Learning and Teaching with Lexicarry:
A User's Guide

PAPER | **DIGITAL**

Pro Lingua's Color **Lexicarry** — Pictures for Learning Languages — Patrick R. Moran
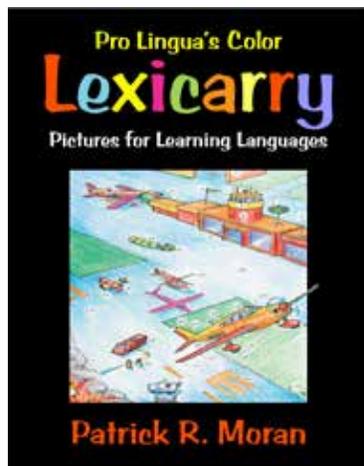
Pro Lingua's Digital **Lexicarry** — Pictures for Learning Languages — Patrick R. Moran

Patrick R. Moran Ph.D

Learning and Teaching with Lexicarry
for Learners, Tutors and Teachers
Partick R. Moran

Contents

*At **Pro Lingua**
our objective is to foster an approach
to learning and teaching that we call
interplay, the **inter**action of language
learners and teachers with their materials,
with the language and culture,
and with each other in active, creative
and productive **play**.*

General Introduction
for Learners, Tutors and Teachers

Lexicarry is a book of wordless pictures for building vocabulary in any language.

Wordless pictures motivate learners to look closely at the pictures to discover the meanings. This engages the learners in thinking creatively to figure out the language using language they already know, using their imaginations, guessing, and talking to peers or a helper, or consulting the word list. Then using the pictures they review and recall what they have learned. This thoughtful investment enhances vocabulary acquisition and retention.

The illustrated vocabulary items in Lexicarry are grouped into seven contexts: Functions, Sequences, Related Actions, Topics, Places, and Proverbs and Sayings. There are learning and teaching activities in this guide for each of the seven contexts. They are written for any user: learner, tutor, or classroom teacher. The activities address the needs of beginners as well as more advanced learners. Many activities can be used in more than one context.

The activities include a variety of participatory tasks: mime/acting, creation of stories and dialogues, games, interviewing, cultural research and comparison, and using imagination.

For additional learning activities, see the *Introduction for the Learner* in the book.

Functions

This context consists of brief, everyday conversational exchanges or speech acts that revolve around specific communicative functions. These are almost always set within more involved communicative situations or scenarios.
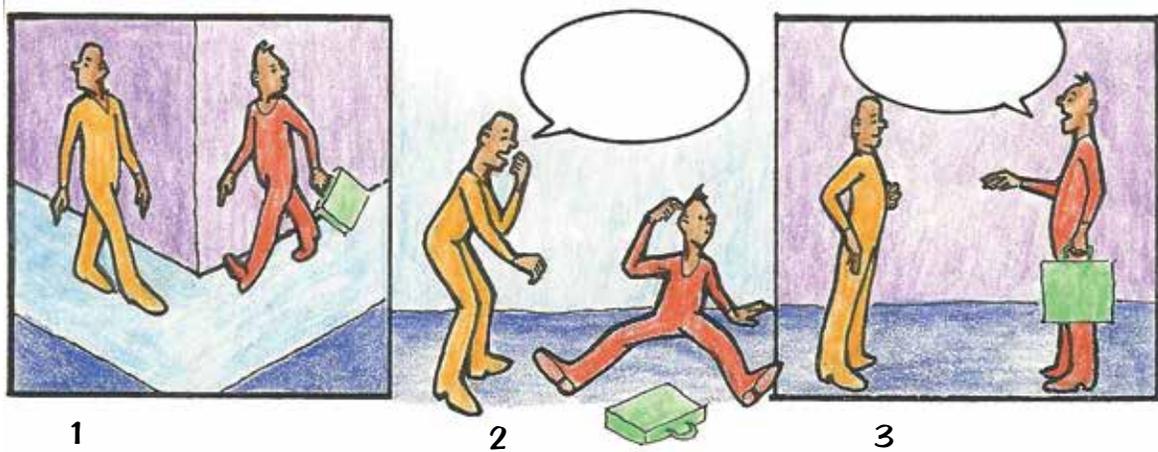
Identifying the Language

1. Identify the language for each of the numbered balloons. Collect a variety of alternative expressions.

2. Study each of the dialogues or exchanges to determine whether or not the language in them accurately reflects the situation portrayed in the drawings.

3. Give names to the people in the drawings.

Practice

1. Choose one set of exchanges and practice saying it. Act out the exchange with others.

2. Identify appropriate gestures, facial expressions or other non-verbal language appropriate to the exchange. Act out the exchange again, incorporating these elements.

