

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Task		Learning Outcomes
1	Understand the steps to conducting a focus group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give instructions and directions for tasks, procedures, and processes. ↻8 (II-i)
2	Listen to a sample focus group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify implied meanings, feelings, attitude, purpose, and intent in social exchanges. ♪ 8 (I-i)
3	Prepare and run a focus group on an eco-friendly product.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in a focus group and meetings. ↻8 (I-i)

Embedded Competencies			
Essential Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Others: Participate in supervisory or leadership activities Thinking skills: Think critically 	Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate academic, teamwork, leadership, and personal management skills needed to succeed in the workplace
Soft Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate and plan projects and tasks 	Intercultural Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask complex questions about other cultures, seek out and articulate answers to these questions
Genre(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ / ↻ Class/Seminar Presentations ♪ / ↻ Focus groups 	English for Academic Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and participate in in-class groups Research
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and/or use conceptual vocabulary related to content area Understand and/or use mid-frequency vocabulary 	Grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indirect questions Noun Clauses
Vocabulary Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guess the meaning of words in context 	Pronunciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and/or use rhythm (and sound segments)
Textual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ Recognize cohesive devices that make it easier to understand listening texts across utterances/discourse indicators (e.g., adverbials) ↻ Use cohesion links across utterances and discourse indicators 	Socio-linguistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ Recognize different registers, styles, and some language varieties ↻ Use appropriate language to indicate formality and show respect
Functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ Recognize speaking conventions in oral presentations ↻ Understand situational scripts and corresponding oral discourse formats for particular academic, work, or community events 	Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♪ Recognize language used to avoid miscommunication ↻ Use strategies to check understanding, such as confirming information and paraphrasing

Task	CLB Competency Statement(s)	CLB Sample Indicators of Ability
1	<p>☞ 8 (II-i) Give instructions and directions for a broad range of technical and non-technical tasks, procedures, and processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses correct sequence of steps. • Uses clear references and provides necessary details. • Uses appropriate intonation so that the listener can follow. • Checks to confirm understanding.
Suggested Approach		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage Ss in a warm-up discussion on conducting focus groups; have Ss identify and discuss their abilities and needs with respect to Activity 5. • Have Ss listen to an audio clip explaining the steps to conducting a focus group, and take notes on the steps. Mid-frequency vocabulary from the video is addressed. • Review discourse markers used in giving instructions, addressed in Activity 3. • 🗣️ (II-i) Have Ss use their notes to practice retelling the steps to conducting a focus group with a partner. Ss receive a handout with steps, written in key words only, on how to conduct a focus group. Ss use the handout as a guide while explaining the steps to conducting a focus group. Ss can record themselves in the computer lab and submit the recording for PBLA. • Have Ss review and practice indirect questions and noun clauses with content from the audio. 		
Task	CLB Competency Statement(s)	CLB Sample Indicators of Ability
2	<p>👂 8 (I-i) Understand moderately complex social exchanges (such as expressions of, and responses to, gratitude, hope, appreciation, complaints, disappointment, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, approval, disapproval, formal welcomes, farewells, condolences, and congratulations).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies implied meanings and stated and unspecified details. • Identifies situations and relationships between participants. • Identifies speaker's purpose and intent. • Identifies emotional state, mood, and attitude from tone and intonation. • Understands the intent of expressions and responses.
Suggested Approach		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have Ss brainstorm the criteria and characteristics of an effective focus group. • 🗣️👂 (I-i) Choose 2 sample focus group videos. Ss watch the video and answer comprehension questions. Mid-frequency vocabulary from the video is addressed. Have Ss listen for meaning in tone, intonation, and register in the video. Choose an appropriate listening assessment design and set-up for the second video. Collect it for PBLA. • Instructor introduces key functions and strategies for facilitating/participating in a focus group, such as checking for understanding, asking for clarification, interrupting, and holding the floor. Have Ss practice using these functions and strategies. 		

Task	CLB Competency Statement(s)	CLB Sample Indicators of Ability
3	<p>☞8 (I-i) Participate in less routine social conversations for most everyday purposes (such as expressing and responding to empathy, clarifying conflicts, and providing reassurance). [Little support from interlocutors; communication may be related to situations where tone and register may have an impact on the outcome.]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces guests or speakers appropriately. • Asks follow-up questions to keep conversations going. • Encourages others to participate. • Holds the floor, interrupts appropriately, and resumes after an interruption. • Uses appropriate levels of formality with increased ability.
Suggested Approach		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor introduces critical thinking as a key function of participating in a focus group. Have Ss watch videos on critical thinking and discuss as a group. • Divide Ss into 5 groups. Each group is assigned 1 eco-friendly product that they will conduct a focus group on before it is launched (e.g., bathtub cleaner, non-pesticide lawn care, environmentally friendly sidewalk de-icer). • Have Ss create questions for the focus group and prepare a rough script of key phrases/questions for the focus group leader. Refer to transcripts from the sample focus group videos as a guide. • 🗣️ (I-i) In their group, have Ss take turns practicing moderating 1–2 questions for the focus group, with other members acting as the audience. Have Ss use functions and strategies for group management learned in Task 2. For PBLA, Ss regroup so there is 1 student from each group. Each person in the group takes turns moderating the focus group, participating in the focus group, and assessing the moderator. Collect for PBLA. • Have Ss go back to their home groups to report on the focus group results. Home groups select the best answers for each question. 		
Extension Ideas		Linked Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have Ss create a visual to display the results from the focus group, and share results with class members. 		Listening and Speaking 8 / Activity 3

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups**Instructor Self-Evaluation**

To set a professional standard, review this self-evaluation prior to and during the planning and delivery of this activity. After delivery, self-evaluate your delivery by checking (☑) the statements below.

- I explicitly discussed the relevance of the activity's CLB competencies and tasks to Ss' future target contexts. (Standards)
- I focused on linguistic features (e.g., cohesive devices, discourse markers, natural English) to enhance Ss' listening skills. (Planning)
- I focused on critical thinking as an important aspect of participating in a focus group (Planning)
- I helped Ss understand the genre, register, and structure of focus groups inductively with authentic Internet samples. (Authenticity)
- I explicitly discussed the transferability of the skills learned in conducting and managing a focus group. (Authenticity)
- I supported Ss by providing explicit support so they could serve as functional members in group work. (Needs)
- I ensured Ss received feedback on the content and register of the scripts they prepared for their focus groups. (Environments)
- I made use of "teachable moments" during class to illustrate ground rules for group work in Canadian academic contexts. (Culture)
- I assessed Ss' ability to conduct and manage a focus group. (Assessment)
- I gave suggestions to Ss to become involved in academic, community, or commercial research as participants. (Community)
- I encouraged Ss to improve their understanding of natural spoken English (e.g., listening links on-line, shadowing, dictation). (Independence)
- I encouraged Ss to volunteer to participate in a focus group or small group discussion and to reflect on their participation in the group. Were they active or not? What would have helped them be more effective? (Experiential Learning)

My areas of potential development (based on what I did not check) are:

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Getting Started: What do I know?

Use the following scale to rate the statements below:

2 - Yes	1 - Somewhat	0 - No
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Activity

___ I can conduct a focus group.

Task

___ I can give instructions and directions for tasks, procedures, and processes.

___ I can identify implied meanings, feelings, attitude, purpose, and intent in social exchanges.

___ I can participate in a focus group and meetings.

Language

___ I can use indirect questions.

___ I can use register charts to expand my vocabulary across registers.

___ I can understand and/or use conceptual vocabulary related to the content area by guessing the meaning of the words in context.

Skills

___ I can expand my vocabulary by using word forms.

___ I can lead and manage a group discussion.

___ I can think critically when asked for my opinion.

Questions I have about this activity: _____

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Student Self-Study

Orienting to Activity

To help you prepare for this Activity, think about and/or discuss the questions below.

1. What is a focus group? Who uses focus groups and for what purposes—researchers, marketing companies, PR firms? Why?
2. What are the pros and cons of collecting advice from a focus group as compared to from friends, employees, or the Internet? In the past, who have you consulted to get advice on complex decisions, work projects, or assignments? Did you follow their advice? What happened? How do you know if their advice was useful? What decision might a focus group help you to make?

Analyzing Content

To help you with the content in this Activity, complete the exercise(s) below.

1. In this activity, you will collect opinions on your eco-footprint oral questionnaire in order to improve it. What interview techniques are useful to elicit the information you need? What might prevent you from getting good feedback?
2. Search: *The Critical Thinking Community* and choose an article that is relevant. Read it and note down 3 suggestions.
3. Listen to a news story in the local media that reports facts or opinions on issues of local importance. Listen for how the facts/opinions were collected and decide whether they support the story well.
4. Find 3 on-line examples of people discussing a topic in a work or academic setting. View each, taking notes under these headings: (1) Purpose; (2) Formality (i.e., Register); (3) Interactions; (4) Transitions between topics; and (5) Invisible rules of discussion.

Practicing Skills

To help you with skills in this Activity, complete the exercise(s) below.

