

# TESOL Certificate Program UCLA Extension

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## Observation Report

**Observation Guidelines:** An Observation Report from each core class is required. Question #6 on the Observation Sheet will be specific to each class and provided by the instructor.

- Arrange ahead of time with the school and instructor an observation of your choice and level
- Sit quietly and do not disturb the class while observing
- Bring the “**Things to Notice**” sheet to help guide your observation
- Final observations must be typed
- Students must complete a minimum of four (4) observations to include in the final portfolio class
- One observation will be done in EACH core class
- One of the four observations may be done observing an online class (these URL’s will be provided by your teacher)
- A recommended observation time is 25 – 50 minutes

➤ **Name: Carl Peel**

➤ **Class: Linguistics**

➤ **Date: February 26, 2023**

➤ **Online: <https://www.newamericanhorizons.org/training-videos>**

➤ **Class subject observed: Growing Vocabulary**

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### *Classroom Observation*

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- **Class level: Adult beginners**
- **Teacher's name: Karli Booth**
- **Amount of time in observation: 28 minutes**

### General Notes While Observing

**Take *notes* during your observation.**

**Use the *Things to Notice* sheet for guidance.**

Pay particular attention to:

- **Learner Engagement:** The teacher used Total Physical Response (TPR) as the first activity which got students engaged and participating right from the beginning. Students seemed enthusiastic throughout the class, with the various activities, most of which appeared to be fun and enjoyable while getting a chance for a lot of repetition and teacher assessment.
- **Monitor & Assessment:** Group work and the games give a good opportunity for the teacher to roam the room and assess how various students and groups of students are doing. High-ordered thinking is evident from the various ways the students engage with the vocabulary, matching up words with pictures, sounds with words, sounds with pictures, spelling, etc.
- **Strategies:** Total Physical Response was well used. Clear directions. Many different activities. Plenty of recycling and repetition.
- **High-Quality Lesson:** Instructions were clear and direct (though I wonder how much they understood of all of these). Various activities made it clear she was following a well thought out lesson plan.

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- Teaching: Breaking into smaller groups during activities (“Gentlemen, please point to your ears” gives a better chance to assess and correct issues than directing the whole class at once.
- Materials: Had various materials, handout sheets, an overhead projector, magazines to cut pictures out of, letters on paper to arrange for spelling, a song, and even the students’ own bodies.
- Classroom Management: Moved through clear activities with good transitions: TPR → Handout/Board work → Bingo Game (2 ways – matching sound to pictures, then pictures to written words) → TPR again → Singing a Song using vocab → Group Spelling Practice → Individual work making and labeling pictures → Early finishers she had write out some simple sentences with the vocab → Final review via TPR.

## Essay Response

Answer the questions below in essay form. This paper must be typed.

### *Learning Strategies*

1. **What did you learn about teaching from this observation? Include at least one in – text citation from the current class readings to support your response.** Is there something that was particularly useful in this lesson? Was there clear evidence of a high quality lesson? Were the learning goals and objectives clearly reviewed and evident? Please give examples and specific details (150-300 words)

I learned how having various activities that cover the lesson material in various ways, and engage the students in listening, speaking, reading, spelling and writing in general is a good way to get repetition students need, without boring them or getting them tired of the

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lesson. Making the activities fun, through body movement, games, songs, group activities, etc. keep the students engaged. Also, the mix of individual, partner, group and whole class activities does the same, keeps students engaged while giving the teacher a chance to assess student progress at various points throughout the lesson or class.

Karli Boothe, the teacher in the online class I observed, obviously had a well-thought-out lesson plan, one that made the students engage in the vocabulary in various ways that helped them learn the sounds, hear the words, speak them, read them, write them, and importantly, to know what they mean. So even if a student easily understood the word spoken, they'd have to continue to the complex tasks of knowing how it's spelled, and what it refers to. It was very clear what they were studying and while the teacher didn't (at least in the video) explain why they were learning that vocabulary, the nature of it (words defining the body) are universally important words to understand for day-to-day life in any language.

I sometimes thought there could be more context, more examples of the words in sentences. But then I recalled the article by Michael Swan (Modern English Teacher 15/2, 2006) on whether teaching grammar works, where he said that, "Given too much information, learners won't assimilate it." I assume that's right, and feel it's right from my experiences, and trying to shoehorn some grammar into a vocabulary lesson, or even to overwhelm the student with too much vocabulary and different examples would be too much. Ms. Boothe did a great job of keeping the lesson simple, a manageable amount to learn, and repeating it in a way that was engaging and effective.

2. **What have you learned from this observation that relates to your current TESOL class?** Discuss two strategies from your current coursework and readings that were evident in this lesson. Was there a section where learner engagement and student understanding could be improved? (150-300 words)

Since it was a vocabulary lesson, I think it was done well. There wasn't much grammar discussed, though the teacher did use some context sentences which gave at least a sense of the sound of a sentence using the new vocabulary words being used correctly, in the correct position for how it was used, as a direct object, specifically, "Please point to your \_\_\_\_." This she had the students write out (copying her sentence on the board). Perhaps there could have been more of this to place the new words in some more contexts, but as a vocabulary lesson I thought it was good.

