Standards Focus

Objectives

Students will

- compose and prepare for interviews
- understand how to prepare for an interview

Preteach

Speak with a Purpose

Tell students that interviews are conducted to inform and impress; making it important to be prepared and composed.

- Brainstorm with students a list of possible questions to find out more about the interviewee's past, present, and future goals.
- Tell students that in this workshop they will learn how to be confident during interview situations.

Direct Teach

Guided Practice

Prepare for the Interview

Demonstrate how to revise simple questions so they become open-ended. To find out about an athlete's childhood, you could ask how long she has been playing, but then she will give a one-word answer. Instead, ask her about her favorite childhood memory on the field.

SKILLS FOCUS pp. 658–659

Listening and Speaking Skills

- Adapt oral message to occasion: interviews.

Listening & Speaking Workshop

Interviewing

Speak with a Purpose

With a partner, take turns interviewing each other. Prepare appropriate interview questions in advance, and then participate in two interviews, once as an interviewer and once as an interviewee. Prepare a summary of the main points of the interview you conducted.

Tips for Professional Situations

In this workshop, you may not need to conduct background research. For a formal interview, however, knowing as much as possible about a topic is critical. For instance, during a job interview you will want to show that you are knowledgeable about the company and the position for which you are applying.

Reader/Writer Notebook

Use your **RWN** to complete the activities for this workshop.

Think as a Reader/Writer

Writers thoughtfully compose and edit their text to create top-notch works. Interviewers, too, must carefully prepare their questions in order to conduct first-rate interviews.

Interviews—conversations in which one person asks questions to obtain information—are more common than you might think. You've probably been interviewed—by a teacher, the school nurse, or a neighbor wanting you to baby-sit or mow the lawn. In this workshop, you will work with a partner to learn both how to conduct an interview and how to be interviewed yourself.

Prepare for the Interview

First Things First

A good interviewer is well prepared. Before you take out your pencil and notepad, follow these steps:

- **Decide on your topic.** With your partner, brainstorm ideas for your interview. Think about interests your partner has that you would like to know more about, such as his or her hobbies or sports. Consider, too, interviewing each other about your career aspirations: What jobs interest you? Why?
- **Research your topic.** If appropriate, go to a library or search the Internet to find out all you can about your topic. The more you know, the better your questions will be.
- **Make a list of questions.** Ask obvious questions rather than assuming that you know the answers. Don't ask questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no. Avoid questions that might influence your subject, such as "You hate losing, don't you?"
- **Organize your list of questions.** Begin with easier questions that will break the ice. Then, progress to questions that will provide specific information about the topic. These questions often will take longer for the interviewee to answer.
- **Gather your materials.** Before beginning your interview, be sure you have sufficient paper and pens or pencils. If you are planning to use a recording device, check to see that it is in working order.

Resources

Writing and Speaking Workshops, on-level practice and assessment, p. 88

Differentiating Instruction, modified lesson plans and teaching strategies

Teacher One Stop™, on-level lesson plans and all print resources

Conduct the Interview

Showtime!

How do you make the most of your opportunity as an interviewer? Follow these guidelines:

- **Set the ground rules.** If you want to record the interview or quote your interviewee's exact words, ask permission first.
- **Be courteous and patient.** Allow your interviewee plenty of time to answer your questions. Try not to interrupt. Respect the person's ideas and opinions, even if you disagree with them.
- **Listen carefully.** Don't rush on to your next question. If you are confused, ask for an explanation. If an answer reminds you of a related question, ask that question—even if it isn't on your list.
- **Focus on the interviewee—not on yourself.** Avoid going off on tangents, such as "something like that happened to me. . . ."
- **Wrap things up.** A good interview is leisurely but doesn't go on forever. Know when to stop. Be sure to thank your interviewee, and give him or her a chance to add any comments.

Following Up the Interview

Use these steps to help get your thoughts in order after an interview:

- **Review your notes.** As soon as possible, read through your notes, and make sure your information is complete and clear.
- **Write a summary.** To make sure you understand what was said, write a summary of the main points of the interview.
- **Check your facts.** If you can, check the spelling of all names and technical facts.

Turning the Tables: Being Interviewed

Remember these tips when you are on the other side of the interview:

- **Stay relaxed.** Listen carefully to each question before you answer. If a question confuses you, ask the interviewer to reword it or repeat it. Take your time. Long, thoughtful answers are better than short, curt ones.
- **Be accurate.** If you're not sure of something, say so.
- **Keep a sense of humor.**

A Good Interviewer

- comes prepared with an organized list of questions
- listens carefully, asking for clarification when needed
- is polite and respectful

A Good Interviewee

- offers thoughtful, clear answers
- is poised and relaxed

Tip for Professional Situations

If you run out of time during a face-to-face interview, remember that you can always phone or e-mail later to check a fact or ask a final question.

Differentiating Instruction

English-Language Learners

Students may have difficulty creating interview questions. Explain that a clarification to an interview question could be another question or an explanation. On the board, list the following phrases that students can use to ask for clarification: Please tell me more about. . . . What's an example of that? What happened next? Would you please explain how that works? Have student pairs practice asking and clarifying questions and answers in order to build English fluency.

Readers Gaining Proficiency

Show students how to organize interview questions on index cards. Have students write one question in large, clear print on the front of a card. Then, tell students to arrange the cards in order of importance or in a logical sequence. Have students refer to the cards during the interview and record the interviewee responses on the back of each card.

Guided Practice

Conduct the Interview

Tell students that interviews are conducted to inform and impress; making it important to be prepared and composed.

- Before students conduct their own interviews, play a video clip of a television interview. After the clip, have students evaluate the interviewer and interviewee according to the guidelines listed on these pages.
- Pair students and have them conduct their interviews. After each student has had a chance to act as interviewer and interviewee, ask students to write a short summary of the interview. Tell students to include the most interesting thing that they learned.
- Have students share their summaries with the interviewees. Tell the interviewees to correct any errors or misconceptions. Then, have the interviewers present their summaries to the class.

Assess

Independent Practice

Writing and Speaking Workshops, Interviewing analytical scale and rubric to evaluate students' presentations.