



english for **NEW
BOSTONIANS**

ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum: Companion Guide for Parents of Students in Grades 7-12

Unit 3: Parent-Teacher Conferences

Activities:

- #1: Overview: Parent-Teacher Conferences for Immigrant Parents) (b)
(PowerPoint)**
- #2: Learning the Vocabulary (b)**
- #3: Why High School Parents Should Attend Parent-Teacher Conferences (b)**
- #4: Parents Gain Confidence (We Speak NYC video) (b)**
- #5: Talk to Your Child About School (b)**
- #6: Preparing for Your Teacher Conference (b)**

Developed by Susan Klaw

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About English for New Boston About English for New Bostonians

English for New Bostonians (ENB) invests in the future of our region by fostering a high-quality ESOL system that prepares immigrants to pursue their educational, economic and civic aspirations. Through grant making, training teachers, and building public awareness, ENB expands the number of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) seats, improves program quality across agencies, customizes curricula to diverse subpopulations, and leverages private and public resources. Founded in 2001 by the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA), immigrant leaders, and local foundations, ENB now involves several city departments, approximately 20 public and private funders, and numerous community organizations.

About the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Initiative

Through ESOL for Parents and Caregivers, ENB guides ESOL providers and immigrant-rich schools in building partnerships to facilitate parent engagement in schools, enabling parents/caregivers to improve their English and digital literacy skills, navigate school systems, and understand expectations and opportunities for school involvement and ways to optimize children's learning. At the same time, ESOL for Parents helps adults prepare to pursue their own educational and employment goals, while supporting children's learning – aiming to eliminate multigenerational poverty.

About Susan Klaw

Susan Klaw has directed, taught in, and developed original curriculum materials for Boston-based parent ESOL programs since 1991. She has delivered extensive training locally and nationally on various aspects of Family Literacy and been named a "Literacy Champion" by the Massachusetts Literacy Foundation, Parent Educator of the Year by the Children's Trust Fund, and Adult Educator of the Year by the Massachusetts Coalition for Adult Education.

About the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum

The Curriculum (on ENB website and available free of charge) gives ESOL teachers background materials, lessons and activities designed to help immigrant parents learn English and become more effectively involved in their children's education. Selecting curriculum units and lessons relevant to their classes, ESOL teachers can orient immigrant parents to the U.S. school system and provide practical skills such as interpreting report cards, participating in teacher conferences, advocating for children, and supporting children's learning at home. While some information is Boston specific, much can be used in any locale. ENB can assist in adapting materials for school districts. Additionally, ENB offers a Companion Middle/High School Guide, as well as a Digital Learning Guide to support online instruction.

Using the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum

All materials are intended to be downloaded and widely used. Please cite English for New Bostonians and credit English for New Bostonians on all reproductions. We welcome feedback and stories on how you and your students are using the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum!

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ACTIVITY #1: OVERVIEW: PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES FOR IMMIGRANT PARENTS (A POWERPOINT)

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Note to Teachers: *The Parent-Teacher conference unit in this Companion Guide has six activities and will take several classes to complete. Although the unit is designed for parents of middle and high school students, many of the activities include information about parent-teacher conferences applicable to all grade levels. For more videos and activities specific to conferences for elementary age children, go to the primary [ESOL for Parents and Caregivers Curriculum](#). See Topic 2: School Involvement, Unit 2: Parent-Teacher conferences.*

This is best done prior to whenever the first parent-teacher conferences are actually scheduled. In Boston, this is generally late November through mid December. But given that parents or teachers can request conferences at any time during the school year, the unit could be done at any time.

Rationale:

It is important that parents attend parent-teacher conferences to support their children's success in school. Both the concept and the structure of parent-teacher conferences may be new and confusing for immigrant parents. This overview attempts to demystify parent-teacher conferences.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will learn about parent-teacher conferences and how to prepare for them*
- *Students will practice forming questions in English*
- *Students will learn what a PowerPoint is.*

Materials:

- [PowerPoint: ESL Parent Teacher Conferences for Immigrant Students](#)
- *Handout: Homework: [Practice Forming and Choosing your Questions](#)*
- *Guide to the Boston Public Schools for Students and Families, "How to Prepare for a Productive Parent-Teacher Conference" www.bostonpublicschools.org/familyguide*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives*
2. *Write opening discussion questions on the board to discuss as a group:*
 - *What is a parent-teacher conference?*
 - *Have you been to one? What happened?*
 - *How did you feel about the conference? Explain.*

- *Are high school teacher conferences different than elementary school ones?*

3. Project for class the PowerPoint: Parent Teacher Conferences for Immigrant Students. The text of each slide is read aloud slowly. It is a 10 minute power point, but if you pause and discuss as recommended, it will take longer. Ask for examples from the class to solicit student prior experiences. Particularly note and discuss the slide on benefits of going to parent-teacher conferences, as Activity #3 picks up on that theme. In the section on Sample Questions, you can decide if you want students to actually practice saying the questions aloud in a choral format. They will be doing this for homework. The homework also will ask them to choose and copy one of the questions from each category. Model how students will pause, look at the slide, and copy down one question they like. Tell them that a lot of the activities they will be doing in this unit stress the importance of being prepared with questions.

