Out-of-The-Box Teaching Activities to Develop Creativity and Critical Thinking in a Second Language

From Reading Comprehension to Magazine Cover Creation

Kinohi Abafo*
Hawaii Pacific University

Duration: 60+ minutes

Target student proficiency level: Intermediate to Advanced

Target student age: Any

Objectives: To develop
  Language skills: Reading, writing, speaking, listening
  Content knowledge: Varies (e.g., food, sports, nature, social issues)
  Cognitive abilities: Planning, design thinking, problem-solving
  Social abilities: Explaining and expressing voice in writing and speaking to peers and instructors

Materials:
Reading: Article or story containing imagery in the text.
Online Creative Tool: Pixlr https://pixlr.com/
Other options: Adobe Photoshop https://www.adobe.com/, Canva https://www.canva.com/

Preparation: Instructor must have basic background knowledge of Pixlr (or similar creative tool), pre-selected readings that contain imagery in the text.

Procedure:

1. Show students popular magazine covers that illustrate an article inside. Ask students to guess what the article might be about. (Search "magazine covers" on Google Image and select subcategories such as "food".)

2. Have the class read the article and discuss the connection between the article and its cover image, focusing on content (what the article is about), perspective (whose viewpoints are represented?), and mood (what feelings does the author create in the audience?).

3. In groups of 5, students discuss how design patterns, trends, and layouts are done in the example and go over key design elements as a class.

4. Tell students that they will now read an article and create a magazine cover to illustrate it.

5. Students read a pre-selected reading as a class, in groups, or individually. Explain any new vocabulary from the reading and discuss any questions about the content as needed.
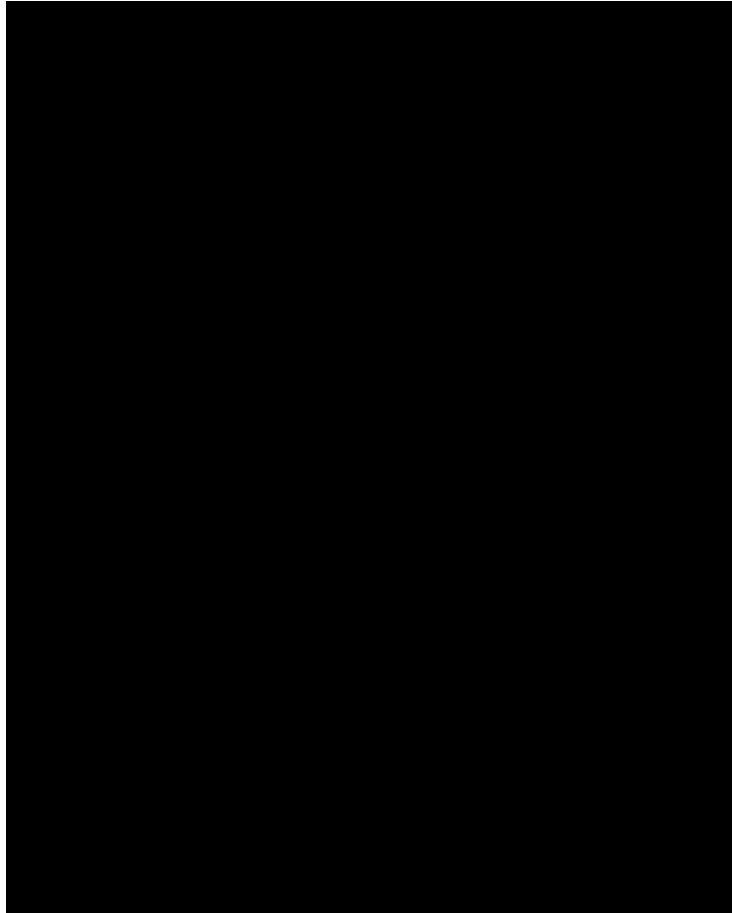
?& , tudents write an artist statement to go wit* t*eir cover& T*e statement s*ould e. plain t*e reasons)e*ind t*e creative output& In t*eir statements" students s*ould:

use 'ormal or academic language

give in'ormation a)out t*eir creations suc* as:

color c*oice

design c*oice

voca)ulary usage

image manipulation

>& , tudent pairs s*are t*eir maga6ine covers and e. plain t*eir designs& Audience mem)ers rate t*e designs)ased on t*e accuracy o' illustration and artistic Duality& , ee e. amples o' student wor)elow&

ariations！ " #tensions:

Instead o' a maga6ine cover" learners could create al)um art" posters")ill)oards" etc&

I' online tools are not availa)le" learners can create p*ysical o)lects using pens" colored pencils" collages" etc&

,tudents can c*oose di''erent topics to read a)out rat*er t*an reading t*e same article as a w*ole class&

In addition to s*aring in class" students can s*are t*eir designs on a we)site wit* a larger audience&

5or more advanced students:

Learners must use specific tools wit*in t*e online application during t*eir creative process to demonstrate t*eir nowledge o' t*e tool itsel'&

Learners write an artist statement %30+400 words(a)out t*e creative c*oices made and *ow t*ese c*oices connect)ac to t*e reading&

%see e.ample o' student wor on t*e ne.t page(

$bout the author

Kinohi Abafo *olds a Jac*elor's degree in 5ine Arts 'rom t*e University o' #incinnati and is currently a =A T-,⁄L candidate at Hawaii Pacific University& ,*e *as tutored –nglis* in America 'or 7 years& Her researc* and teac*ing interests include integrating p*otograp*y" p*ilosop*y" and culture into t*e language classroom&