. For this reason, a 40-minute play was possible. However, we'd suggest you first try your class with a short play, especially if they are in Grades 6 - 9. Choose a single scene from a play or novel, or a suitable short story, and ask a small group to turn this into an eight-minute play. Later you can become more adventurous.

language – to which the class readily agreed. This strategy meant that the learners had to delve into the play very carefully to draw out the 'best' lines and speeches, and combine them constantly with their own language to express the 'bits' in between.

Before long, the entire class was deeply immersed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in a way which would never have happened if the class had not been given a manageable project of producing Shakespeare as entertainment which, after all, was what Shakespeare intended it to be. The end result on one C60 audiocassette would not have won an award on the BBC or the SABC, but it was not at all bad and, in the process of making it, the learners had found themselves interpreting the rather silly young lovers' confusion in a way that they could relate to completely.

HOW TO GO ABOUT PRODUCING A RADIO PLAY

Preparation

- Make sure you have a reasonably good portable tape recorder with a separate microphone, one 60-minute cassette tape, and a room that is free from outside noise to enable your class to produce a 'radio production'.
- Divide the class into small groups and get them to dramatize scenes or chapters from a setwork. Learners working in groups search the text for essential dialogue and narrative, and then begin writing the radio script. Each group works on one chapter or scene.
- Editing is not possible with the standard audiocassette, so careful scripting and reading are necessary. During this phase a good deal of peer and teacher comment on the script should take place in order to improve the script.
- Audition learners to play the main characters throughout this writing process. Others should be assigned to do sound effects or provide a 'studio audience'.
- Some dramatization is needed if voices are to sound convincing and not dull. The teacher may provide some guidance here, but usually the fact that the actors are focusing on speaking, and not on action or being seen, means that they quickly learn the need to speak 'with expression'.

Recording

- Actors need to stand around the microphone, so it's best to have one with a longish cable that will enable it to be suspended from the ceiling (such cables can be bought from shops supplying sound equipment). Tape recorders with built-in mikes are not much good as they tend to pick up the hum of the recorder's motor on tape.
- Actors will need to be reminded to remain alert and be careful not to rustle their scripts.
- Because it's irritating to re-record portions of the tape that sound bad, it's essential to do at least one 'dry run', reading through the whole script (with sound effects) before recording.
- Learners will have fun exercising their ingenuity to come up with sound effects that work. For instance, stamping suddenly on a small, empty fruit-juice carton produces a very convincing 'gunshot' on audiotape. Shaking a large piece of sheet metal can reproduce the sound of thunder on demand.

Projects like this can take up a fair amount of time, but the 'deep' understanding of a literary work that develops as a result of preparing a text for *presentation* is usually worth it. One of the writer's Grade 11 classes took four weeks of English lessons to produce a complete 'radio' version (on tape) of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. By the end of the process, the learners had a very thorough 'firsthand' knowledge of the story of *Animal Farm*, its characters and its underlying ideas.