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One thing I'm learning in the linguistics class is the importance of repetition and getting as much exposure as possible to the language and its lessons. I thought the various activities provided this brilliantly. The observation also underscores how these basic words and concepts might be difficult for some or all students. Even after so much repetition, some students were still pointing at their chins when the teacher asked them to point to their cheeks. We have to keep in mind how difficult this really is, and how new all this might be to our students.

### *Connecting to TESOL Classwork*

**3. Discuss in detail the classroom management of this particular lesson. (100-200 words)**

The teacher had a well-thought-out plan for this lesson with clear reasons for each section or activity. She started by using Total Physical Response to introduce the new vocabulary. This got the students immediately engaged. She then gave them a handout and used prompts on the board to repeat the vocabulary. A bingo game was played, a fun way to engage with the vocabulary yet again, which also gave the teacher a chance to move about the room and assess how well individuals were understanding the vocabulary. She then reversed the bingo game so that instead of matching a spoken word to a picture, she would point and they'd match the body part (meaning) to written words. Then she did TPR again followed by having them sing a song while doing TPR. Spelling practice came next, which allowed for more assessment, as did individual picture/labeling work, a creative activity as they got to choose the pictures they used. She kept those who finished early engaged by having them write sentences using the new vocabulary. Then as final review had the class do TPR again which gave her a chance to assess how much the class understood overall. Meanwhile, students were able to ask questions and get clarification of points. The students seems engaged the entire time. So I'd say the class was well managed.

**4. Were there informal assessments during this lesson that prove understanding and clarity on the part of the student? Describe these assessments in detail. Were they stressful? What additional assessments could you add if you were the teacher? (100-200 words)**

Many of the activities gave the teacher opportunities for informal assessment. It might be hard to assess how people are doing in a big group unless one is really paying attention and moving slow enough to gather information spoken by many people at one time, but by breaking the class into smaller groups, or with partner or individual work, as Ms. Boothe did in this video, it offers a chance to get a sense of how people are doing. At one point she asked just the "gentlemen" of the class to point out various body parts (the focus of the vocabulary lesson), which gave a better chance to see who got it right and who needed more work. The bingo game was a chance

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to roam the room and see if students were marking the right squares on the card as she said the new vocabulary. The individual picture labeling also gave a chance for assessment. The only thing I might have added was making sure something individual was turned into for her review. Maybe the picture labeling was and we just didn't see that part. But I think it's too easy for a student to fall a little behind if their progress or lack of it is buried in the assessment of the group as a whole.

### *Things to Remember*

5. **Is there something from this observation that really stands out?** Give two or more examples and justify your reasoning. (100-250 words)

The repetition stood out to me, as well as the various ways of coming at the same material. She really made sure to cover the vocabulary in forms that made the students, listen, speak, read, write and be clear on the meaning of the words.

The activities also seemed fun (playing bingo, singing a song, the whole TPR body usage), which seems a good way to handle the repetition, especially if the material is easy for any particular student. It'd be a way to keep them from getting bored and get them to hear or engage with the vocabulary one more time, which can't hurt even if they know it already.

One interesting thing that I noticed is that, given this early level, there are some instructions that are being given that I wonder if the students really understand, or if they just figure it out based on context and some words they can grasp. For instance, when she explains how to play bingo, or that they're going to cut out pictures from magazines. How much of the instructions do they understand? They have no problem doing it, but on the other hand, they're just learning the word for knees and nose, and hands. So I wonder how they're picking up on something like "Please keep my magazine organized." It seems to me a lot of information is conveyed implicitly rather than as a formal lesson.

### *Current Classwork- Morphology, Phonology, Grammar*

6. **What approach to teaching grammar did the instructor take? Was it taught explicitly or implicitly? If the lesson was not focused on grammar or pronunciation, how did the instructor incorporate them in this lesson? Was it effective? Draw upon class materials and readings. What would you do differently?** (100- 250 words)

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Grammar was not a focus in the lesson I observed, this was a vocabulary lesson. A very small amount of grammar was taught implicitly, as part of instructions, such as “Point to your ears.” The students are getting the structure and meaning of this sentence and how the body-body related words are positioned in a sentence like that, even if they’re not being explicitly taught that. They’re at least being exposed to some sentences with the new vocabulary in them.

At one point, a student asked about the difference in sound and meaning between the words *ankle* and *uncle*, since they sound so similar. This gave a chance for the teacher to explain and ask, “How many uncles do you have?” which also introduces a tiny bit of sentence structure (grammar) implicitly into the lesson. There’s some subtle lesson there in an uncle being a whole individual person and an ankle being a part of a person, I suppose and so a slight difference in how one might use the words in a sentence. You could ask “How many ankles do you have?” and there would be a slight difference in concept between something you “have” as part of you and you “have” separate from you.

I don’t think a teacher can help but give a little bit of implicit grammar instruction just in the activity of holding a class.