

Selecting Materials for LAC Sections

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Importance: Selection of materials for LAC is crucial.

- Relating material to corresponding classes.
- Material (along with assignments) should aim to advance language proficiency in: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Ideas for selecting material:

- Hot and current topics: The idea is that topics that are current engage students, and build upon their knowledge about these topics, which helps overcome individual differences in terms of topic knowledge and focus on improving the language. Examples: women's rights in Middle Eastern countries, the concept of Jihad in Islam.
- Format of material:
 - o Speaking: Discussion in classroom (debates, project presentation)
 - o Listening: movies, songs, documentaries, ads
 - o Reading: newspaper articles, novels, the web
 - o Writing: Reaction papers, discussion board on Blackboard** To contextualize the assigned material, write a summary paragraph.
- Self-selected material: I picked two very popular topics (Iraq and Palestine). For those two days, the students will have to go and look for material for that topic. I posted many links to high-circulation newspapers in Arab countries. Each student needs to surf the internet and pick material related to the topic of discussion that day. Self-selected material come at the end of the course, when students are supposed to be more confident with their language skills. Also, self-selected material gives the students voice in selecting the material for the course. Finally, instead of having one piece to read, the class will have as many different points and angles to look at the topic as many there are students.
- Maximizing learning
 - o Vocabulary files available before students read the assigned material. Then the file is updated to include new vocabulary learned during class discussion.
 - o The discussion board for the class is up and running. Each student has to post a comment or a question regarding the assigned material for the week.
 - o Benefit from the extra-curricular activities for the Arabic program.