3. For intermediate or advanced levels, practice other possible exchanges in the same manner.

4. Use reported speech to describe the exchange.
   He said that he was sorry.
   He told him that he was sorry.

5. Use the exchange as the central feature to write a brief story. Set the story in a particular time period, using the appropriate tenses (past, present, future). Share the story with others.

Follow-up Activities: Sociolinguistic/Cultural Exploration

Once the basic exchanges have been mastered, explore cultural and sociolinguistic implications and features of the exchanges. The appropriate language changes according to a number of factors, described below.

1. Make a list of various persons who could be involved in the exchange. For each set of persons, identify the language for an appropriate exchange. Some possible persons and their roles:

parent/child	employee/boss
husband/wife	rich person/poor person
strangers	lovers
enemies	young person/old person
colleagues	salesperson/customer

2. Identify appropriate non-verbal language (facial expressions, gestures, body language).

   Practice and act them out. Use props and costumes.

3. Suggest underlying motives for the exchanges between specific persons. Possible motives include:

   impatience: one person wants to end the exchange
   affection: one person likes the other
   suspicion: one person doesn't trust the other
   condescension: one person looks down on the other
   fear: one person is afraid of the other
   respect: one person holds the other in high regard
   deceit: one person tries to trick or lie to the other
   boredom: one person is not interested in the other

   Once these motives have been assigned to the persons, identify the appropriate tone of voice, gestures, facial expressions and other body language to convey these underlying messages through the basic exchange. Include these in acting out the exchange.

4. List other contextual variables that could affect the exchange:
   time of day or night
   place
   season of the year
   personalities of the persons
   ethnic backgrounds of the persons
   social circumstances (during a meal, at a party, etc.)

   Identify the appropriate verbal and non-verbal language and act out the exchanges.

5. Discuss the cultural aspects of the exchanges. Focus questions can include:

What observations can you make about the culture in this exchange?
What cultural values or beliefs might explain the language or the behaviors in this exchange?
How are such exchanges carried out in your culture?

Describe the similarities and differences.
What are possible explanations for these similarities or differences?

6. Observe exchanges in films, videos, television programs or in the culture itself. List the language and gestures that are used. Share the results. Describe the physical setting, the social situation, and the identities of the participants.

7. Show the illustration of the exchange to a fluent speaker and ask them to identify the language used in different social situations.

Sequences

This context consists of a series of actions that together constitute a logical chain of events.
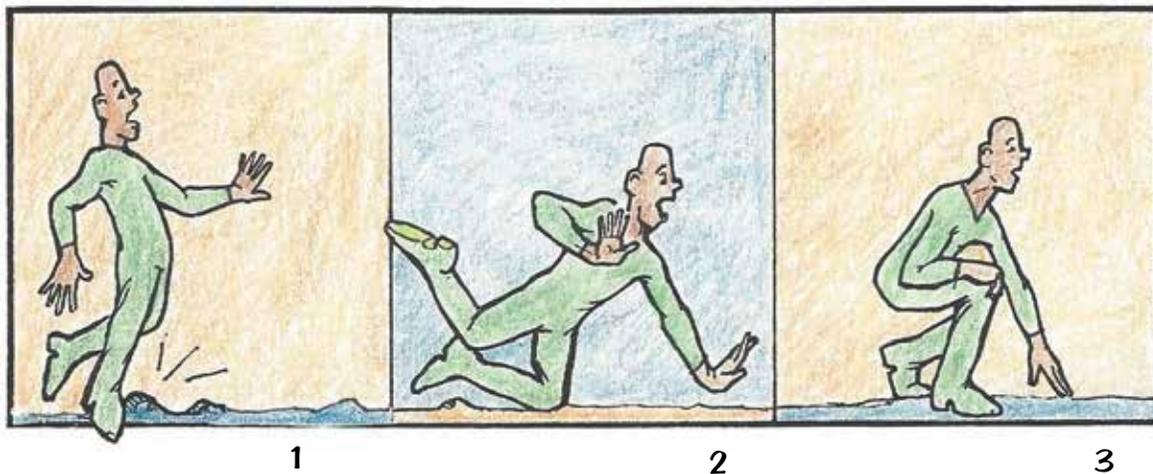
Identifying the Language

Identify the actions in each of the panels.

Practice

1. Ask and answer questions about the actions in each of the panels of the sequence.

What is the person doing in number two?
Is the person falling in number two?

2. Make a list of synonyms or equivalent expressions for the actions in each panel. Ask and answer questions using the new words.

   • stumble   • lose his balance   • get to his feet

3. Vary the tenses used to describe the sequence of actions. For example:
    He fell.
    He will fall.
    He has just fallen.
    He is going to fall.

