



Firsthand Flipped

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“Flipping a class” means turning it around. What you used to do in class is now delivered outside of class, often on-line. What was previously homework now happens in class.

The idea was developed for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) classes. In the past, class time was used for lectures. The real practice was often done out of class. In Flipped STEM classes, teachers now video their lectures and put them on line for students to watch as many times as they need to. Then they do the actual practice in class.

In language teaching, we certainly don’t need more lectures. Indeed, one reason our students have so much difficulty *using* English is that they’ve had years of lectures – (grammar explanations and other descriptive input) and not enough chance to use and develop *productive knowledge*. But students do need input – comprehensible input. And, since most are “false beginners”, they need to “activate” the language they already have

Flipping the language classroom means creating ways for learners to get *input for activation* outside of class so they can use nearly all the class time for *output – communicative practice*.

English Firsthand lends itself to flipping, especially since it was written in Japan for our students. It is designed to quickly activate the learners’ passive knowledge of English and get them communicating.

Basically, to flip *Firsthand* you have the students do the listening, reading and writing activities outside of class, usually as homework. This frees up your in-class time to

focus on pairwork and groupwork – the communicative activities which most students enjoy and which make the best use of face-to-face time.

Of course, this brings up the issue of “will the students do homework?” In our experience (and we are classroom teachers with more than 50 years of experience in Japanese classrooms), most students will do homework if it is “valued” (which means it is graded so it is important to the learners goals but also “valued” in the sense that it is important to making activities work – if student have done it, they are able to do the in-class task better and more easily – which makes it more enjoyable. And if some students haven’t done it, they can’t do the task as well. It is kind of embarrassing because it is clear they are having trouble because they didn’t do the task. Creating a situation where they need to do the preview tasks helps **maximize student buy-in.**

How to flip *Firsthand*

In colleges and universities, *Firsthand* is usually taught over 15 once-a-week classes per semester or 30 classes, two-a-week. The following plan assumes you are using *Firsthand* for the entire year so each semester covers 6 units. If you are covering the whole book in one semester in twice-a-week classes, follow the “once-a-week” plan, but double the number of meetings. If you are teaching the whole book in 15 once-a-week classes, you are really going too fast. There is no way students will develop much “depth” to their language, if you are going that fast. Consider choosing just 6 or so units and focus on those. If you are teaching in a different situation, such as a conversation school, choose the plan that most closely fits your schedule.

Extra activities: The English *Firsthand* Teacher’s Manuals (TM) have at least three extra expansion activities for each unit, including one that is photocopiable. They are located on the first page (called *Optional Warm-up Activity*) and usually on the Pairwork page. The photocopiable activity is on the *Teacher’s Resource CD-ROM*. Also, there is at least one additional activity at **www.efcafe.com** → Teacher Resources → Extra Activities. So you can use the books in different ways without worrying about running out of useful tasks connected to the syllabus.

Once- a-week classes, 15 each semester.

Week 1- Unit zero, and orient them to the idea of a flipped class.

Weeks 2-13. One unit every two weeks. Follow this pattern:

<p>Class 1 Pre-class tasks: (using their CD) * scoring – see below. • Vocabulary Preview • Listening Tasks (they do both these on a separate paper to hand in) • Conversation (using their CD or the video at www.efcafe.com Drama coach.). Listen and repeat. Match the intonation In-class • Warm-up: Practice the conversation in pairs. Then, introduce the “drama coach” variation. • If you have time, in pairs students compare their answers for Vocabulary and Listening). Collect the papers. See grading below: • Pairwork</p>	<p>Class 2 Pre-class tasks: * scoring – see below. • Language Check (do online at www.efcafe.com. Print and check their own. Or from book but write on a separate paper to hand in.) • <i>Real Stories</i>. Step 3 – <i>My story</i>, must be at least 10 sentences long (see *scoring, below) • Review <i>Conversation</i>. Try shadowing. (CD or on-line) In-class • Warm-up: Practice the conversation in pairs. Include the 3-Minute Conversation task. • <i>Language Check (pairs/small groups) & Real Stories “my story” task</i>. Use Teachers’ manual task or have them exchange stories and</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pronunciation (use one of the “language models and the senses” techniques). - Think time. 1-3 minutes for planning (Note- background music on the last 3 tracks of the CD) - Main task. - Finished? Learners choice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Challenge</i> (see student book page) • <i>Task Recycling</i> (Change partners and page (A/B). Do task again.) • Free conversation in English (<i>Topic related to pairwork or suggested by teacher</i>) 	<p>think of/ask at least 3 follow-up questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Interaction Groupwork</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language map task (guess, then check) - Think time. 1-3 minutes for planning (Note- background music on the last 3 tracks of the CD) - Main task. - Finished? Task in student book <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Task Recycling</i> (Change partners and page (A/B). Do task again.) • Free conversation in English (<i>Topic related to pairwork or suggested by teacher</i>)
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Scoring Pre-class tasks: You don’t need to check/correct all the (in)correct answers. Simply grade: 3-(complete & on-time. 2= incomplete or late, 1= incomplete AND late. 0= not done. For *Real Stories/My Story*: 50- 74 words = 2 points, 75-99 words = 3 points, 100+ words = 4 points. Students count their own words and write the number.

Week 14 – Review Unit

Week 15 - Test (see *Teachers Manual*).

Twice- a-week classes, 30 each semester.