1. Find an interesting news interview on-line. Play it, pausing 10 times during the interview to paraphrase something the interviewee said. Use reported speech and write 1 “open” and 1 “closed” follow-up question in response to what was said.
2. Search: *Quick and Dirty Tips* on-line and take notes on an expert giving advice. Listen again and identify the words that give a formal/informal tone, move the topic along, or are hard to understand. Confirm your understanding with the transcripts.

Experiential Learning

Complete the exercise(s) below.

1. Volunteer to participate in a focus group or small group discussion. After the experience, reflect on your role in the group: Were you active or not in the discussion? What would have helped you to be more effective?

Practicing Language

To help you with the vocabulary in this Activity, read the explanation below.

Learning the word forms of a word can increase your vocabulary easily and greatly. Some words do not change to many other forms, while other words have many forms.

Now practice the exercises below.

Fill in the table with the correct word form. If you think there isn't a form, put an X in the box.

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
facilitator			
	reason		
			honestly
	introduce		
product			
		styling	
	influence		
		expectant	
			ethically
		harmful	

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Student Self-Evaluation

How did you do when performing the tasks for this activity? Check the appropriate box.	I can do this.	I would still like to practice this.	I can't do this.
I can conduct a focus group.			
I can give instructions and directions for tasks, procedures, and processes.			
I can identify implied meanings, feelings, attitude, purpose, and intent in social exchanges.			
I can participate in a focus group and meetings.			
I can understand and/or use conceptual vocabulary related to the content area by guessing the meaning of the words in context.			
I can use register charts to expand my vocabulary across registers.			
I can expand my vocabulary by using word forms.			
I can lead and manage a group discussion.			
I can think critically when asked for my opinion.			
I can volunteer to participate in a focus group or small group discussion, and after the experience, reflect on my role and participation in the group.			

My strengths in this activity, *Conducting Focus Groups*, are:

Challenges completing this activity, *Conducting Focus Groups*, are:

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Activity at a Glance

Tasks		Learning Outcomes	CLB Competency Statements	CLB Sample Indicators of Ability
1	Understand the steps to conducting a focus group.	Give instructions and directions for tasks, procedures, and processes. (II-i)	☞ 8 (II-i) Give instructions and directions for a broad range of technical and non-technical tasks, procedures, and processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses correct sequence of steps. • Uses clear references and provides necessary details. • Uses appropriate intonation so that the listener can follow. • Checks to confirm understanding.
2	Listen to a sample focus group.	Identify implied meanings, feelings, attitude, purpose, and intent in social exchanges. (I-i)	☞ 8 (I-i) Understand moderately complex social exchanges (such as expressions of, and responses to, gratitude, hope, appreciation, complaints, disappointment, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, approval, disapproval, formal welcomes, farewells, condolences, and congratulations).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies implied meanings and stated and unspecified details. • Identifies situations and relationships between participants. • Identifies speaker's purpose and intent. • Identifies emotional state, mood, and attitude from tone and intonation. • Understands the intent of expressions and responses.
3	Prepare and run a focus group on an eco-friendly product.	Participate in a focus group and meetings. (I-i)	☞ 8 (I-i) Participate in less routine social conversations for most everyday purposes (such as expressing and responding to empathy, clarifying conflicts, and providing reassurance). [Little support from interlocutors; communication may be related to situations where tone and register may have an impact on the outcome.]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces guests or speakers appropriately. • Asks follow-up questions to keep conversations going. • Encourages others to participate. • Holds the floor, interrupts appropriately, and resumes after an interruption. • Uses appropriate levels of formality with increased ability.

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Overview	Task
1	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to an audio recording on steps for conducting focus groups, following relevant sequence markers, and cohesive devices to identify the steps in conducting focus groups. (II-i) Retell the steps to conducting a focus group. Review indirect questions. 	1
2	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (I-i) View a video of a focus group identifying language features and key characteristics of this spoken genre. Learn and practice group management strategies. Prepare to conduct a focus group on an eco-friendly product. 	2
3	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a script for a focus group leader that uses key phrases appropriate to a standard and informal register. Practice key functions and strategies of facilitating/participating in a focus group. 	3
4	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (I-i) Organize, conduct, and participate in a focus group. Create and present a visual to summarize focus group feedback. 	3
5	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research an environmental problem and develop an eco-friendly product in small groups. Participate in PBLA Checkpoint 2 	CH 2
6	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present an eco-friendly product to a group Participate in PBLA Checkpoint 2 	CH 2

* All lessons are 2.5 hours.

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Instructor's Lesson Plans

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Task 1

Lesson 1 of 6

Materials and Handouts

- *Getting Started: What do I know?*
- *Student Self-Study Pages: Overview for Activity 5*
- Handout 1-1: *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups: Vocabulary Preview*
- Audio: *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups*
- Handout 1-2: *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups: Note taking*
-  PBLA Exercise: *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups*
- Handout 1-3: *Indirect Questions*

Lesson Sequence

1. *Getting Started: What do I know?* and *Student Self-study Pages for Activity 5*
 - Ss discuss their abilities/needs relevant to Activity 5.
 - Ss discuss questions in the *Student Self-study Pages, Orienting to Activity: all questions*
2. Handout 1-1
 - In pairs, Ss do vocabulary preview & discuss answers as a class.
3. Handout 1-2 & Audio
 - Ss review sequence markers as used in giving instructions or directions or steps to doing something. Ss listen to the provided audio "*Steps for Conducting Focus Groups*" twice and take notes. In pairs Ss compare and revise notes, & then practice telling the steps using their notes & focusing on discourse markers.
4.  (II-i)
 - Distribute handout listing the number of steps & key words from the audio *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups*. Ss use handout as a guide while recording themselves outlining the steps, in the audio lab or using Vocaroo.com in a computer lab. Collect the recordings and assess.
5. Handout 1-3
 - Review indirect questions (embedded questions). Focus Ss' attention on the ability of indirect questions to soften questions and briefly discuss intonation contours associated with statements and questions.
 - Ss ask each other questions from Handout 1-2 by changing the direct questions to an indirect form (using noun clause with if/whether or wh-words), paying attention to intonation. Ss respond using their guided notes.
 - Discuss tone of focus group (comfortable, friendly, open, informal) and how indirect questions can be used effectively in a focus group (when asking participants personal information, to delve deeper into a subject/further questioning about something a participant has said, etc.) Need to do this since the video example used is very informal, but the use of indirect questions can imply polite/formal.
6. *Student Self-study Pages*
 - Guide Ss through the pages, focussing on Overview, Analyzing Content and Samples to do for homework.

Homework:

1. Student Self-Study pages: Overview, Analyzing Content and Samples: Find three online examples of people discussing a topic in a work or academic setting. View each, taking notes under these heading: 1. Purpose 2. Formality (register) 3. Interactions 4. Transitions between topics 5. Invisible rules of discussion.

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Task 2

Lesson 2 of 6

Materials and Handouts

- YouTube website video (see link below)
- Handout 2-1: *Focus Group Sample Video Listening Worksheet*
-   (I-i) PBLA Exercise: *Analyze Focus Group Discussion for a Hair Product*
- PBLA Video: *A Focus Group for a Hair Product*
- Handout 2-2: *Group Discussion Strategies - Checking for Understanding and Asking for Clarification*
- Handout 2-3: *Group Discussion Strategies - Interrupting and Holding the Floor*
- Handout 2-4: *Scenarios to Practice Social Conversation Strategies*

Lesson Sequence

1. Handout 2-1 & *Focus Group Sample* video
 - Ss in groups brainstorm and identify criteria and characteristics of an effective focus group.
 - Search *youtube.com*: “Focus Group Sample” “Frank Luntz” “5:15 min” or go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gR1zu7i0-E>
 - Ss view *Focus Group Sample* video, Introduction only (0:00 – 1:36), to answer main idea, detail & prediction questions in Exercise A. Ss in pairs discuss Vocabulary Preview, Exercise B.
 - Ss listen to the complete *Focus Group Sample* video twice and complete Exercise C.
 - Ss listen for meaning in tone and intonation from the video. Discuss the importance of intonation for the moderator, especially with the use of indirect questions.
 - Ss identify informal language register using Handout 2- Exercise D. Pause the video every few minutes to allow Ss to listen carefully for informal language.
2.   (I-i) and PBLA Video
 - Ss watch the focus group video “*A Focus Group for a Hair Product*”, & answer questions about the intended meaning of the tone and intonation used in the video. **Note:** Be sure to introduce & clarify names of characters so Ss can answer questions (Characters are wearing name tags).
3. Handouts 2-2, 2-3 & 2-4
 - Introduce key functions and strategies of facilitating **and** participating in social conversation in group discussions such as a focus group. Focus on tone and intonation & register. Discuss and indicate which gambits are used by moderators, which could be used by both moderators/participants, and which are commonly used by participants only. Note: Handouts are preparation for conducting a focus group.
 - Ss practice with Handout 2-4.