4. Distribute the handout: Homework: Practice Forming and Choosing Your Own Questions. Review the directions carefully. Students are supposed to watch the PowerPoint again at home. To make sure students can complete the assignment independently, have them find the PowerPoint on YouTube on their phones, and practice the pause function before they leave the class.

Follow Up:

- *For reinforcing ideas about preparing for a parent-teacher conference, show students how to find and read on-line the page in the BPS Guide called "Preparing for a Productive Parent Teacher Conference." Show them how to find the translation function. Encourage them to use it so they can read the page (very text heavy) in their first language.*

Handout: Practice Forming and Choosing Your Questions

1. On YouTube, use the search function to find the presentation we watched in class: **ESL Parent-Teacher Conference for Immigrant Parents.**

2. Watch the presentation again. This time, when you get to the section called Sample Questions, practice saying each question out loud, using your child's name where it says in the text "my child."

3. There are five categories of questions:

- *Academic Skills*
- *A Need for Improvement*
- *Homework*
- *Social Skills*
- *Grades and Tests*

Pause the presentation and choose one question from each category you would like to ask your child's teacher. Copy it below. We will discuss the questions you choose in our next class.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

ACTIVITY #2: LEARNING THE VOCABULARY

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Rationale:

Schools have parent-teacher conferences for all parents at least once a year and it is important for parents to attend those meetings. If ELL parents can learn the vocabulary teachers might use ahead of time, they will get more out of the conference.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will be better prepared for parent/teacher conferences.*
- *Students will learn 12 new vocabulary words related to parent/teacher conferences.*

Materials:

- *Handout: A Conversation with your Child's Teacher*
- *Handout: A Conversation with your Child's Teacher- Vocabulary Definitions*
- *Handout: (optional): Parent-Teacher Conferences—Forming Negatives*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives.*
2. *Distribute Handout: A Conversation with Your Child's Teacher. Read the dialogue all the way through once. Then read it a second time, pausing to define the underlined words in context.*
3. *Have student pairs read the dialogue, alternating roles. Circulate to help with pronunciation. Ask for any volunteers who would like to read the dialogue aloud to the whole class.*
 - a. *Work on vocabulary definitions*
 - b. *Read each sentence that contains an underlined word*
 - c. *Have students attempt to explain the words and write any examples on board.*
4. *Distribute Handout: A Conversation with Your Child's Teacher – Vocabulary Definitions. Read definitions aloud and have students complete practice sentences.*
5. *Vocabulary game--Play **Match it Up**. Divide students into teams. Each team gets an envelope which contains the words and the definitions on separate pieces of paper. Index cards work well. Team members have to pair the word and the definition. Whichever team finishes first, wins. **Alternate:** do a Quizlet vocabulary set and give students the link so they can practice the words further on their phones.*

Follow-Up:

- *If you have already taught the negative, a good way to review is with the handout: Teacher-Parent Conferences—Forming the Negative.*
- *Have students write their own sentences, using some or all of the vocabulary words. Correct these and type them up for a further review, either as a sentence completions or dictations.*
- *Have more advanced students write or tell stories about a memorable parent-teacher conference.*
- *Have students contact their children's schools to find out when Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled and report their findings back to the class.*

Handout: A Conversation with Your Child's Teacher

- Teacher: Good evening, (parent's name). It's good to see you. Thank you for coming in this evening.
- Parent: Thank you for inviting me. How is my son doing this term?
- Teacher: I'm pleased with his progress. I see improvement in his grades, especially compared to last year.
- Parent: I took his advisor's suggestion and told him he had to quit his part time job during the school year so he would have more time to study and complete his assignments.
- Teacher: - So how is this plan working?
- Parent: He tries to spend more time on homework, but he is easily distracted by his younger sisters and brothers. He is the oldest of five children. It's hard for him to concentrate.
- Teacher: Do you have a library close to your house where he could go to do his homework? Maybe that would be a quieter place to study.
- Parent: That is a good suggestion. Thank you.
- Teacher: Your son seems happy in school. He gets along well with his classmates and is very cooperative. He's a pleasure to have in class.
- Parent: I appreciate your comments and suggestions. We will find out what hours the library is open. I will also try to teach all my children not to bother each other when they are doing homework.
- Teacher: Thank you for coming in. I will let you know how he is doing. Please email me if you are concerned about anything or you can give me a call if that is more convenient.
- Parent: Thank you again. Goodbye.

Handout: A Conversation with Your Child's Teacher – Vocabulary Definitions and Practice

progress - moving ahead to a goal.

improvement - getting better or making better. The verb is 'to improve.'

suggestion - an idea about something you can do in a specific situation

complete – to finish

assignment – the homework the teacher has given to students

distracted - your attention doesn't stay on one thing, like the book you are reading.

