

Topic: How to Interview a Guest Speaker and Write an Article

Submitted by: Connie Hilton, Vinemont High School

Level/Subject: 9th English

Content Standards:

- Writing Standard 21: Write informative or explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Production and Distribution of Writing Standard 23: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Range of Writing Standard 29: Write routinely over extended time frames, including time for research, reflection, and revision, and shorter time frames such as a single sitting or a day or two for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- Production and Distribution of Writing Standard 25: use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically. (Optional)

Time Required: 6 class periods

Overview/Purpose: Students will create interview questions, interview a veteran, and write an article based upon their interview notes.

Materials/Resources:

- Video of Oprah Winfrey interviewing Elie Wiesel (or a copy of any interview from the paper or any other school-appropriate source)
- Appointment with veteran (or whatever guest you choose)
- Appointment with reporter or editor
- Schedule time in the computer lab (if you choose Standard 25)
- Grading rubric for interview

Activities:

Day 1:

- Watch an interview of Elie Wiesel from Oprah (because we just finished reading *Night*).
- Discuss the kinds of questions asked in the interview.
- As a class, formulate interview questions that students will use to interview one another. Students will need a list of these questions as well as the rubric by which they will be graded for their interview with the veteran.

Day 2:

- Students will work with a partner and interview one another using the questions generated on Day 1. They should take good notes (keeping in mind what is on the rubric)!
- Students will write up a narrative from their interview notes. (This is practice for the real interview).
 - Homework: Students will generate interview questions for tomorrow's guest, using their prior knowledge from their history class and our *Night* unit.

Day 3:

- Have "press conference" with a veteran. He/she will speak for about half the period.
- Students will interview guest using their pre-generated questions for the remainder of the period. Additional questions may be added, provided the student has taken a moment to reflect on the question to make sure that it is not rude or inappropriate in some other manner.

Day 4:

- Have a reporter (or editor) come in and teach students how to turn their notes into a story. (Save time for Q & A).

Day 5:

- Compose "articles" in class. (If you have chosen to use Standard 25, this should be done in the computer lab. For example, students could post their articles in their digital portfolio or on their blogs or a class blog, so that all postings are together).

Day 6:

- Share and critique articles. (If you have chosen to use Standard 25, this should be done in the computer lab. Students should read one another's articles and post comments on at least two classmates' articles. Note: You will want to make sure that you have taught what is and is not appropriate to post as a comment).