Homework

1. Internet search: Critical Thinking. What is it? When do we use it? Etc. Prepare to discuss next day.
2. Internet search: Conducting focus groups (video—you tube). Ss write down key phrases they hear the moderators use, and come with a list of gambits to share next class. Ss can also listen for and write down any instances of indirect questions.

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Task 3

Lesson 3 of 6

Materials and Handouts

- YouTube website video (see link below)
- Handout 3-1: *Eco-Friendly Product Focus Group*
- Handout 3-2: *Criteria for Moderating a Focus Group*
- PBLA Checkpoint 2 Materials

Lesson Sequence

1. Homework check: Critical thinking search and video
 - Homework check: Groups discuss critical thinking search results. Introduce critical thinking as a key function in participating in a focus group.
 - Search *YouTube.com*: “Critical Thinking” “Qualia Soup” (5:13 minutes long) (or go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OLPL5p0fMg>)
 - Have Ss watch YouTube video on critical thinking and discuss as a group.
2. Handout 3-1 & Handout 2-3
 - Discuss results of homework search: conducting a focus group. Elicit the steps and language the moderator needs. Remember: Welcome, introductions, house rules, purpose of the focus group and the purpose of the moderator. Questions. Wrap up, thank you and good bye.
 - Divide Ss into 5 groups. Each group is assigned one eco-friendly product for which they will conduct a focus group before it is launched. E.g. bath tub cleaner, non-pesticide lawn care, environmentally friendly side walk de-icer, etc.
 - Using the handout as a guide, Ss create questions for the focus group.
 - Ss prepare a rough script of key phrases/questions for the focus group leader. Ss can refer to the *Focus Group Sample* video to guide them.
3. Handout 3-2
 - Each person in the group takes turns moderating 1-2 questions for the focus group, with other members acting as the audience. Ss use Handout for peer feedback. Remind Ss to use group discussion language & strategies learned in last lesson. Remind Ss of the communicative value of stress and intonation as discussed in the previous day’s lesson.
4. PBLA Checkpoint 2 Materials
 - Assign for homework: Ss answer the PBLA reflection questions ahead of PBLA checkpoint interviews. Ss peruse their portfolio folder to organize and get familiar with portfolio contents and complete questions more fully before class, during break, or after class over the next few days.

Homework

1. Practice focus group script with friends and family, including good use of stress and intonation.
2. Review group management strategies.

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Task 3

Lesson 4 of 6

Materials and Handouts

- ↻ (I-i) PBLA Exercise: *Moderating a Focus Group*
- Handout 4-1: *Giving and Receiving Feedback*
- Flip chart paper, pens
- *Student Self-evaluation: How did you do?*
- *Student Self-Study Pages Activity 6*
- PBLA Checkpoint 2 materials

Lesson Sequence

1. ↻ (I-i) and Handout 4-1
 - Ss assemble in their teams and review the script for the focus group moderator.
 - Ss regroup so there is a new group containing one student from each group. Review giving and receiving feedback using Handout 4-1.
 - Each person in the group takes turns moderating the focus group, participating in the focus group and assessing the moderator.
 - Peer assessors give oral feedback to the moderators using the PBLA tool and using strategies & language based on Handout 4-1. **Suggested:** assign Ss to only peer assess once, so they can focus on doing the participant role effectively.
 - **Suggested:** videotape (focus on moderator) for later review (teacher comments and student self-review).
2. Discussion of Results
 - Ss go back to their home groups to report on the focus group results. Home groups select the best answers for each question, create a visual (for example bar or pie graph) to display these results & share results with class members.
3. *Student Self-evaluation: How did you do?*
 - Ss complete the survey.
4. PBLA Checkpoint Materials
 - Review the materials with the Ss. Remind them to complete and bring to class next day for the interview.

Homework

1. Review Activity 6 Student Self-Study Pages.
2. Ss review and complete Checkpoint material.

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups**Checkpoint 2****Lesson 5 of 6****Materials and Handouts**

- Handout 5-1: *Designing an Eco-friendly Product*

Lesson Sequence

1. Handout 5-1
 - Ss work in groups of three to research an environmental problem, design an eco-friendly product, and plan a presentation.
2. **PBLA Checkpoint 2.**
 - While Ss are preparing their presentations, begin PBLA Checkpoint 2 interviews.
 - PBLA Checkpoint Interviews will take place over two lessons.

Homework

1. Ss complete eco-friendly product presentations if not finished in class.

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups**Checkpoint 2****Lesson 6 of 6****Materials and Handouts**

- Handout 5-1: *Designing an Eco-friendly Product*

Lesson Sequence

1. Handout 5-1
 - Ss divide into three groups, each with one student presenting on each eco-friendly product.
 - Ss present their eco-friendly product to their new group. After all Ss have presented, each group can vote on the three best products.
2. **Continue with PBLA Checkpoint 2 interviews.**

Homework

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Instructor's Answer Key

Handout 1-1: Steps for Conducting Focus Groups Vocabulary Preview**Answers Below****A. Guess the meaning of the underlined words based on the context.**

1. We have to consider budgets and time constraints when we do research.

Answers may vary.

2. The answers to the questionnaire reveal a person's attitude towards the environment.

Answers may vary.

3. The researcher can conduct an experiment to collect information.

Answers may vary.

4. The downside to having a long questionnaire is that it takes a lot of time to complete.

Answers may vary.

5. You will need to get the consent of the participants before doing the experiment.

Answers may vary.

6. You should formulate your questions carefully when you make a questionnaire.

Answers may vary.

7. To make sure enough people volunteer to join your research, you can offer them an incentive.

Answers may vary.

8. Offering snacks can help facilitate participants to speak more.

Answers may vary.

9. When a focus group leader dresses too formally, it can be intimidating to the participants.

Answers may vary.

10. The personal information of each participant is confidential.

Answers may vary.

11. Group members need to develop rapprochement with each other so they can work more easily together.

Answers may vary.

12. We want participants to be vocal so we can get more information.

Answers may vary.

Activity 5

B. Fill in the blanks with the correct word below. Use the correct form.

immigrant, soda, gender, informal, participant, publication, rural, discourage, snack, refresh

1. Many people immigrate to Canada to start new lives.
2. After a nap, I feel refreshed.
3. The party was informal. Everyone wore jeans.
1. There is very little public transportation in the rural areas in Canada.
2. Soda is a large contributor to obesity.
3. Teachers expect students to participate in class and not just be quiet.
4. Many forms require you to fill in your gender.
5. The book will be published next year.
6. He felt discouraged after failing the driving test three times.
7. The survey questioned the snacking habits of Canadians.

C. Fill in the table with the correct word form

Noun	Verb	Adjective
downside	x	x
assertion	assert	assertive
immigrant	immigrate	immigrant
conduct	conduct	x
formulation, formula, formulator	formulate	formulated
gender	x	gender
intimidator, intimidation	intimidate	intimidating, intimidated
participant	participate	participating, participative
publication	publish	publishing, published
x	x	rural
consent	consent	consenting, consensual
discouragement	discourage	discouraging, discouraged
snack	snack	snack
x	vocalize	vocal
incentive	(incent), incentivize	x
confidentiality	x	confidential
revelation	reveal	revealing, revealed
refreshment	refresh	refreshing, refreshed

Handout 1-2: Steps for Conducting Focus Groups: Note-Taking

No Answers Required

  **(II-i) PBLA Exercise: Steps for Conducting Focus Groups**

No Answers Required

  **(II-i) PBLA Tool: Steps for Conducting Focus Groups**

Rubric in Student Handouts

Handout 1-3: Indirect Questions

Answers Below

A. Let's make the rules. Look at the changes in the questions above and complete the rules below for the indirect question (in the subordinate clause).

1. If the original question uses the helping verb "do" ("did"), omit the helping verb & change the main verb to the correct tense (the same as the tense in original question).

2. If there is a helping verb "be" or a modal, change the order so the subject is before the "be" verb (or modal).

3. If it is a "yes/no" question, use "whether", "whether or not", or "if" to introduce the reported question in the subordinate clause. Change the verb form & order as in the first two rules.

4. In the subordinate clause, the infinitive form can be used after a question word or whether.

B. Practice: Change the direct questions to indirect questions using the introductory expressions below. Then, ask your partner the questions. Your partner will use their notes from the audio listening *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups* to answer.

1. What should you consider when you plan the focus group?
→ *Could you tell me what you should consider when you plan the focus group?
(what you want to learn, when you need the info by and how you will use this info.)*
2. What kind of criteria can you use to select an audience?
→ *Do you know what kind of criteria you can use to select an audience?
(gender, race, age, level of education or other characteristics / at least two groups)*
3. What are some good locations you can use?