4. Use varied sentence patterns to describe the sequences using the appropriate language.

    If he trips, then he'll fall.
    Whenever he falls, he gets up.
    He fell because he didn't see the stone in the path.
    By eight o'clock tomorrow, he will have fallen down.
    Before he fell, he tripped on a stone.
    He had better be careful, otherwise he'll trip and fall.
    He must have been preoccupied, because he tripped.

5. For added challenge, describe the sequence of events starting from the second, third, or fourth panel. For example:

    • He fell down after he tripped on a stone. Then he got up.

    • He got up slowly. He had been walking along and didn't see a stone in
      the path. He tripped on it and fell down.

6. Create new "beginnings" and "endings" to the sequences by adding new panels. For example:

    Beginnings: He is strolling down the street.
                  He is thinking about his problems as he walks.
                  He is hurrying to catch the bus.
                  His friend is pushing him from behind.

    Endings: He is dusting himself off.
                  He is rubbing his knee.
                  He is limping.
                  He is complaining to his friend.

7. Add new panels that occur between existing panels in the sequence. For example:

    He's waving his arms in the air.
    He's rolling on the ground.
    He's shouting for help.

8. Write brief stories with the sequence as the central theme. Share with others.

9. Choose 3 to 5 sequences and put them together into a story. Share with others.

Follow-up Activities

1. Choose a sequence at random to mime for others to name each action.

2. Add dialogue or conversations to the description of sequences.

3. Situate the sequence into other contexts and describe the actions using the vocabulary of this new setting.
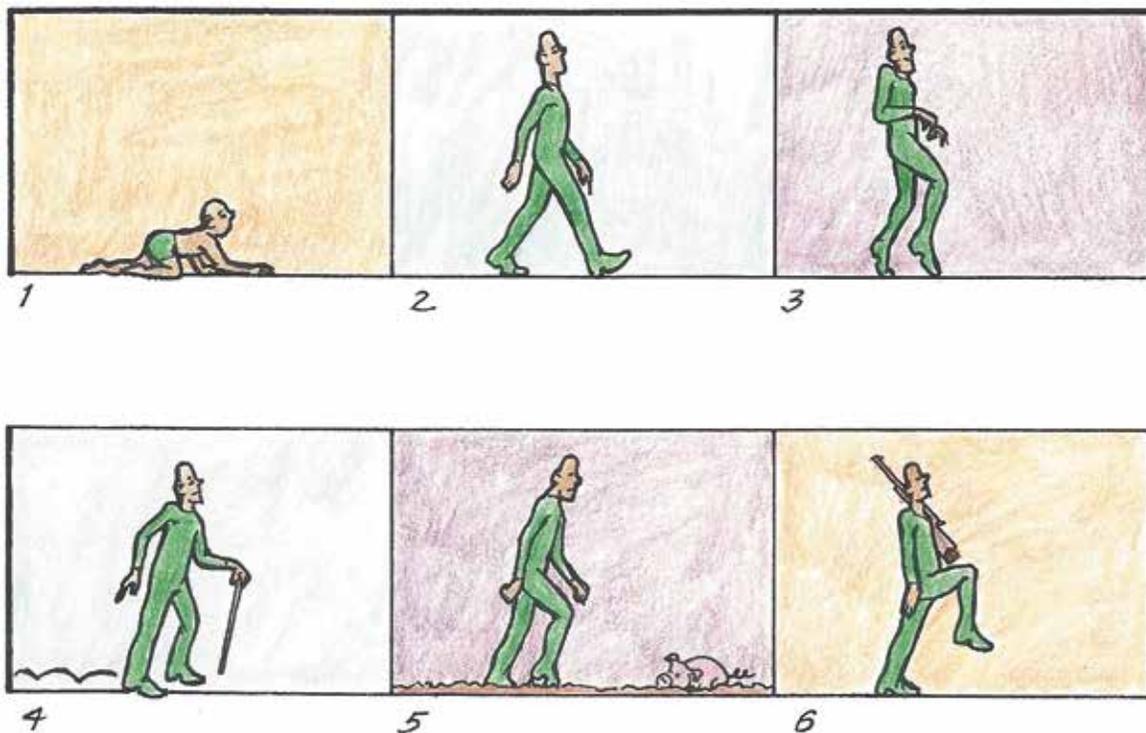
    • at home   • in a store   • at a concert

Cultural Exploration

1. Observe a social scene (portrayed in a film, video, television program, or directly in the culture) and note the sequences. Report the results.

Related Actions

This context includes actions that are variations of a single action.

Identifying the Language

Identify the actions for each panel. Use circumlocution to describe an action for unknown words. For example:

In number 4, the man is walking with a cane. He is walking as if he hurt his leg. He has difficulty lifting his left leg.

