

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Listen Up: A Content-Based Approach to Integrate Listening and Culture

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Cultural background knowledge is necessary for adult English-language learners (ELLs) to fully comprehend messages in the L2 (second language) and to become participants in the L2 environment. While skills-based language courses, such as those offered in Ball State University's Intensive English Institute, present cultural information on a need-to-know basis, students at times request additional information that would help them understand the L2 culture better. Therefore, this project addresses students' requests for cultural information, describing a content-based model of instruction geared towards an advanced-intermediate listening class and centered on three goals: motivation, acculturation, and listening. In this project, the film *Forrest Gump* is used as the core text, and curriculum units are thematically based on issues prevalent in the film and decades in which the film is set. Student comments and classroom behavior indicate that the curriculum leads to greater motivation, acculturation, and listening proficiency.