→ *Can you tell me what some good locations you can use are? / Can you tell me what are some good locations you can use? Note: the latter is commonly accepted spoken form. (meeting rooms at churches, schools, office buildings, community centres, etc.)*

4. Why should you not tell participants the specific subject beforehand?
→ *Do you know why you should not tell participants the specific subject beforehand? (They may formulate ideas or study to become more knowledgeable)*
5. How do you recruit participants?
→ *I was wondering how you recruit participants. (By telephone, ad in a local publication, work with community organization, professional associations)*
6. How can you ensure participants show up?
→ *Can you tell me how you can ensure participants show up? offer an incentive (usually money), over-recruit*
7. How should the interviewer dress?
→ *I was wondering how the interviewer should dress. (appropriately, not too formal, not too informal)*
8. What should be in the interviewer's guide?
→ *Do you know what should be in the interviewer's guide? (questions that will get you the answers that you want, most questions should be open ended)*
9. What should you do at the beginning of the focus group?
→ *Do you know what you should do at the beginning of the focus group? (greet the audience, explain the process, ensure they understand that confidentiality will be maintained, have participants introduce themselves to the group)*
10. Why should you ask icebreaker questions?
I was wondering why you should ask icebreaker questions.
→ *bring participants to focus on the topic, help the interviewer develop rapport with the participants*
11. How do you do an in-depth investigation?
→ *Would you mind telling me how you do an in-depth investigation? (encourage participants to express their views and even disagree with one another about the topics, ask as many questions, seek opinions from all participants)*
12. What is the last thing the interviewer should do?
→ *I was wondering what the last thing the interviewer should do is./ I was wondering what is the last thing the interviewer should do.. (Note: the latter is a commonly accepted spoken form) (thank the audience, reassert confidentiality, give any promised incentives)*

Handout 2-1: Steps for Conducting Focus Groups Audio Transcript

No Answers Required

Handout 2-2: Focus Group Sample Video Listening Worksheet

Answers Below

A. Listen to the introduction. Answer the questions.

1. Main Idea Questions

- a. Who is Frank Luntz? *a researcher (unstated detail)*
- b. Where is he? *in New York*
- c. What did he do? *He conducted focus groups*
- d. Why did he do it? *to find out what people liked and what they disliked about the news*

2. Detail Questions

- a. How did Frank select his focus group members?
selected for having an interest in national and international news
selected according to age: one young group, one more mature group
- b. How did the focus group sessions work? What are the steps?
-Gave exercise to get a clear idea of what they want from the news, what excites them, and what turns them off.
-Played clips of BBC World & major US news programs
-Each person responded with a handheld dial set with result > computer

3. Prediction

- a. What do you think will happen next? *Answers may vary*

B. Discuss the meanings of these words and idioms with a partner.

credible, biased, perspective, hype, migrate, impact, cross section

to have the balls to do something

to point the finger at someone

to look for/at every angle

to second guess oneself

C. Listen to the whole focus group session.

1. What are the main discussion points? *Answers may vary. (main ideas)*

What do people think when they hear "BBC"?

Activity 5

Is BBC biased?

Why do people watch the BBC and not some American channel?

What types of stories did the viewers to see the most?

2. Why do people prefer the BBC news? *Answers may vary. (details)*

*Credible, more in-depth, more international perspective, intelligent, serious, informative
Isn't biased*

3. What kind of news story do viewers want to see the most? Why? (details)

Technology

4. What is the purpose of the questions “When I say BBC what do you think of first?” (Purpose and intent)

a. to get a general idea of who likes BBC and who doesn't

b. by beginning with an easy question and get people to respond easily

c. to surprise people

5. Listening to the tone of the speakers' voices, when they answer the above questions, what is the mood and attitude of the speakers when they answer the questions? (*Identifies mood and attitude*)

a. businesslike b. unsure **c. confident**

6. When the speaker says: “It's the most intelligent, the most serious, the most informed, the most international. How does he feel about the BBC News? (*Interprets feelings*)

a. satisfied b. hopeful c. thankful

7. When the man said “They (BBC) have the balls to point the finger at people who are responsible for things that are going on in this world.....” What is he implying? (*intent of expression*)

a. BBC news is insensitive b. BBC news is right **c. BBC news is courageous**

8. When the man finished the sentence by saying, “....*Not to even speak of this country (America)*”, he is implying:

a. *American news is insensitive* **b. American news is not courageous** c. *American news is courageous*

9. After the moderator asked, “Why do you watch the BBC and not some American channel?” the emotional tone of the responses were all:

a. approving b. happy c. hopeful

D. Watch the video again. Find examples of words and phrases that show informal register. Write down the standard and formal equivalents.

Informal	Standard	Academic (Formal)
gonna	<i>going to</i>	<i>going to</i>
stuff	<i>things</i>	<i>things</i>
have the balls	<i>be brave</i>	<i>have the courage</i>
to point the finger	<i>to blame</i>	<i>to accuse</i>
slanted	<i>skewed</i>	<i>biased, distorted</i>
look for every angle	<i>look at all sides</i>	<i>look at every perspective</i>
hype	<i>hype</i>	exaggeration
thumb drives	<i>USB stick</i>	<i>USB flash drive</i>
second guess myself	<i>question myself</i>	<i>doubt myself</i>

(I-i) PBLA Exercise: Analyze Focus Group Discussion for a Hair Product**Answers Below**

1. How would you describe Chris' tone of voice when he says "*Recording our responses... you didn't mention that.*" (*emotional tone mood and attitude*)
 - a. excited
 - b. disappointed
 - c. accusatory**
2. How does Tom feel when he says "I don't really know how much useful information I can give you with this focus group because I don't really use hair products. So?" (*emotional tone mood and attitude*)
 - a. embarrassed
 - b. disinterested**
 - c. angry
3. What is the relationship amongst the people? (*identifies relationships*)
 - a. friends
 - b. co-workers
 - c. strangers**
4. After Cindy talks about the different products she uses in her hair, what does Chris mean when he says "uh, is that all?" (*implied meaning*)
 - a. Cindy doesn't use enough hair products

Activity 5

- b. Cindy uses a normal amount of hair products
- c. Cindy uses too many hair products**

5. What factors do each of the people in the focus group consider when they choose hair care products? Include one factor per person (*detail*)

a. Tom	<i>Price</i>
b. Chris	<i>Brand loyalty, Marketing: commercials</i>
c. Janice	<i>Price, what friends recommend</i>
d. Cindy	<i>Price, What is popular in magazines/new products</i>

6. How does Janice feel about the leave in conditioner product? (*implied meaning*)

- a. excited
- b. curious
- c. suspicious**

7. When Chris says, : “So, what’s the difference...you put cream in your hair, you put mousse in your hair, what’s the difference?” he... (*identifies speaker’s purpose*)

- a. a. agrees with Janice.
- b. disagrees with Janice.
- c. disagrees with Janice and Tom**

8. What does Chris think about using a leave in conditioner? (*tone*)

- a. It’s a gimmick and he would not buy it.
- b. he may try it if it helps his hair look better**
- c. he is really excited about the product and can’t wait to try it

9. What is most important to Cindy when purchasing a hair care product? (*detail*)

- a. ease of use
- b. ingredients
- c. not tested on animals
- d. packaging**

10. When Janice says to Cindy: “Maybe that’s why your hair was falling out.” Why did everyone laugh?

- a. Because Cindy is so sweet and innocent and didn’t know that hair products could damage hair**
- b. because Cindy was pretending that she didn’t know that hair products could damage hair
- c. because Cindy has a good sense of humour

11. Throughout the focus group Tom’s attitude is (*identifies attitude*)

- a. rude
- b. uninterested
- c. negative**

12. What is the purpose of the focus group? (*situation*)

Activity 5

a. To collect opinions on a brand new product

b. To collect opinions on an existing product

c. To try out a new product and collect opinions on it

13. The participants won't be paid if

a. they sign a cheque on the way out

b. they don't sign on the way out

c. they sign on the way out

 (I-i) PBLA Tool: *Analyze focus group discussion for a hair product*

Indicators of Ability	Comments	Scores
o Identify implied meaning and unspecified details (4,13)		/2
o Identify stated details (5 a,b,c,d,9)		/5
o Identify situations and relationships (3, 12)		/2
o Identify speakers' purpose and intent (7, 10)		/2
o Identify emotional state, mood and attitude from tone and intonation. (1, 2, 6, 8, 11)		/5
Achieved = 11/ 16		/16

Handout 2-3: *Checking for Understanding and Asking for Clarification*

No Answers Required

Handout 2-4: *Interrupting and Holding the Floor*

No Answers Required

Handout 2-5: *Scenarios to Practice Social Conversation Strategies*

No Answers Required

Critical Thinking

Video

Handout 3-1: *Eco-Friendly Product Focus Group***No Answers Required****Handout 3-2: *Criteria for Moderating a Focus Group*****No Answers Required**** (I-i) PBLA Exercise and Tool: *Moderating a Focus Group*****Rubric in Student Handouts****Handout 4-1: *Giving and Receiving Feedback*****No Answers Required****Handout 5-1: *Designing an Eco-friendly Product*****No Answers Required**

Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Transcripts

Audio: Steps for Conducting Focus Groups**Transcript Below**

Hi. I'm James Kirkpatrick. I have over ten years of experience in running focus groups for companies both large and small. Today I am going to share my experience and give you my advice on running focus groups. Focus groups are great when you want to find in-depth information about a topic or product, but there is a lot to think about when planning and conducting focus groups. By following my advice and instructions, you will reduce the stress involved in planning and conducting focus groups.