Practice

1. Put the actions into categories. Share the categories and the reasons for the system of categorization.

2. Create a situation that describes each action. For example:

    You crawl when you are a little baby.
    Soldiers crawl when the enemy shoots at them.
    To get something underneath a bush, you need to crawl.

3. Choose a set of 3 to 5 actions and put them together in a series of related statements. For example:

    The man ran to the hospital with a bottle of champagne and a bouquet of flowers. He paced the floor, waiting for news of the birth. He drank too much champagne in celebration and staggered home.

    While walking through the park, a woman hit her head on a tree branch, and staggered into a busy street. A man ran to call an ambulance. Her friend paced back and forth in the waiting room, expecting the worst.

4. Pick two actions at random and explain how they are similar and different. Use situations as part of the explanations.

5. Identify adverbs to accompany the actions in sentences. Ask and answer questions to identify the manner of the action and to explain why. For example:

    How is the man pacing in number 8?
    • He's pacing nervously.
    Why is he pacing nervously?
    • He's pacing nervously because he is worried about his wife's health.

6. Add imaginary comparisons to the descriptions of actions. For example:

    • He's limping like a wounded animal.
    • He's jumping over the fence as if he were a deer.
    • He tiptoed across the room like a guilty child.

Follow-up Activities

1. After mastering a number of related actions, choose 7 to 10 different ones and put them together in brief stories.

2. Choose 5 to 7 actions from different related actions contexts and compose a sequence to mime.

Cultural Exploration

1. Observe a social scene (portrayed in a film, video, television program, or directly in the culture) and list the sequences. Share the results through oral descriptions, miming the actions, or drawings. Discuss cultural aspects of the sequences.

2. Show the page of related actions to a fluent speaker of the language and ask for examples of actions, or stories that involve actions. Share with others.

Operations

This context consists of a ordered sequences of actions, a set of procedures, which result in a predictable outcome. These procedures usually involve tools, objects, or machines and follow a strict sequence of steps.
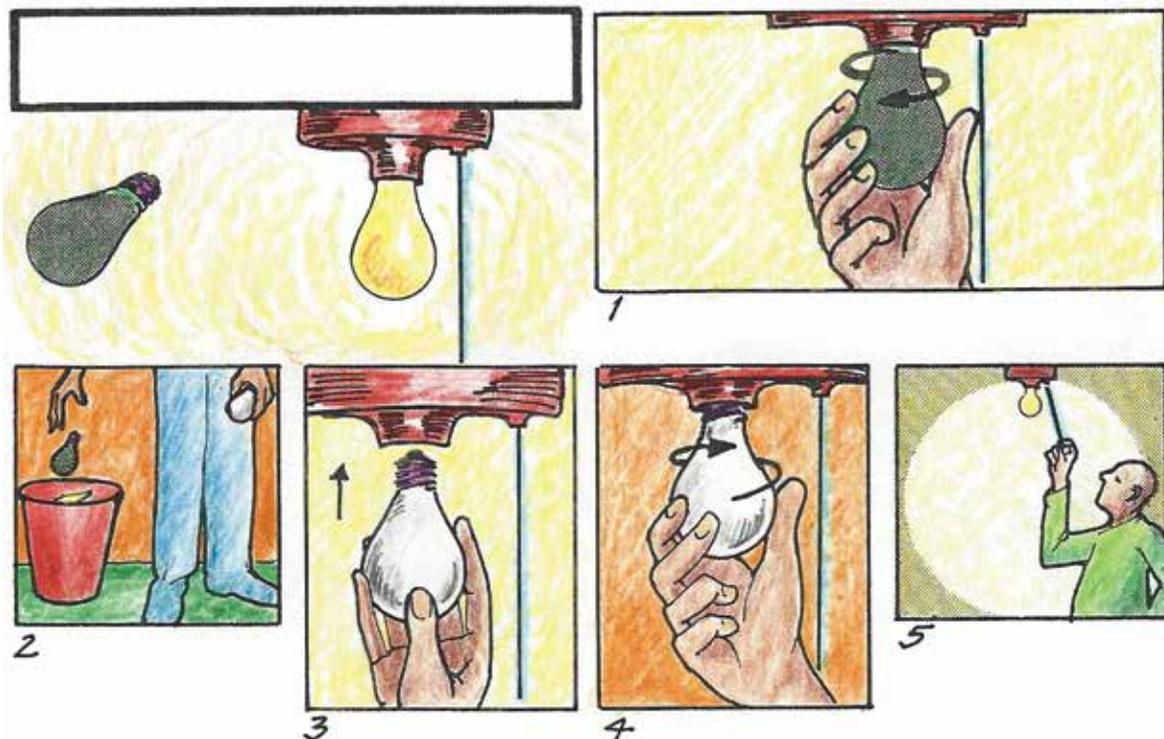
Identifying the Language

Have students identify the language for each step by using the imperative form.