Collecting media resources

4.6

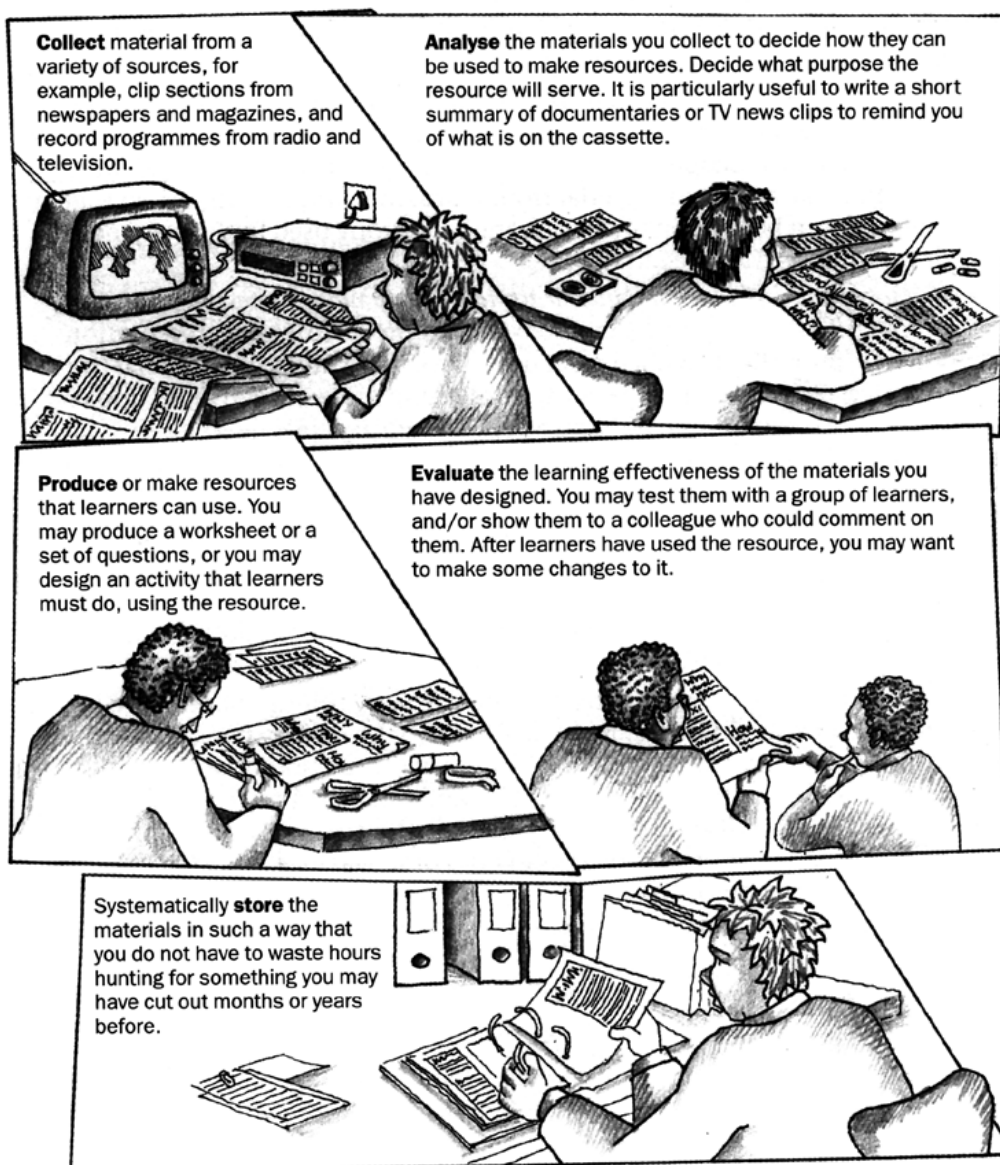
Being organized about media-based learning resources

Generally, there are five important stages that you need to follow when you are making your own resources based on the media (the CAPES model). These are:

- Collecting material;
- Analysing this material;
- Producing your own resources based on this material;
- Evaluating the lesson based on media;
- Systematic storing/filing for easy retrieval when you need it.



You are now halfway through the module; you should have spent 60 hours on it! Well done! Begin Week 11 now.



Watch part 8 of the video. You will watch two teachers, Jayesh Nair and Mrs Mophangwe, prepare media-based lessons and then teach them. Notice how both follow a CAPES approach.

Some further practical tips

- *Be consistent in setting aside materials that you might find useful.*
 - Keep a box for storing promising materials until you have time to deal with them further.
 - Cut out such material as soon as you find it, or at least put the magazine or newspaper page in the box.
 - If possible, have a video cassette recorder and tape recorder set up (preferably with a blank tape available) for easy recording of programmes.
- *Make brief notes about possible uses, and attach these to the material.* When you have used the material, update these notes with comments on how to adapt it for future lessons.
- *Continually re-evaluate your resources.* Here are three questions we asked when we considered what to use in this learning guide – they make useful criteria for you to use in evaluating your material:
 - Does the material help learners demonstrate the learning outcomes we want them to achieve?
 - Did the learners experience any problems with the activities, such as lack of clarity and levels of difficulty?
 - How can we improve this resource?
- *Be sure always to write the name of the publication from which material was taken, and the date, on the material itself.*
- *Photocopy newspaper clippings and preferably store these in plastic covers.* (Newsprint quickly yellows with age, and this shows up badly as grey or black when photocopied.) In fact, it is preferable to make two copies (and even to make a copy of material from magazines and elsewhere), so that one copy can be kept on file in case the other copy used in the classroom never finds its way back to the file.
- *If you have access to a computer, learn to use it to make professional-looking worksheets and other materials.* Today's word-processing and presentation software allow the teacher a great deal of scope for adapting material (for instance, changing the typeface to something more attractive, or updating questions without having to retype the entire worksheet).
- *If you are fortunate enough to have access to a scanner, consider scanning in pictures to be stored digitally.*
- *Use a colour laser photocopier to copy photographs or colourful diagrams onto overhead projector slides.* This is a relatively cheap way of making slides, with the added advantage that you can use a Koki™ pen to label particularly important aspects of the photographs or diagrams represented. This will allow you to show them to an entire class at the same time.
- *A word about maps.* Among the best are the large roll-up maps made for educational use. Unfortunately, these are also the most expensive. World maps in laminated plastic are less expensive, and should last for many years (these are impervious to Prestik™, and can be written on and wiped clean). Teachers should also look out for the free maps occasionally published as teaching aids by newspapers or magazines. Another option is to custom-make your own map with only the features you want to have on it, and to have this laminated – an excellent once-off investment.