Before the focus group:

1. The first thing you want to do is to plan the focus group. Decide what you want to learn from the focus group. Determine when you need to have this information by and how you will use this information. Other considerations include budgets and time constraints.
2. Next, you will need to develop criteria for your audience. In other words, you will need to decide which type of audience you want to have in your focus group. For example, if you wanted to find out why people drink your soda, it wouldn't be smart to focus on an audience that doesn't drink your product, as this audience will reveal very little information into why people like your soda.

The criteria for selecting an audience can also be along the lines of gender, race, age, level of education or other characteristics. For example, if you want to figure out why men drink your soda more than women, it might be a good idea to create a focus group exclusively of men. Oppositely, if you wanted to find out why women don't drink your soda, then it would probably be best to make a focus group entirely of women.

When using focus groups, conduct at least two groups with each audience segment. For example, if you're conducting separate groups with men and women, you would need at least four groups – two with men, two with women. If audience feedback is unclear, you may want to conduct additional focus groups.

3. After deciding on your audience, you will need to choose the location and format for your focus groups. You can conduct focus groups or interviews several ways. For example, there are many companies that you can use to recruit participants. These companies also offer audio and/or video recording equipment as well as one-way mirrors with observation rooms. The obvious downside of hiring a company is that it is extremely expensive and may not be available in small towns or in rural locations.

If your budget is small, you can also conduct focus groups or interviews in meeting rooms at churches, schools, office buildings, community centers, or other locations. If an observation room with a one-way mirror isn't available, then you can hook up speakers or cameras to audio and/or video record the session. Of course, you will need to get the consent of the audience before doing this. In some cases, you may use one or two quiet observers taking notes in the room.

4. Now that you have chosen a location, you will need to draft a short screening questionnaire. This screening questionnaire will be given to potential participants, typically by telephone, to ensure that they meet the criteria you developed. Remember, you do not want an audience that will reveal little information. Potential participants can be told what the subject is in general (for example, "a health topic"), but shouldn't be told what the specific subject is. If participants know the

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subject in advance, they may formulate ideas or study to become more knowledgeable about the subject than the typical audience member.

5. The next step is to actually recruit participants for your focus group. Choose the right participants for the focus groups, or your research will be a waste of time. Participants should be recruited by telephone one to three weeks before the sessions. If you do the recruiting yourself, which is most likely, you might need to run an ad in a local publication, work with community organizations, or identify professionals through a relevant association or mailing list service. For example, if you wanted new immigrants in your focus group, you could ask an ESL instructor at a local school to post a notice about the focus group in their classroom.
6. You will now have to think about how to get participants to show up. To ensure that enough people show up, offer an incentive (usually money) and over-recruit more people than you actually need. If everyone shows up, select those who best fit your screening criteria, thank the extra participants, give them the agreed-upon incentive, and ask them to leave. You also can make sure you have enough people by scheduling sessions at times that are convenient for your potential participants (such as at lunch or after work).
7. You will also have to choose a convenient and comfortable site. A comfortable site will encourage participants to open up and speak more. For this reason, avoid using sites such as cafés or parks. Find a private room with comfortable furniture. Offering snacks and refreshments can also help facilitate participants to speak more.
8. You should also consider yourself, if you are to be the interviewer of the focus groups. You should dress appropriately. Dressing too formally may discourage participants because you can come off as intimidating. Dressing too informally could result in the participants not taking the focus group seriously. The interviewer should dress semi casual.
9. Next, you should develop an interviewer's guide. The quality of the interviewer's guide is critical to your success. The interviewer's guide tells what information you want from the participants and helps keep the discussions on track and on time. Before making this guide, think about what you want to learn from the focus groups and how you'll use what you learn. Then, write questions for the guide that will get you the answers that you want. Most questions should be open-ended, so participants can provide more in-depth responses than just "yes" or "no."

During the focus group:

1. Now it's time to conduct the focus groups. The first thing you should do while conducting the focus group is to greet the audience, explain the process, and ensure they understand that confidentiality will be maintained. It's also a good idea at the beginning of the focus group to have participants introduce themselves to the group. You don't want the audience feeling unsafe, or you risk not getting honest answers.
2. After the introductions and greetings are finished, you should lead into the topic of the focus group by asking a few simple "icebreaker" questions and simple yes/no questions. This will help bring the participants to focus on the topic. This also helps the interviewer develop rapport with the participants.
3. Next, the session should shift to an in-depth investigation of participants' thoughts. Following the interviewer's guide, the interviewer manages the session and ensures that all topics are covered without overly directing the discussion. Participants are encouraged to express their views and

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even disagree with one another about the topics. The interviewer should ask as many questions to learn about the participants' thoughts. The interviewer also seeks opinions from all participants so that all are heard, rather than a vocal few dominating the discussion.

4. Finally, at the end of a focus group, the interviewer should close by thanking the audience, reasserting that confidentiality will be maintained, and by giving any promised incentives.

ESL Pathways Project: In-house Development

PBLA Video: *Focus Group for a Hair Product***Transcript Below**

Beth: Ok, hi everybody. My name is Beth and I'm your facilitator today for this focus group. Welcome and thank you very much for coming. Um when you came in today I don't think you knew what we were going to be discussing and um and we're going to be talking about a hair care product. Ok?

Tom: Hair?

Beth: Hair, yes. Um so, I've been hired by this company to run this market research and we're recording your responses for us to look at later.

Chris: Recording our responses... you didn't mention that.

Beth: Um it was in the waiver that you signed before you came in. Um..

Janice: You didn't see that?

Chris: I didn't see that.

Beth: It was on the form that you signed.

Chris: Oh...

Beth: But not to worry, it's only for the purposes of this focus group, for the company that's... Yes?

Tom: I don't really know how much useful information I can give you with this focus group, because I don't really use hair products. So...

Beth: That's fine, that's the reason that you're here. The company would like to know about your thoughts...and

Chris: You're still getting paid.

Beth:... and you're still getting paid. Awesome. Ok. So, I'm going to ask you a few questions um and I'll be writing a few notes, but I'll just want you to talk honestly, and just give your opinions of what you think. So, first thing I want to do is go around and get your names, if everyone can just introduce themselves. Tom, can I start with you?

Tom: Yep, my name is Tom and uh I'm a financial advisor.

Beth: Oh, great. Welcome. And..

Chris: I'm Chris. I work as a financial market analyst. Also finance.

Activity 5

Beth: Ok, finance guys. And yourself?

Janice: Hi. My name is Janice and I'm a pastry chef.

Beth: Oh—pastry chef. Yumm!

Cindy: I'm Cindy, and I'm a part time secretary.

Beth: Excellent. Welcome Cindy. Ok, so what we're going to do today, I'm going to get started right away, I'm going to talk to you about your hair care products. What you use right now. So, what kind of products do you use um for your hair? So, start with you?

Cindy: Sure. I use about 8 different products. Um, the first thing I do is like sort of a pre-shampoo oil, and then I go into the shower and I shampoo at least 3 or 4 times. And then I put in a cream rinse and I leave that in for about 2 minutes, and then I rinse. And I put in a leave in conditioner. And then when I get out of the shower, I um put in a heat protector before I blow dry and then when I'm done blow drying, a little dry shampoo, and then um some hairspray to hold it.

Beth: Great thank you.

Chris: Uh, is that all?

Tom: I'm sorry, I I don't understand anything.

Beth: Ok, so Tom, what about you, what do you use?

Tom: I'm going to keep it short and sweet. I use shampoo.

Beth: Shampoo. All right. So we go from eight products to one product, no problem.

Tom: That's it. I wash once a day. Shampoo.

Beth: Excellent. Thanks. What about you Chris?

Chris: Ah well, you know, obviously shampoo, but I have some styling products, some hair styling products, that I use.

Beth: Ok,

Chris: That I use, hair cream things like that.

Beth: Perfect. What about you Janice?

Janice: I think I fall somewhere in the middle. I don't use so many products, but I usually use shampoo, conditioner, and maybe a little bit of mousse when I'm styling my hair to give it some body.

Beth: Ok, that's good. So, I have a question about anything that you might buy that would be a new product. What would influence you to buy a new product? Um, would it be...

Tom: You mean a new hair product or a new product?

Beth: Hair product. So, would it be your hair dresser or hair stylist recommending, friends, television ads ... what would make you buy a new product?

Tom: The "on sale" sign at the supermarket.

Activity 5

Beth: So, it's price for you.

Tom: Normally if it's just for me, I'll have a look, what's on sale, looks good, I'll take it. I'm not really um loyal to one brand.

Beth: One brand. So what's ... the sale price is what's most important. All right. What about for you.

Cindy: You know um like when I've bought products from the hairdresser, they've never really worked out and they've been really expensive, so I'm kind of like Tom, I buy what's reasonably on sale, but I also read magazines a lot, about once a month, and I get my beauty tips from there. And I like to try new products.