Practice

1. Give the command for each step of the operation. In response, act out each step. For example:

    • Unscrew the burned out light bulb.
    • Throw it in the trash.
    • Put in the new light bulb.

2. Vary the command-mime exercise by including negative commands and other expressions. Some possibilities:

    • Don't throw the light bulb away yet.
    • Never unscrew the light bulb with the switch on.
    • Be careful not to break the old light bulb.
    • It's always a good idea to test the new bulb.

3. Describe all the steps of the operation using expressions of time. For example:

    First, _____.   Second, _____.
    Then, _____.   After that, _____.
    Next, _____.   Finally, _____.

    Vary this activity by asking questions to elicit these time expressions. For example:

    What do you do first? What do you do after that?

4. Use modal auxiliaries (or their equivalents) to describe the steps of the operation. For example:

    You must not throw the new light bulb in the trash.
    You have to turn on the light switch to test the new bulb.
    You could throw the old bulb in the trash afterwards.
    You had better turn off the switch beforehand.
    You ought to test the new bulb after you put it in.

5. Speculate on possible "breakdowns" that could occur if the steps of the operation are not properly followed, using "What if?" questions. For example:

    • What if you don't test the light bulb?
      You won't know if it works.

    • What if you didn't unscrew the burned out light bulb?
      You wouldn't be able to put in a new one.

6. Write a set of technical instructions for the steps of the operation, using expressions found in a technical manual. Examples:

    > Remove the defective light bulb by turning it counterclockwise.
    > Discard the defective bulb by placing it in the trash receptacle.
    > Insert a new light bulb into the light socket.

Follow-up Activities

1. Create stories that have the operation as a central event. To focus the stories, provide limitations, such as:

    > time: yesterday
    > unreal conditions: if John had known
    > characters: John and Mary (husband and wife)
    > plot: they heard a suspicious noise in the basement

2. Choose 3 to 5 elements from other contexts and include them in a description of the operation. For example:

    > function: saying "I don't know"   topics: animals
    > sequences: falling   operation: changing a light bulb
   > related actions: seeing

Cultural Exploration

1. Observe a social scene and list the artifacts, objects, tools or machines that are used. Identify the procedures to operate or use them. Report the results. Include a photograph or drawing.

2. Interview fluent speakers about the objects, tools or machines that they use as part of their profession or daily lives. Have them list the steps in the operations.

