

# Introduction

The Help ESL lesson plan aims to facilitate language learning through the exploration of themes and vocabulary from the popular novel "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett. This topic is important as it not only introduces students to cultural and historical contexts but also allows them to engage with relevant social issues, such as racial discrimination and civil rights. By delving into the characters and plot of "The Help," students can improve their language skills while gaining a deeper understanding of societal issues. This lesson plan provides an opportunity for students to develop their reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities in English within a meaningful context.

## Vocabulary Building

### Vocab

Vocab	Definition
<b>Jim Crow laws</b>	Racial segregation laws that were enacted in the Southern United States.
<b>Civil Rights Movement</b>	A social and political movement advocating for equal rights and treatment of African Americans.
<b>Domestic worker</b>	A person employed to work within the employer's household, often performing tasks related to housekeeping or taking care of children.
<b>'The Help' novel</b>	'The Help' is a novel by Kathryn Stockett that explores the lives of African American maids working in white households during the early '60s in Jackson, Mississippi.
<b>Segregation</b>	The enforced separation of different racial groups in a country, community, or establishment.

# Contextual Usage

1. The **Jim Crow laws** were responsible for creating segregated public facilities such as schools, restrooms, and drinking fountains.
2. The **Civil Rights Movement** led to significant changes in society by addressing inequality and discrimination based on race.
3. A **domestic worker** takes care of household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare.
4. 'The Help' novel offers insight into the lives of African American maids struggling against the racism they faced while working for white families.
5. **Segregation** affected various aspects of daily life including where people could live, go to school, or even sit on public transportation.

## ESL Warm-up Activity

To kick off the lesson on "The Help," start with a thought-provoking question related to the themes in the novel. For example, you could ask students to reflect on how literature and storytelling can shape people's perceptions of specific historical events or time periods. Encourage students to express their ideas and opinions on this topic, fostering a sense of anticipation for what they are about to learn through the lesson. This will set the tone for an interactive and immersive learning experience, laying the groundwork for exploring the themes and vocabulary in "The Help."

## Main ESL Lesson Activities

### Vocabulary Activity: Character Analysis

Begin by assigning students different characters from "The Help." In groups, they should discuss and write down adjectives and personality traits to describe their assigned character. Afterward, each group presents their findings to the class, using

the targeted vocabulary words. This encourages collaborative discussion and expands students' vocabulary in a contextualized manner.

## **Listening Activity: Historical Context Podcast**

Students listen to a podcast episode discussing the historical background of "The Help" era. Afterward, they engage in a group discussion regarding the key points of the podcast and how it relates to the themes present in the novel. This activity not only improves listening skills but also enhances comprehension and critical thinking.

## **Roleplay Activity: Civil Rights Situations**

Divide students into pairs and provide them with various scenarios related to civil rights issues. For example, one student could act as an African American maid while another student can act as her employer during 1960s America. They will roleplay different situations utilizing vocabulary related to social inequality, allowing them to understand perspectives and practice appropriate language use.

## **Reading and Writing Activity: Letter Writing Exercise**

After reading a specific chapter or section from "The Help," ask students to imagine themselves as one of the characters from that part of the book for whom they will write a letter expressing their feelings about an event or situation depicted in that chapter. This exercise encourages language production while connecting emotionally with characters' experiences through writing.

## **ESL Homework Assignment**

For homework, students are tasked with writing a reflective essay on the themes of discrimination, racism, and empowerment as portrayed in "The Help." They should

also be encouraged to include new vocabulary words studied during the lesson. Additionally, students can watch a related movie or documentary and jot down any new language elements encountered for further discussion in the next class. This assignment aids in reinforcing comprehension of the lesson content while encouraging independent critical thinking and expanding language skills beyond the classroom.

## **Conclusion**

### **Summary of Key Points**

Throughout this lesson, students explored the themes of discrimination, social inequality, and empowerment within the context of "The Help." They engaged in various activities that fostered vocabulary expansion, critical thinking, and empathy towards others' experiences during a significant historical period.

### **Reflection and Application**

As students reflect on this lesson, they can consider how exposure to diverse perspectives through literature enhances their language development. They can apply the learned vocabulary and thematic understanding to real-world conversations and written expression, thereby gaining a deeper grasp of language nuances while developing an appreciation for different cultures and histories.

## **Why this topic is great for ESL learning**

### **Relevance to Real-life Scenarios**

"The Help" ESL Lesson Plan provides a platform for language learners to engage with real-life issues, such as discrimination and social justice, through literature. This offers a valuable opportunity for students to connect language learning with meaningful societal topics, fostering empathy and cultural understanding.

## **Multifaceted Skill Development**

By exploring "The Help," students can enhance various language skills, including reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, critical thinking, and communication. The multifaceted nature of the novel allows for the holistic development of language abilities.

## **Cultural Insight**

The lesson plan offers insights into historical and cultural aspects of American society in the 1960s. It enables ESL learners to broaden their cultural awareness while improving their linguistic proficiency.

This topic is particularly beneficial as it encourages students to apply language skills in a context that is relevant and engaging.