

“The Honorable Joha, Mulla Nasruddin Hodja Feeds His Coat”
An English Language Lesson Plan by Mary Brooks



Unit/Theme: true values

Proficiency Level: novice to intermediate low (ACTFL Guidelines)

Timing: two to three hours with writing assignment

Content Objectives

For students to:

- understand the personalities of those who can only see clothing and not the person inside
- be able to describe the situation
- be able to retell the story

Language Objectives

For students to:

- use new vocabulary
- use discourse markers for the sequence of the story
- find meaningful metaphors
- determine the meaning of new words using context clues
- integrate listening, reading, speaking, and writing
- retell the story
- relate the story to a personal experience, first orally, and then in writing

Learning Strategies

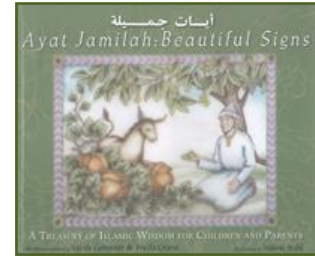
For students to:

- understand the story sequence by building a context
- use discussion skills to consider the lesson of the story as a pre-reading strategy
- describe what the characters said when the reading is divided into time segments, and then retell the story using discourse markers
- use the reading as a context for writing

Key Vocabulary: fasting month, debated, finest, invisible, sidled away, similar incident, turban, host, stuffed, snatching, tucked, what on earth, quite obvious, ignored

Materials

- *Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents*, collected and adapted by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane. Boston: Skinner House (2010). Available at www.uuabookstore.org or 800-215-9076 and wherever books are sold.
- mp3 player/recorder



Context Building

Ask the students:

- Have you ever felt dismissed because of the clothes you wear? Do you ever feel competitive in the way you dress? Do you like to look like other students?

Presentation (Teachers)

1. Now that the students have some background for the moral of the story, play the whole story for an overview, without stopping.
2. Play the recorded story again.
3. Play the recorded story a third time and pause at the following parts in order to emphasize their importance:
 - what Nasruddin was thinking as he came back from the field
 - what happened at the dinner party
 - what Nasruddin did
 - what happened when Nasruddin returned
4. Read the moral out loud: “What on earth are you doing?” asked his host. “It is quite obvious to me,” replied Nasruddin Hodja, “that since everyone ignored me until I put on this fancy coat, it is my clothes who have been invited, not me.”

Practice/Application

1. Retell the story with the students. Start a story chain. Use the new vocabulary in the retelling.

Use sequence markers, for example:

first of all, second, third
in the first place, for one thing, then, next
before, now, after, while
into, until, last, during
since, always, later, earlier, in the end, finally

2. Help the students use descriptive adjectives and interesting verbs.
3. Make sure the lesson of the story is clear.

Assessment

Use a dictation to give the students assessment questions. The dictation sequence is: listen, listen and repeat, listen and write, listen and check.

They can write the answers individually and then share with a partner.

1. What was Nasruddin thinking as he left his field?
2. What did he decide to do and why?
3. What happened to him at the party?
4. Why do you think people were ignoring him?
5. What did Nasruddin decide to do?
6. What was the reaction?
7. What does “What on earth are you doing?” mean?
8. Have you ever felt strange because of your clothing?
9. What was your reaction?
10. Do you ever mind looking different than your friends?

Extension

Reading into Writing

1. Ask the students:
 - Have you ever felt ignored or strange because of something you were wearing?
 - Do you ever judge people by what they are wearing? What is the result? How do you feel? How does the other person feel?
2. Tell the students:

- Think about your own stories and brainstorm with a partner about a time when you felt ignored.
- Tell your partner what happened.
- Record this story.

3. Tell the students:

Use this practice storytelling and your recording to write your story. Divide the story in this way:

- Describe the event.
- What was your reaction?
- Did you decide to change or adjust your behavior?

Use sequence markers, descriptive adjectives, and interesting verbs when you write the story.

4. Follow standard writing process to guide the students into editing and redrafting their stories.