Topics and Places

Topics are collections of items that relate to a particular theme, purpose, or category. Places contain items that are associated with a particular location. In the place picture, there is a mysterious "quirk" that can provoke students' speculation and discussion.
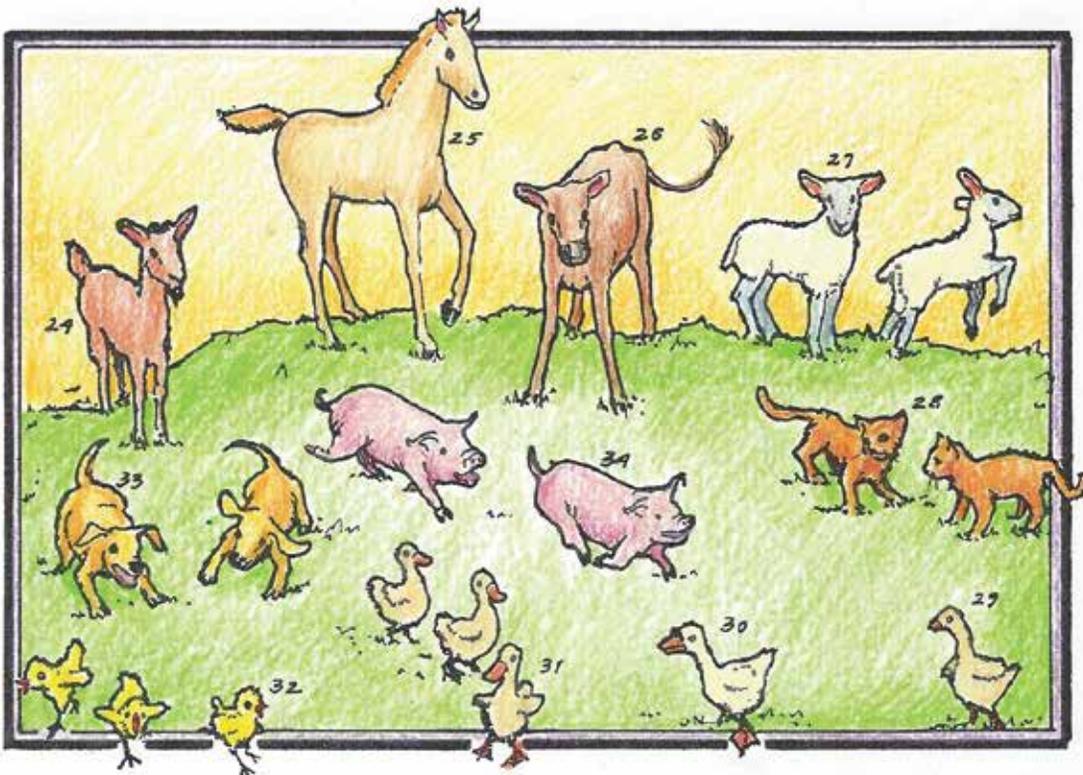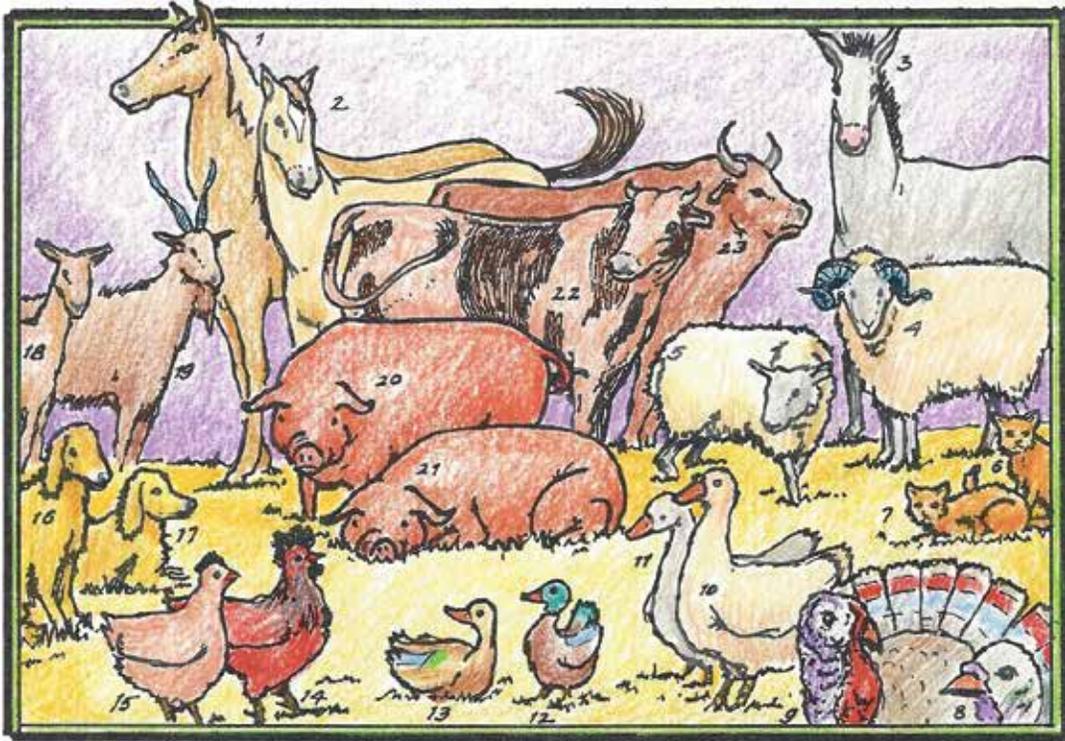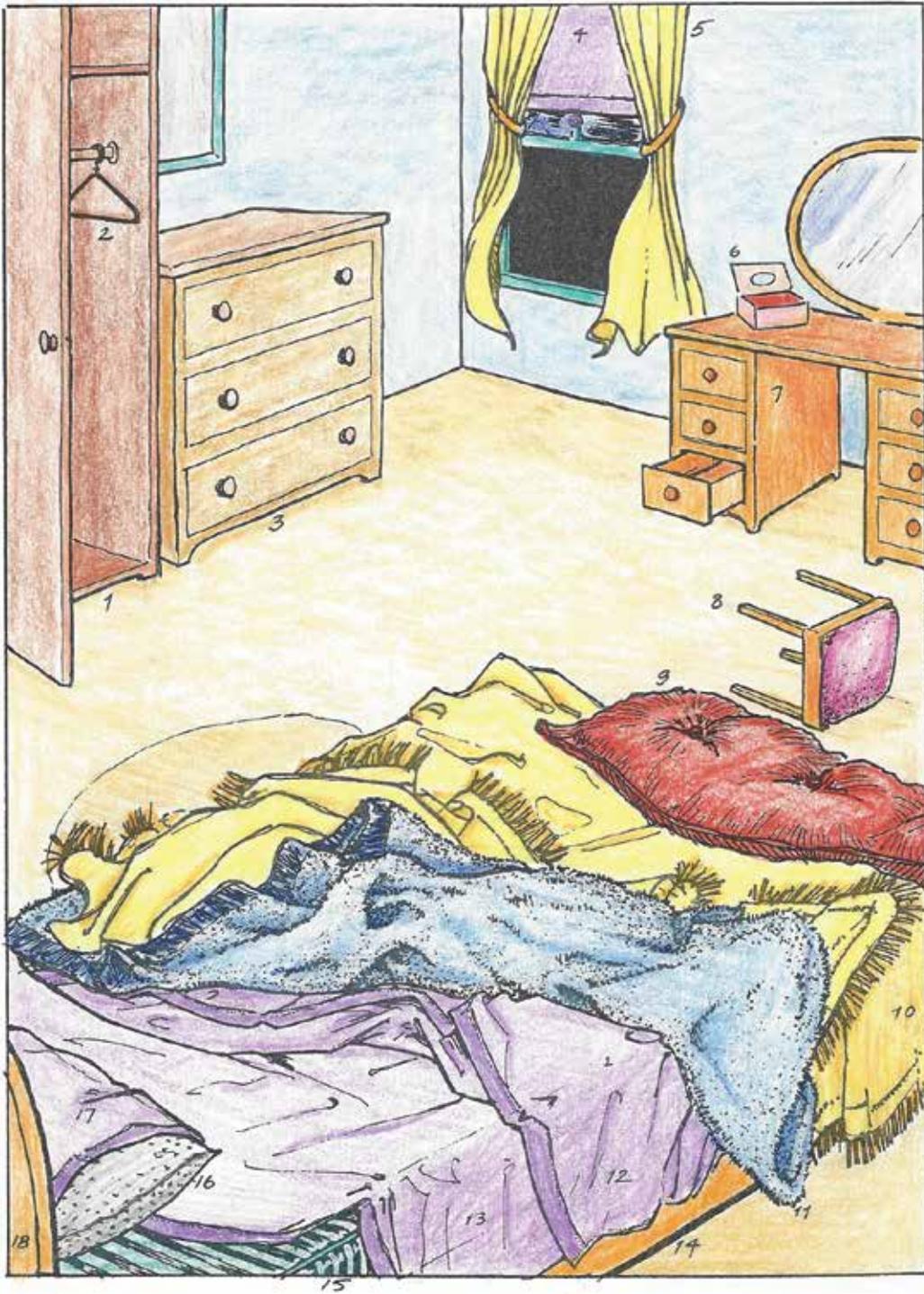
Identifying the Language

