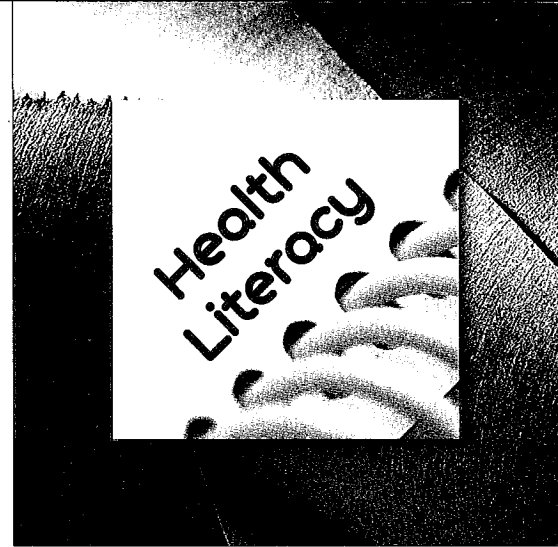


A Guide to Calling 911



Purpose

To guide students through a practice 911 conversation and give them a better idea of when to use the emergency number.

Rationale

Do your ESOL students know when to and when not to call 911? There's a good chance that many may not know. They may think that calling 911 can be for any situation where help is needed, including minor health issues or home incidents (for example, a water leak). In other instances, students may hesitate to call 911 because they fear they will not speak English clearly enough.

This lesson plan helps ESOL students decide when it is appropriate or inappropriate to call 911. It then gives them a practice conversation to call 911. The lesson would be ideal during a class focused on health or telephone skills.

The Basic Activity

- 1. Ask students if they know what 911 is.** Explain that 911 is a number to call when there is a medical or home emergency. Do they have a number similar to 911 in their native country? What is the number? Ask if they know when to call 911.
- 2. Have students draw two circles on a piece of paper.** One circle should say "OK to call 911." The other should say "Not OK to call 911." Next, the items below can be listed in random order on a handout or presented on the board. Discuss each situation and have students decide if it is OK to call 911 for it or not. Make sure students understand each scenario. The list comes from the website 911.org (see more information about 911.org in the sidebar).

OK to call 911:

- Medical emergency
- House fire
- Heart attack
- Burglary or theft
- Domestic violence
- Car accident with bad injuries

Not OK to call 911:

- When the power is out
- When water pipes burst
- For a ride to a doctor's appointment
- For your pet
- As a joke

More Information

911.org

When to Call 911

The website 911.org from a Texas-based government organization has several helpful links, including: www.911.org/HowWhentoCall.asp

A guide on when to call 911 (most of the information at this link was presented in the article).

FAQ on 911.org

www.911.org/Help_9-1-1_Help_You_FAQs.asp

How to help 911 when you have to call (for example, give your exact location and stay on the line until help arrives).

Texting Service

www.911.org/911_Texting_Service.asp

Information on when it may be appropriate to text 911.

Know How to Call 911

<http://tinyurl.com/notebook-911>

A more comprehensive lesson plan on preparing students to call 911, from the North Carolina Network for Excellence in Teaching.

Call 911 Worksheet

www.elcivics.com/worksheets/calling-911.pdf

Use this worksheet from EL Civics for the portion of the lesson that focuses on when it's OK/not OK to call 911. It includes blank lines for students to write their answers.

More Information

Another 911 Sample Conversation

<https://community.lincs.ed.gov/discussion/lesson-plan-be-posted-part-assignment>