Beth: Ok, so you like to try the new...what's new and out there. Ok, what about for you.

Claudine: Uh I kind of... I go by what my friends are are using. And you know I've got a group of friends that um... we meet up for coffee once a week. And...

Beth: And so their discussion will influence you to buy

Janice: Yeah, but we are also very aware of price, the group of us. So, you know. That's part of it.

Tom: Well, they can be so expensive can't they? I mean I've gone into supermarkets before and I've seen products for 25 dollars. So who's going to spend 25 dollars on a hair product?

Cindy: I thought 25 dollars was normal.

Beth: I think everyone has a different idea. So, price is important for you.

Tom: No, no I don't think so..

Beth: Let's hear from Chris and see what Chris has to say.

Chris: Oh Ok, well, I have certain brands that I tend to buy but uh I'm influenced I have to admit by marketing that's out there you know.

Beth: Would it be television?

Chris: Commercials, things like that. But I have to say that a lot of the times when I do buy the products, I have these expectations, but honestly, most of the times, they don't live up to my expectations.

Beth: Ok. Ok, so what we're looking at is the new product would be a leave in conditioner. So, this product would be something that you would use in the shower after you shampoo, and you would leave it on your hair. Um, it says that it actually adds more volume and body to your hair. So...

Tom: So, what's the difference between a normal conditioner?

Beth: Usually I think the conditioners you rinse out and ...afterwards, and this one you leave in. You put it in and you leave it in.

Janice: Yeah that's...

Beth: So, what do you think about that...

Janice: That sounds a bit odd to me.

Activity 5

Tom: Yeah.

Janice: If you're leaving something in your hair ... a conditioner?... I don't know, I can just imagine it would be all sticky and gummy... I think it's a I think it's a gimmick.

Tom: I agree

Chris: So, What's the difference...you put cream in your hair, you put mousse in your hair, what's the difference with that? You just leave it in and you don't have to worry about it.

Beth: So, you would say you could use that. You see yourself using that?

Chris: Well, maybe, if it gave you more body like you were saying. Yeah

Janice: Yeah.

Chris: then you won't have to buy the mousse or whatever.

Tom: I.. I just fear that the more products that you put in your hair, um, it could ruin your hair. I mean I don't want my hair falling out. You know.

Cindy: One time that happened to me.

Tom: Yeah? Really? So...

Cindy: Yeah. I put in a product that was brand new and everyone was talking about it, and I left it in a little bit too long, and I had this burning sensation and then little clumps of my hair started falling out.

Tom: Yeah—see, no.

Beth: So, would you say you'd purchase this product because it has the leave in conditioner, do you think?

Cindy: I mean if I read it in a beauty magazine that it worked I probably would buy it, yep.

Claudine: For me, I mean I'm guessing that because this is a new item it's probably going to be super expensive and ... I'm not into that kind of gimmicky stuff so...I you know, if it's a reasonable price and my friends try it and they like it, maybe I would try it but...

Chris: And you know too, they tend to you know in the beginning, they make it really cheap, then when you start to like it and the price goes up, right, you know what I mean.

Janice: Yeah Yeah.

Beth: Ok, so I have another question for you, so this is a new product we're talking about, a leave in conditioner. So, when you're looking at buying a new product, like this for example, um which of the following things sort of matter to you. I'll give you a list of some things that might matter, so, convenience, maybe you know easy to use in the shower, the product ingredients, um or no testing on animals. So are those things that important to you when you are purchasing?

Everyone: Oh, yes, yeah...sure

Tom: When I'm purchasing anything it doesn't have to be a hair product, when I purchase anything those things are important to me.

Activity 5

Beth: So, which if, if you rank them, which would be most important?

Tom: For me? I would probably say, ingredients.

Beth: Ingredients?

Tom: Yeah ingredients. So, I'm looking for you know things that are natural, not a lot of chemicals, and this is in anything that I buy—Ok, anything.

Beth: Ok, not just hair products.

Tom: Anything. Not just hair products, anything.

Beth: What about for you Janice?

Janice: I think that it's not tested on animals. That's really important to me. It's got to be, it's got to be something that um..is ethically sound, you know... I'm not into buying products that harm other creatures.

Beth: Ok, so no testing on animals is important for you. Ok.

Tom: It's important to always look at the company. What's the background of the company? Are they socially responsible? You know, what if they..

Beth: So what's the overall...

Tom: Yes the overall.

Beth: Cindy what about you?

Cindy: I have to be honest, I've never even thought about it. Um I guess I probably should be more conscious of it. But when I'm at the store I kind of just get overwhelmed and just buy what looks good.

Beth: So maybe the packaging for you is important?

Cindy: Yeah I mean if it was on the packaging I'd probably pay attention to it.

Beth: Ok, that's good. And what about you Chris?

Chris: Well, you know I guess I have to kind of uh agree with Cindy. You know I think I admire the fact that you guys care about that stuff but uh you know honestly I don't really think about it.

Beth: Not as important for you...

Chris: Not as much. But I mean the chemical thing you know, I think about that, of course you know you don't want to buy something that could be harmful.

Cindy: I didn't even know that shampoo could be harmful.

Beth: Ok, so you need some more information.

Janice: Well, maybe that's why your hair was falling out.

Chris: Don't laugh about that.

Beth: Ok, so I think we've got lots of information. And we're going to take this and um look at everything that we've got. Thank you very much for your time and for spending it with me this afternoon. When you leave make sure that you sign there's a form could you just sign? and they'll pay you on the way out. So, thanks very much for coming

Chris: So, do we get any samples?

Beth: No samples.

Chris: No samples?

Beth: No samples.

Chris: Oh can we find out about this company?

Beth: Um generally not. Actually so you are going to be signing and maybe find out after when you see it on the market.

Chris: Ok, works for me.

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Target Activity 5: Conducting Focus Groups

Student Handouts

Handout 1-1: *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups: Vocabulary Preview***A. Guess the meaning of the underlined words based on the context.**

1. We have to consider budgets and time constraints when we do research.
2. The answers to the questionnaire reveal a person's attitude towards the environment.
3. The researcher can conduct an experiment to collect information.
4. The downside to having a long questionnaire is that it takes a lot of time to complete.
5. You will need to get the consent of the participants before doing the experiment.
6. You should formulate your questions carefully when you make a questionnaire.
7. To make sure enough people volunteer to join your research, you can offer them an incentive.
8. Offering snacks can help facilitate participants to speak more.
9. When a focus group leader dresses too formally, it can be intimidating to the participants.
10. The personal information of each participant is confidential.
11. Group members need to develop rapport with each other so they can work more easily together.
12. We want participants to be vocal so we can get more information.

Activity 5

B. Fill in the blanks with the correct word below. Use the correct form.

immigrant, soda, gender, informal, participant, publication, rural, discourage, snack, refresh

1. Many people _____ to Canada to start new lives.
2. After a nap, I feel _____.
3. The party was _____. Everyone wore jeans.
4. There is very little public transportation in the _____ areas in Canada.
5. _____ is a large contributor to obesity.
6. Teachers expect students to _____ in class and not just be quiet.
7. Many forms require you to fill in your _____.
8. The book will be _____ next year.
9. He felt _____ after failing the driving test three times.
10. The survey questioned the _____ habits of Canadians.

C. Fill in the table with the correct word form

Noun	Verb	Adjective
downside		
	assert	
immigrant		
	conduct	
	formulate	
gender		
	intimidate	
participant		
publication		
		rural
consent		
	discourage	
snack		
		vocal
incentive		
		confidential
	reveal	
refreshment		

Handout 1-2: *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups: Note-Taking*

Listen to a 9-minute audio on conducting focus groups, and write the 13 steps for conducting focus groups below. Write only the main idea of each step and the key supporting details for each one. Use point form.

After you have finished your notes, compare with a partner. Add any missing information.

Practice retelling the steps to each other using an appropriate introduction, sequence markers, and a brief conclusion.