1. Identify each of the numbered items.

2. Identify other vocabulary items that are not numbered.

3. To expand vocabulary, put the names of categories in columns, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc. Identify additional vocabulary items in the picture that fit these categories.

Practice

1. Use the vocabulary items in sentences that describe the picture. As a variation, make sentences of certain types: statements, questions, negative statements. A further variation is to use a particular sentence pattern, such as:

   > Whenever _____, _____.
   > Every day, _____.
   > If _____, then _____.
   > I'm not sure, but I think that _____.

2. Make a list of questions to talk about the pictures. Ask and answer these questions. Sample questions:

   > What color is _____?   What is _____ used for?
   > Where is _____?   What is _____ like?
   > What is the difference between_____ and _____?
   > What is happening in picture number _____?

3. Use vocabulary items and sentence patterns to write brief stories that describe the picture or that use it as a point of departure for conversation or discussion. These stories can have a concrete, descriptive focus, or they can be based on imagination.

4. Write and perform dialogues that relate to the pictures and incorporate the target vocabulary items and sentence patterns. If necessary, use a structured dialogue. For example:
   > + Where is the _____?
   > − It's _____.
   > + Are you sure?
   > − Oh, I'm sorry. It's not _____. It's _____.

Follow-up Activities

1. Play a memory game. Study the items in the picture, then hide the picture. Ask and answer questions about the names and locations of numbered items in the picture.

2. Study the picture and mentally place yourself somewhere in it. Others ask yes-no questions to find your location. Set a limit on the number of questions.

3. Play a guessing game. Choose an item from the picture and act out a scene involving this item. The others guess what the item is.

4. Name items or aspects of the pictures that are different in your country or culture. Discuss these differences and explain or hypothesize why they exist.

5. Name items from your country or culture that are not present in the pictures, but are relevant to the theme. Draw a picture of these items. Show and explain the drawings. Discuss the similarities and differences.

Cultural Exploration

1. Show a topics or places page to a fluent speaker or a person with experience in the culture. Ask them to describe what they see. Interview them about their personal experiences with items in the illustration. Record the results and report.