What have we learnt about using popular media in teaching?

4.7

Key learning points in Sections Three and Four

What are popular media?

- 'Popular media' is a term that describes a variety of different formats. We can categorize these as either *print-based media* (magazines, newspapers, posters, flyers, etc.) or *electronic media* (radio, television, CDs, etc.).
- Within each broad category, there are differences: Magazines tend to carry longer stories, most often with a strong human interest focus, while newspapers carry shorter stories that focus on more immediate 'hard news'. Television is a strongly visual medium, which means it has both benefits and drawbacks as an educational medium, while radio is a strongly auditory medium. But even within magazines, newspapers, radio and television, a number of different formats are evident.
- These different formats provide a rich range of different resources that teachers can use in education.
- However, it is important to recognize that popular media – designed primarily to inform and entertain rather than educate – are not *designed* to educate in a conceptually sound manner. For this reason, teachers using them in the classroom need to play a strong *mediating* role.

Teaching with popular media

- In the end, the weakness or strength of an educational resource based on popular media is determined by the *degree of thought the teacher has put into the design* and, in particular, the link the teacher has made to educational media such as textbooks.
- Popular media are very effective in supplementing the learning of content knowledge by activating learner interest, contextualizing content knowledge, making abstract ideas more concrete and 'visible', updating textbooks and teaching values education.
- They are also useful in developing language skills. Print media are particularly powerful in developing reading and writing skills. Electronic media are particularly good at developing listening and speaking skills.
- The popular media are a source of many of the stereotypes and unquestioned assumptions that we take for granted in our day-to-day lives. However, precisely because of this, they also provide excellent resources for developing *critical thinking* and *media literacy* skills. Developing these skills is important for learners and teachers alike in order to become more familiar with the way in which the media work, and the effect they have on our thinking and behaviour. This familiarity is called 'media literacy', and it is regarded as an important learning outcome in the new South African curriculum.

Teaching with popular electronic media

- Follow a 'PSA' procedure to ensure the best use of television extracts:
 - *preview* (*preview* the programme yourself before showing it to learners);
 - *select* (*select parts* of the programme to help you achieve educational outcomes);
 - *activity* (*design an activity* to go with the programme).

- *Recordings* of radio and TV programmes usually work better than live broadcasts.
- Focus on a relevant *section* of a programme rather than the complete programme – select on the basis of what will best help to achieve the *learning outcome* you're after.
- Make sure you know what the *purpose* of using radio or TV is.
- Decide whether the activities you set will take place at home or in the classroom.
- To ensure *active* viewing or listening, introduce the recording or video, stay in control of the medium, and set questions or activities based on it.
- Consider ways in which radio or TV can help learners to explore *values, attitudes* and *knowledge*, as well as skills.
- Think about using other forms of media, such as newspapers, *in conjunction with* TV or radio.

Resourcing classrooms

- To use popular media successfully, teachers must collect and store popular media resources systematically (for instance, in an alphabetically-arranged file). You can't look for articles a day or two before you teach. You need to do so methodically over the entire length of your teaching career. Cut out articles you know you will use, and even those you think you *may* use. Work with other teachers so that you cover as many publications as possible.



This is a long, time-consuming activity. But it is important. It will help you pull together the work done so far. So don't skip it! Spend about four hours on it.

A summative assessment activity

Choose any three of the school lessons referred to in Sections Three and Four.

- a** Note down how popular media were used to develop a learning resource in the examples you chose.
- b** Try to identify the knowledge, skills, and values or attitudes (where applicable) that each resource tried to develop. Did the lessons develop sufficient *higher-order* conceptual learning? (You may want to refer back to Section Two to answer this question.)
- c** Think about how the use of popular media added to the teaching and learning experience. Do you think these lessons were able to achieve the intended learning outcomes more successfully than conventional methods would have? Give reasons.
- d** Develop your own teaching and learning resource which uses a popular media format. Using a mix of print and electronic media, develop a learning unit or a series of lessons, and make sure your lessons develop higher-order conceptual understanding. Spell out in detail how you want each lesson to proceed. The following headings may help you to structure your lessons:
 - Specific outcomes you are hoping learners will demonstrate
 - Teacher activities
 - What the learners will do
 - Resources you will develop and use
 - How you will assess learners
- e** Assess your work. Write a note on why you think it is a good piece of work (not more than a page). Think carefully about the criteria you used to arrive at your assessment.
- f** Ask a fellow teacher to assess your work, then discuss it together. Do you agree on your assessment? How and why do you differ?