If taught by two different teachers, we suggest each teacher has his/her own units (e.g., teacher A: Units zero, 2, 4, 6. Teacher B: Units 1, 3, 5).

Week 1- Unit zero, and orient them to the idea of a flipped class. The other teacher does an orientation/ice-breaker class or begins with unit 1 (which serves the same purpose)

Weeks 2-13. One unit every four weeks (per teacher). Follow this pattern:

<p>Class 1</p> <p>Pre-class tasks:</p> <p>* Scoring tasks. See above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Preview • Listening Tasks (using their CD) (they do both these on a separate paper to hand in) • Conversation (using their CD or the video at www.efcafe.com Drama coach.)– listen and repeat. Match the intonation <p>In-class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up: Practice the conversation in pairs. Then, introduce the “drama coach” variation. • If you have time, in pairs students compare their answers for Vocabulary and Listening). Collect the papers. See grading below: • Pairwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pronunciation (use one of the “language models and the senses” techniques). - Think time. 1-3 minutes for planning (Note- background music on the last 3 tracks of the CD) - Main task. - Finished? Learners choice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Challenge</i> (see student book page) • <i>Task Recycling</i> (Change partners and page (A/B). Do task again.) • Free conversation in English (<i>Topic related to pairwork or suggested by teacher</i>) 	<p>Class 2</p> <p>Preclass tasks:</p> <p>* Scoring tasks. See above.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Check (do online at www.efcafe.com. Print and check their own. Or from book but write on paper to hand in.) • Review <i>Conversation</i>. Try shadowing. (CD or on-line) <p>In-class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up: Practice the conversation in pairs. Include the x-Minute Conversation task. • <i>Language Check (pairs/small groups) & Real Stories “my story” task</i>. Use Teachers’ manual task or have them exchange stories and think of/ask at least 3 follow-up questions. • <i>Interaction Groupwork</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language map task (guess, then check) - Think time. 1-3 minutes for planning (Note- background music on the last 3 tracks of the CD) - Main task. - Finished? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Task Recycling</i> (Change partners. Do task again.) • <i>New task</i> (photocopy from Teacher’s Manual.) • Free conversation in English (<i>Topic related to pairwork or suggested by teacher</i>)
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<p>Class 3</p> <p>Pre-class tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Stories. Note: The most important part is step 3: <i>My story</i>. Encourage long stories. <p>In-class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up: Real Stories/My story follow-up From Teacher's Manual (TM) • Conversation (1-2 times, quickly, then 3-minutes conversation task. Change partners and recycle at least 1 time) • Major expansion activity for fluency. Use any of the expansions from the unit in the Teachers Manual. Notice especially the photocopiable expansion from the TM. 	<p>Class 4</p> <p>Pre-class tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra Listening. Student book, pages xx-x. They write their answers on a separate paper to hand in. <p>In-class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up: From Teacher's Manual (TM) (page one of the unit or any expansions from the unit. • Unit test (quiz) from Teacher's Manual • <i>Fluency Frame</i>. Choose from one of the 3 <i>Fluency Frame</i> activities introduced on page T-11 of the TM. After the first 2-3 times, we suggest giving learners a choice of topics. Note that options are listed as <i>Fluency Frame Topics</i> on the <i>Real Stories</i> lesson plan page.
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Extra classes (approx. 3 – space these wherever they fit easily into your schedule.

See ideas below.

Week 15 – Review Unit

What to do with those few extra classes. Actually, doing something out of the routine is good for learning. So use those 2-3 extra classes to do something different. Here are some options.

- As mentioned before, there are always at least 4 extra activities in the TM, CD-Rom and website. Just choose any unit topics you and the students find particularly engaging and add a class to those. Personalize units including the past, future, abilities and families are especially good for this.
- EF author Marc Helgesen works with “ELT and Positive Psychology” (TIME magazine calls PosPsych “the science of happiness”). He has a set of PosPsych activities tied to the *Firsthand* syllabus at www.ELTandHappiness.com.
- Favorite songs. Students, in groups of 2-3, choose a song they like in English. They teach the song, usually distributing a copy of the lyrics. Play the audio or, if video is available, they may choose to play that. When students come up with music lessons, cloze (fill-in-the-blanks) are often what they choose. (You can do that easily at www.lyrictraining.com) That is OK, but here are other options:
 - before or after focusing on meaning, all students (Ss) draw a picture based on what they imagine. Then they compare.
 - They write or draw how the song is (or isn't) like their lives.
 - In small groups, they come up with choreography (dancing and acting) in a way that shows the meaning of the song. Then groups perform for each other.
 - Of course, having everyone sing is easy, natural and fun.
- Make a “lip-dub”. For an example and a link to an article explaining how, see <http://tinyurl.com/MGISsong2014>
- Haiku Hike. If your campus has any nature area or there is a nearby park, go outside. Students write haiku poems (5-7-5 syllables.) Tell them that English haiku doesn't need a *kigo* (nature) word. Great for noticing English syllabication.

Extra resources

Go to <http://helgesehandouts.weebly.com/firsthand-flipped.html>

for extra handouts that will make flipping *English Firsthand* even easier.

- Voice/ Physical Variations for Conversations
- The language map and the senses – Multi-sensory pronunciation activities (2014 revision)
- Skillsheet: types of shadowing
- EF CD practice ideas and practice log and more.
- Level up- level down (to give learners control over their own learning, This skill sheet show ways to increase or decrease the level of challenge/difficulty of each book section so learners can focus on either accuracy or fluency in a successful way.