Steps for Conducting Focus Groups:

Part One: Preparation for the focus group:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

Step 5:

Step 6:

Step 7:

Step 8:

Step 9:

Part Two: During the Focus Group:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

Activity 5

8. interviewer / dress

9. interviewer's guide / information

Steps during the focus group:

1. opening

2. lead into topic

3. shift to in-depth questions

4. closing

 **PBLA Tool: Steps for Conducting Focus Groups**

Name:	Date:	 
Skill/Level/Competency: <i>CLB Speaking 8 (II-i)</i>		
Learning Outcome: <i>Give instructions and directions for tasks, procedures, and processes.</i>		
PBLA Exercise: <i>Explain the steps for conducting a focus group.</i>		
Type of Assessment: <i>Instructor</i>		

Overall the student can			
- present the information in sequence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
- know who the listener is in terms of language and content	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
- effectively organize the ideas and they are always clearly expressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
- speak clear enough that the listener understands most of the content	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not quite	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not quite	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not quite	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not quite	<input type="checkbox"/>
(all of the above must be answered with “Yes” to be considered for CLB 8 or 9)			

CLB 6 \Leftarrow No	CLB 7 \Leftarrow Yes, but...	CLB 8 Yes \Downarrow	CLB 9 Yes, easily \Downarrow
<p>Main ideas are expressed and supports with some details</p> <p>Good control of simple grammatical structures, pronunciation and intonation; speaker shows developing ability to use complex structures</p> <p>Errors occasionally cause misunderstanding</p> <p>Performance is organized using limited transitional phrases and uses an ineffective ‘hook’ to engage the audience</p>	<p>Main ideas are clearly expressed and supported adequately</p> <p>Complex grammatical structures are often used correctly</p> <p>Errors seldom cause misunderstanding</p> <p>Performance is organized using few transitional phrases and uses a slightly effective ‘hook’ to engage the audience and conclusion.</p>	<p>Main ideas are very clearly expressed and well supported</p> <p>The speaker uses a variety of complex grammatical structures accurately</p> <p>Errors rarely cause misunderstanding</p> <p>Performance is organized using a variety of transitional phrases and uses an effective ‘hook’ to engage the audience, and conclusion.</p>	<p>Main ideas are very clearly expressed and detailed information is provided when needed</p> <p>Good control over a variety of complex grammatical structures</p> <p>Errors rarely impede communication</p> <p>Performance is organized using a wide variety of transitional phrases and uses an effective ‘hook’ to engage the audience</p>

Activity 5

<p>Vocabulary is adequate to the task, but may be borrowed heavily from the prompt. Many phrases or word choices are awkward</p> <p>Extra effort often required by the listener</p>	<p>Word choice and word form use usually accurate, although expressions are often awkward. Speaker may rely somewhat on the prompt</p> <p>Extra effort sometimes required by the listener</p>	<p>Speaker uses an adequate range of vocabulary and word choices are usually natural.</p> <p>Extra effort occasionally required by the listener</p>	<p>and conclusion.</p> <p>A range of concrete, abstract and idiomatic language suited to the context and purpose</p> <p>Extra effort rarely required by the listener</p>
<p>CLB 6</p>	<p>CLB 7</p>	<p>CLB 8</p>	<p>CLB 9</p>
<p>Instructor Comments:</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 200px;"> <p>Overall Achievement: A / NA</p> </div>			

Handout 1-3: *Indirect Questions*

When you are asking someone questions, especially if you do not know them well, how do you avoid causing offense? Has anyone ever asked you these questions directly?

- How old are you?
- Where were you born?
- What do I need to do?
- What do you do?
- Do you prefer debit or credit?
- What should I call you?

Sometimes, we need to ask questions such as these, for example when we register at a college. The questions themselves may not be rude, but we still might feel uncomfortable if they are asked like that. Compare the following questions with those above.

- Could you tell me how old you are?
- I need to know where you were born.
- Could you tell me what I need to do? *OR* Could you tell me what to do?
- May I ask what you do?
- Can you tell me whether you prefer debit or credit?
- I was wondering what I should call you. *OR* I was wondering what to call you.

These are called indirect (or embedded) questions. They contain two parts:

1. An introductory part (in the main clause) which can be:
 - a. a request in a question form (e.g., *Could you tell me...?*), or
 - b. a statement (e.g., *I'd like to know...*),
2. Question (in the subordinate, i.e. noun, clause)
 - a. with *if/whether* (for Yes/No questions), or
 - b. with a *wh*-word

We use indirect questions to be more formal or just to soften questions to make others more comfortable (i.e., to be more polite, considerate, etc.).

A. Let's make the rules. Look at the changes in the questions above and complete the rules below for the indirect question (in the subordinate clause).

1. If the original question uses the helping verb "do" ("did"),

2. If there is a helping verb "be" or a modal,

3. If it is a “yes/no” question,

4. In the subordinate clause, the infinitive can be used after

C. Practice: Change the direct questions to indirect questions using the introductory expressions below. Then, ask your partner the questions. Your partner will use their notes from the audio listening *Steps for Conducting Focus Groups* to answer.

Do you know...?
Can you tell me...?
Could you tell me...?

Do you happen to know...?
Do you by any chance know...?
Would you mind telling me...?

I wonder...
I was wondering...

Example: When do you use focus groups?
→ ***Could you tell me when you use focus groups?***

1. What should you consider when you plan the focus group?

2. What kind of criteria can you use to select an audience?

3. What are some good locations you can use?

4. Why should you not tell participants the specific subject beforehand?

5. How do you recruit participants?

6. How can you ensure participants show up?

7. How should the interviewer dress?

8. What should be in the interviewer's guide?

9. What should you do at the beginning of the focus group?

10. Why should you ask icebreaker questions?

11. How do you do an in-depth investigation?

12. What is the last thing the interviewer should do?

Handout 2-1: Focus Group Sample Video Listening Worksheet**A. Listen to the introduction (0:00- 1:36) Answer the questions.**

1. Main Idea Questions

- a. Who is Frank Luntz?
- b. Where is he?
- c. What did he do?
- d. Why did he do it?

2. Detail Questions

- a. How did Frank select his focus group members?

- b. How did the focus group sessions work? What are the steps?

3. Prediction

- a. What do you think will happen next?

B. Discuss the meanings of these words and idioms with a partner.

credible, biased, perspective, hype, migrate, impact, cross section,

to have the balls to do something

to point the finger at someone

to look for/at every angle

to second guess oneself

C. Listen to the whole focus group session.

1. What are the main discussion points?

2. Why do people prefer the BBC news?

3. What kind of news story do viewers want to see the most? Why?

4. What is the purpose of the question, "When I say BBC what do you think of first?"
 - a. to get a general idea of who likes BBC and who doesn't
 - b. by beginning with an easy question, he gets people to respond easily
 - c. to surprise people

5. Listening to the tone of the speakers' voices, when they answer the above questions, what is the mood and attitude of the speakers when they answer the questions? (*Identifies mood and attitude*)
 - a. businesslike
 - b. unsure
 - c. confident

6. When the speaker says: "It's the most intelligent, the most serious, the most informed, the most international. How does he feel about the BBC News?"
 - a. satisfied
 - b. hopeful
 - c. thankful

7. When the man said "They (BBC) have the balls to point the finger at people who are responsible for things that are going on in this world...." What is he implying?
 - a. BBC news is insensitive
 - b. BBC news is right
 - c. BBC news is courageous

8. When the man finished the sentence by saying, "...*Not to even speak of this country (America)*", he is implying:
 - a. *American news is insensitive*
 - b. *American news is not courageous*
 - c. *American news is courageous*

9. After the moderator asked, "Why do you watch the BBC and not some American channel?" the emotional tone of the responses were generally:
 - a. approving
 - b. happy
 - c. hopeful

Activity 5

D. Listen to the video again. Find examples of words and phrases that show informal register. Write down the standard and formal equivalents.

Informal	Standard	Academic (Formal)
gonna		

PBLA Exercise: Analyze Focus Group Discussion for a Hair Product



1. How would you describe Chris' tone of voice when he says, "Recording our responses... you didn't mention that."
 - a. excited
 - b. disappointed
 - c. accusatory

2. How does Tom feel when he says, " I don't really know how much useful information I can give you with this focus group because I don't really use hair products. So...?"
 - a. embarrassed
 - b. disinterested
 - c. angry

3. What is the relationship amongst the people?
 - a. friends
 - b. co-workers
 - c. strangers

4. After Cindy talks about the different products she uses in her hair, what does Chris mean when he says, "uh, is that all?"
 - a. Cindy doesn't use enough hair products
 - b. Cindy uses a normal amount of hair products
 - c. Cindy uses too many hair products

5. What factors do each of the people in the focus group consider when they choose hair care products? Include one factor per person

a. Tom	
--------	--

b. Chris	
c. Janice	
d. Cindy	

6. How does Janice feel about the leave in conditioner product?
 a. excited b. curious c. suspicious
7. When Chris says, "So, what's the difference...you put cream in your hair, you put mousse in your hair, what's the difference?" he...
 a. agrees with Janice. b. disagrees with Janice. c. disagrees with Janice and Tom
8. What does Chris think about using a leave in conditioner?
 a. It's a gimmick and he would not buy it.
 b. he may try it if it helps his hair look better
 c. he is really excited about the product and can't wait to try it
9. What is most important to Cindy when purchasing a hair care product?
 a. ease of use b. ingredients c. not tested on animals d. packaging
10. When Janice says to Cindy, "Maybe that's why your hair was falling out," why did everyone laugh?
 a. Because Cindy is so sweet and innocent and didn't know that hair products could damage hair
 b. because Cindy was pretending that she didn't know that hair products could damage hair
 c. because Cindy has a good sense of humour
11. Throughout the focus group, Tom's attitude is
 a. rude b. uninterested c. negative
12. What is the purpose of the focus group?
 a. To collect opinions on a brand new product
 b. To collect opinions on an existing product
 c. To try out a new product and collect opinions on it
13. The participants won't be paid if
 a. they sign a cheque on the way out
 b. they don't sign on the way out
 c. they sign on the way out