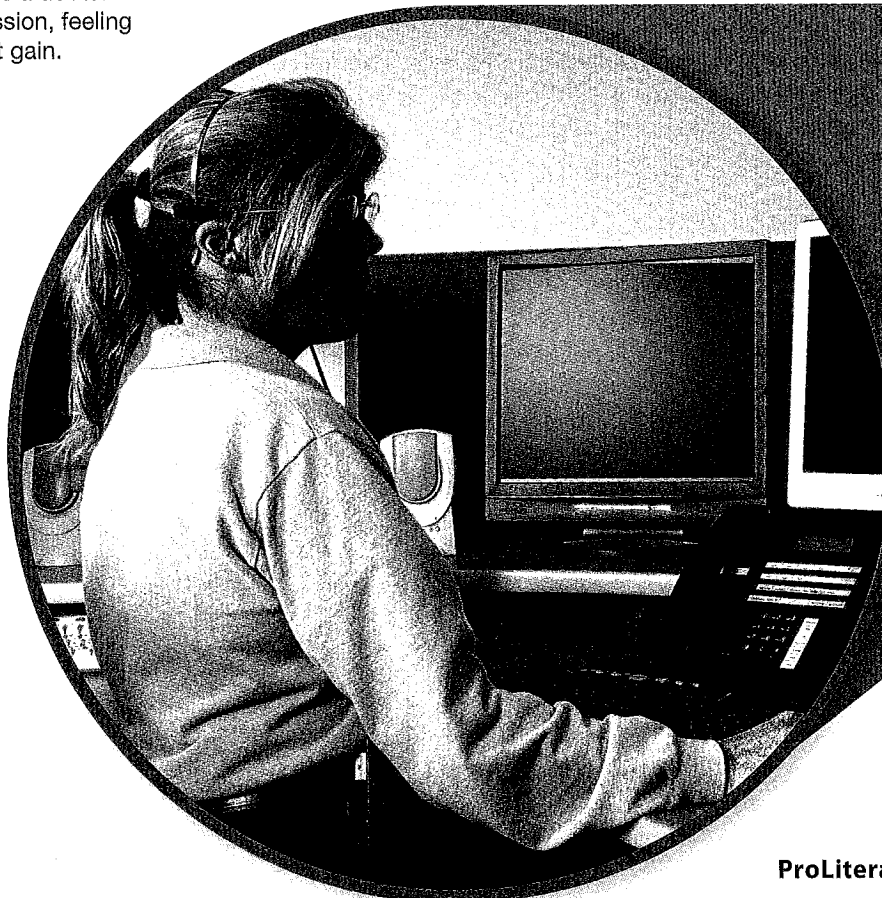
This sample 911 conversation was posted in August 2016 on the free online discussion group LINCS—Adult English Language Learners. LINCS is short for Literacy Information and Communication System and is funded with help from the federal government.

Picture Stories for Adult ESOL Health Literacy

www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/Health/healthindex.html

The picture stories available at this link were created by Virginia teacher Kate Singleton. Teachers can guide students through each picture to help generate dialogue, build vocabulary, and teach about American health customs. Although the stories do not include a scenario for calling 911, they are an excellent resource when studying health. Topics include a doctor's appointment, depression, feeling stressed, and weight gain.

3. **Talk about the kind of information someone should know when calling 911.** This includes having an exact address, saying what the emergency is, staying on the phone until help arrives, and answering questions from the operator.
4. **Once students understand when to call 911, tell them they will practice a conversation.** Let students know that many 911 operators can get an interpreter on the line. However, it is still excellent practice to be able to speak in English about their emergency. Give each student a copy of the conversation on page 5 of this issue. Read the conversation with a volunteer (perhaps someone who has a higher proficiency level or who has had the chance to read their lines beforehand). Alternately, you can record the conversation in advance with someone else and play it for the class. Make sure that you and your reading partner sound worried and speak a few of the lines intentionally fast.
5. **Ask students what words are new for them.** Go over any new definitions or pronunciation points.
6. **Pair students to practice the conversation several times.** As students get more comfortable, encourage them to add the right level of emotion to the call. Remind students that while they might feel emotional during an emergency, it is important to try to stay calm while on the phone.
7. **Ask for volunteer pairs to read the conversation to the class.**
8. **Depending on your students' level of proficiency, one expansion activity could be to work with the class to create a new 911 scenario.** Two other expansion ideas: 1) Do a dictation using some of the sentences from the conversation; 2) Create a cloze activity where the conversation has missing words, and students need to fill in the missing words.





911 Call

911 Operator: 911 operator, what's the nature of your emergency?

Maria: Please help, my house is on fire!

911: Where are you right now?

Maria: I am with my family. We are outside.

911: OK, good. What is your address?

Maria: My address is 7049 Lakeside Drive in Cleartown.

911: I'm sorry, could you repeat that?

Maria (speaking more slowly): 7049 Lakeside Drive in Cleartown.

911: 7449?

Maria: No, it's 7049. Please come. We are scared!

911: It's OK. I have called firefighters. Help should be on the way in 3 to 4 minutes. Please stay on the line with me until they are there.

Maria: OK, thank you.