Proverbs and Sayings

This context represents proverbs or sayings that appear frequently in the written and spoken language. People use proverbs to explain or comment upon people, events, or circumstances in everyday life. Proverbs have both a literal meaning and an underlying moral or message that represents the folk wisdom of the culture. For the most part, the proverbs illustrated reflect North American culture.
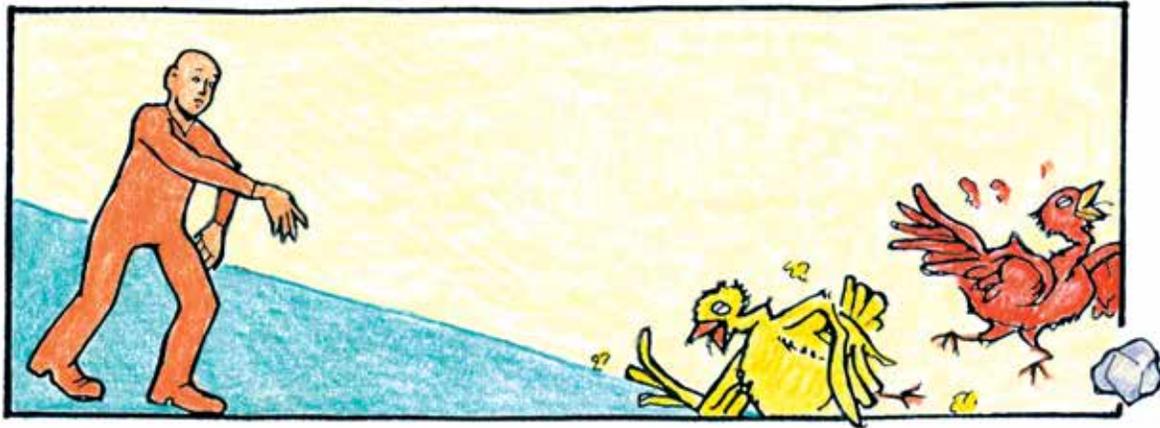
Identifying the Language

1. Describe the actions or activities depicted in the drawing. Use the detail in the drawings to add to the descriptions.

2. Identify the proverb. Offer as many possibilities as possible. Decide which is the correct one.

Practice

1. Describe the underlying meaning or message expressed in the proverb. Proverbs often carry many meanings, and it is important to elicit as many nuances or varying meanings as possible.

   The meanings usually have both a literal and a figurative meaning. "Let sleeping dogs lie", for example, literally exhorts us to not wake slumbering dogs in order to avoid their possible aggression, but it also applies figuratively to any situation where silence or avoidance of a particular topic is prudent.

2. Describe situations where the use of this proverb would be appropriate, drawing from your own experiences. Recount these as brief stories or anecdotes, ending by stating the proverb as a moral to the story.

3. Create brief dialogs or role plays in which the proverb is used as part of the conversation.

4. After mastering a number of proverbs, include several proverbs as part of a story, dialogue, or role play.

Follow-Up Activities

Discuss the following questions:

Cultural Exploration

1. List instances where you have read or heard this proverb. Describe these instances in as much detail as possible.

2. What underlying cultural values or beliefs are expressed through this proverb and the instances where it is used?

3. What experiences in the culture have you had that reflect the values or beliefs expressed in this proverb?

4. How is this proverb used in this culture? When is it appropriate to use this proverb?

Cultural Comparison

5. Does this proverb exist in your own culture?

6. What proverbs in your culture convey similar values or beliefs?

7. How are these proverbs used in your culture?

8. What similarities or differences do you see in this proverb and the proverb from your culture? What similarities or differences do you see in the cultural values and beliefs expressed in these proverbs?

Personal Significance

9. Do you agree with the values or beliefs expressed in this proverb? Give reasons to support your answer.

   Once you have named proverbs from your own culture, return to the cultural exploration discussion questions. This exploration will deepen understanding of both the similarities and the differences among the proverbs.

   There is a tendency to assume that cultures are alike if they have proverbs to address "similar" values or beliefs. However, this is not necessarily the case.

   For example, the proverb "Many hands make light work" can represent the importance of cooperation and community in North American culture. On the surface, we might say that the African proverb "A single hand cannot lift the calabash to the head" represents similar values of cooperation and community. Although similarities do exist, these concepts of cooperation and community are very probably defined and practiced differently by Africans and North Americans. In discussing similarities and differences among proverbs, therefore, it is important to explore and highlight similarities and differences in the cultural practices that embody values and beliefs. This kind of detailed exploration leads to a fuller understanding of cultures.

10. Interview persons with experience in the culture about a proverb or saying, using the questions above as a guide.