  **PBLA Tool: Analyze Focus Group Discussion for a Hair Product**

Name:	Date:	 
Skill/Level/Competency: <i>CLB Listening 8 (I-i) Interacting with Others</i>		
Learning Outcome: <i>Identify nuances in social conversations such as mood, relationship, implications, feelings, and purpose.</i>		
PBLA Exercise: <i>Listen to a focus group to analyze speakers' intent, mood and relationships</i>		
Type of Assessment: <i>Instructor</i>		

Indicators of Ability	Comments	Achieved
○ Identify implied meaning and unspecified details (4,13)		<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Identify stated details (5 a, b, c, d, 9)		<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Identify situations and relationships (3, 12)		<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Identify speakers' purpose and intent (7, 10)		<input type="checkbox"/>
○ Identify emotional state, mood and attitude from tone and intonation. (1, 2, 6, 8, 11)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall Performance:		A / NA
Instructor Comments		

Handout 2-2: *Group Discussion Strategies - Checking for Understanding and Asking for Clarification*

Checking for understanding

Check questions (speaker)	Responses (listener)	
Ok (so far)? Right?	Uh huh./ Mmm... (nodding)	
Are you with me?	Yes, so far...	
Do/Can you follow me?	Oh yes, sure.	
Is that clear?	Oh yes, go on.	
Do you see what I mean? What I'm getting at?	More or less, yes.	
...if you see what I mean/ follow me.		
Am I making sense? Does that make sense to you?	Well, not really. Could you explain...	

Listener:

Asking for clarification: Getting someone to explain something you have not understood

Excuse me. What do you mean? What do you mean by (that)...?
Sorry, I don't/didn't understand <u> (word) </u> .
Hmm. I'm not sure I understand/follow you. Could you explain that last part/bit/what you just said, again?
Sorry, I don't/didn't quite follow what you are saying about <u> (topic) </u> .
I'm sorry, I'm not quite clear on...

Handout 2-3: Group Discussion Strategies - Interrupting and Holding the Floor

Interrupting a speaker:

(I'm) Sorry to interrupt...	Umm...Sorry for interrupting, but...
Sorry to break in, but...	Sorry, can/could/may I interrupt (you) for a second?
Excuse me for interrupting, but...	Sorry, but did I hear you say...?
Excuse me, but I have a question...	Excuse me. Could I ask/add something?

Interrupting to add a point:

Hang on... / Hold on... / Wait a minute...	Can I just say/add that...?
Sorry, but...	If I can just add something/make a point here...
Sorry, can I stop you for a second...?	

Holding the floor:

<p>Sure, just let me finish.</p> <p>Let me finish my thought/point.</p> <p>Allow me to finish.</p>	
--	--

After you have been interrupted, you want to return to the topic:

(Yes, well) Anyway...	(Now) what was I saying?
(Now) What were we talking about?	(Now) Where was I?
Going back to (what I was saying)...	As I was saying...
Getting back to what we were talking about...	Let's get back to ...

Handout 2-4: Scenarios to Practice Group Discussion Strategies

- 1. Scenario to practice interrupting two people who are talking to get them back on track:**
Two focus group participants are talking. You are the moderator, and you need to get them to stop chatting so you can start the question phase of the focus group. Remember to be in view when you approach and to apologize to the other person for interrupting.
- 2. Scenario to practice interrupting someone during a discussion to add a point and that person returns to his/her topic:**
You are a participant in a focus group and your group is discussing the pros and cons of disposable cups and plates. Take turns interrupting someone while he/she is giving his/her opinion. That person will allow you to interrupt to add your point. That person will then return to what he/she was saying.
- 3. Scenario to practice interrupting someone during a discussion and that person holds the floor:**
Your group is discussing a topic (e.g. global warming). Take turns interrupting someone while he/she is giving his/her opinion. That person will NOT allow you to interrupt, but will hold the floor. That person will then return to what he/she was saying.
- 4. Scenario to practice interrupting to ask for clarification:**
Your group is discussing _____ *topic* _____. While someone is giving his/her opinion, you hear a word, or a phrase that you don't understand. You ask for clarification.
- 5. Scenario to practice checking for understanding:**
Your group is discussing _____ *topic* _____. While you are giving your opinion, you see that one or two of the group members look puzzled. You check for understanding with them.

Handout 3-1: *Eco-Friendly Product Focus Group*

You represent an eco-friendly company who wants to introduce a new product. You will be conducting a focus group to find out information about how to get people to buy the product. Use the information on this handout to help you create questions for the focus group.

After you have about 4-6 questions, prepare a rough script for the focus group moderator. The script should go through all of the stages of a focus group – welcomes, introduction, etc. Use the information you found online for homework to help you.

When you have a script ready, practice moderating with your group. Take turns being moderator and practicing some of your script, and give each other feedback. Reminder: use language and strategies for group discussion learned in last lesson.

Your product is: _____

Question Guidelines: (remember you need to ask each person each question)

1. A general easy question about the product group. E.g. What hair products do you use now?
2. Next question begins to move to your purpose E.g. Why do you buy the product you are now using?
3. From the last question, depending on the answer, probe for more information from each person. E.g. If the person answered, "It was on sale.", you would ask, "So, cost is important when you are shopping?"
4. Now, before you move to the next question, explain the product briefly to the group. Then move to your main question E.g. "What do you think about this product and what would make you buy it?"
5. Probe each person for more information if needed. (may not need to ask everyone if they provide enough information).
6. Optional question regarding criteria for purchasing: ingredients, packaging, ease of use... if not addressed already.

Handout 3-2: Criteria for Moderating a Focus Group

Use the criteria below to give feedback to your peers while moderating a focus group of about 10 minutes in length.

How well did the focus group leader do the following things in your group today? Put a check (✓) in the box that best describes him/her and add your comments .				
Indicators of Ability	Did it well	Needs more practice	Did not do it	Comments (What did he/she say or do?)
1. Introduced self and purpose of focus group.				
2. Created a comfortable environment.				
3. Used appropriate register, tone, and vocabulary.				
4. Asked follow up questions to get more information.				
5. Encouraged others to participate.				
6. Held the floor, interrupted appropriately and resumed talk				

 **PBLA Exercise and Tool: Moderating a Focus Group**

Name of Moderator:	Date:	 
Name of Peer Assessor:		
Skill/Level/Competency: <i>CLB Speaking 8 (I-i) Interacting with Others</i>		
Learning Outcome: <i>Participate in a focus group.</i>		
PBLA Exercise: <i>Moderate a focus group of about 10 minutes in length</i>		
Type of Assessment: <i>Peer</i>		

How well did the focus group leader do the following things in your group today? Put a check (✓) in the box that best describes him/her and **add your comments**.

Indicators of Ability	Did it well	Needs more practice	Did not do it	Comments (What did he/she say or do?)
1. Introduced self and purpose of focus group.				
2. Created a comfortable environment.				
3. Used appropriate register, tone, and vocabulary.				
4. Asked follow up questions to get more information.				
5. Encouraged others to participate.				
6. Held the floor, interrupted appropriately and resumed talk				
7. *Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation seldom impede communication				

Instructor Comments (completed after peer check):	A / NA

***Must be achieved to achieve overall**

Handout 4-1: *Giving and Receiving Feedback to a Group***1. General Information to the group:**

"Can I tell you (about) my observations?"

"I'd like to talk to you about my observations of your group interactions."

"First of all, how do you think it went?"

2. After the feedback-receivers make some comments, you can then continue.

"Okay...well..... I'll start with you (name) ."

3. Now begin with a positive comment:

"I noticed/observed that ..."

4. Then an improvement comment:

"Okay...well....there's another thing that I observed..... " (This time it is something that needs to be improved.)

Wait for your classmate to respond. If he/she agrees, he/she could say:

"I appreciate your comments. I'll try to do better next time."

"Thank you for your feedback, I'll try that next time."

If he/she disagrees, he/she could say:

"I see your point, but..."

"I understand what you're saying; however, ..."

5. After listening to the comments of your classmate, continue with more feedback.

Always allow the feedback-receiver to respond to your comments.

6. Finish with a positive comment.

The concept of the exercise is based on the Socio-Cultural Competency work of Jane Forward

Activity 5

Handout 5-1: *Designing an Eco-Friendly Product*

Today you will work with a group of three to develop an eco-friendly product. You will present your product to a new group tomorrow. Your product should be good for the environment and a good business idea as well.

With your group, you should:

- Research an environmental problem. You should find statistics to show why the problem is serious and needs to be addressed. *For example: Canadians use 350 litres of water per day. This is too much!*
- Design a product that will help solve the environmental problem you researched. *For example: A composting toilet.*
- Decide on the basic business details of your product. What will you call it? Where will you produce your product? Will you sell it in stores or online? How much will it cost to make, and how much will you sell it for? Etc.
- Plan a presentation to convince others of the need for your new product. You can draw pictures of your product or create a sample to show your new group tomorrow.

Next class, you will get into new groups. Each person from your group will present the details of your product to the new group, so each person should have a copy of your presentation.

Each group should vote on the top three eco-friendly products.