Example: When I try to do my homework, I get distracted by the television.

concentrate - to focus your attention on something you are doing, like reading a book. If you hear talking, you don't pay attention to it. You keep reading.

cooperative – willing to do what you're supposed to do; doing what the teacher says; working well with others.

get along with – to have a good relationship with others.

He's a pleasure to have in class - It makes me happy to have him in class

appreciate - something you are thankful for

concerned – to be worried about something

convenient - easy to do; it fits with your schedule

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the best word from the vocabulary list.

1. I really _____ your help. It was nice of you to take care of little Maria this afternoon when I had to work.

2. My children _____ with their cousins. They love to hang out together.

3. I would like to talk with you. This afternoon is good for me, but if tomorrow is more _____ for you, that's fine.

4. I'm trying to study for my test, but with all this noise it is hard for me to _____.

5. I'm trying to focus on learning these new vocabulary words, but when I hear a song like that on the radio, I look up and listen. I'm easily _____.

6. Thank you for your _____. I will try to encourage my daughter to study more.

7. I am _____ that my son does not _____ his assignments.

Handout: Parent-Teacher Conferences—Forming Negatives

Directions: *Here are some things parents or teachers might say at a conference. Change each sentence to the negative. Pay attention to whether the sentence is in the present or in the past.*

1. *Teacher: Raymond is handing in his homework regularly.*

2. *Parent: Sylvia came home happy yesterday. She said some girls were teasing her.*

3. *Teacher: Samuel finishes his work quickly enough.*

4. *Parent: Naomi was in school the day you gave that assignment.*

5. *Teacher: Victor is doing the best work he can.*

6. *Parent: I'm always able to help Pedro with his English homework.*

7. *Teacher: Raul speaks up a lot during class discussions.*

8. *Parent: I can help Kelly with Algebra. I never studied it.*

ACTIVITY #3: WHY HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS SHOULD ATTEND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Rationale:

Parents of high school students are less likely to go to parent-teacher conferences than parents of elementary students. They may feel their presence isn't important because their children are older. Many immigrant parents have little understanding of the courses their children are taking. However, high school is when grades start to count and children need to start planning for college and careers. Teens need to feel that their parents notice and care about their school work.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will be able to name at least one reason parents should attend high school parent-teacher conferences.*
- *Students will improve in their ability to read aloud clearly and with expression.*

Materials:

- *Handout A: Reasons for High School Parents to Attend Teacher Conferences (Intermediate level)*
- *Handout B: Reasons for High School Parents to Attend Teacher Conferences (Beginner level)*
- *Parent Toolkit: Parent-Teacher Conference Guide: <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/academics/advice/12th-grade-parent-teacher-conference-guide>*
- *Handout C: High School Parent-Teacher Conference Dialogue (Intermediate level)*
- *Handout D: High School Parent-Teacher Conference Dialogue (Beginner level)*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain Objectives*
2. *Who is Still Standing exercise: Ask everyone who has a child in high school to stand up. Ask those parents, Who has gone to a high school parent teacher conference? Sit down if you have not. Ask those who are still standing to tell their classmates about the parent-teacher conferences they have attended. Prompt them for details such as where and when it was, did they meet with teachers individually or in a group, did their child attend with them.*
3. *Repeat the above exercise one more time, asking about elementary school conferences. Note whether more students went to elementary school conferences.*

4. Explain the concept of “more likely to” and then tell them that parents are more likely to go to elementary school teacher conferences than high school teacher conferences. Ask why they think this might be true.
 5. Brainstorm with class why it **is** important to attend high school parent-teacher conferences. Write responses and save on easel paper (or type and project if your classroom set up makes that easy). You will return to these ideas after reading the handout.
 6. Distribute Handout A or B--Reasons for High School Parents to Attend Teacher Conferences—depending on student level and read it together. You might want to underline or highlight what may be unfamiliar vocabulary for your class before copying and discuss those words before reading.
 7. There are three reasons given in the article for why parents should attend conferences at the high school level. Ask students to write down on an index card the one reason that is most important to them. Go around the room and have students read the reason selected. If you write the three reasons on the board, you or a student volunteer can keep a tally.
 8. Look back at the reasons parents listed in step 5. Are they different? They same?
 9. **For intermediate level students:** print out handout from the Parent Toolkit: Parent-Teacher Conference Guide. Read the first two bolded headings together: *High School: Most Important Questions* and *High School: Listen*. Discuss the advice given. Then Divide class into four groups and assign each group one of the remaining sections of the handout to read and discuss. The group should choose a person who will then explain the section to the class.
- For beginning level students:** Go on to step #10, the beginner level dialogue.
10. Distribute Handout C or D-- Parent-Teacher Conference Dialogue—depending on student level. Read the dialogue aloud, perhaps choosing an advanced reader from the class to read it with you. Explain any unfamiliar words or phrases.
 11. Pair up students and have them practice the dialogues, alternating roles, and doing the entire dialogue several times through. Circulate to listen and help with pronunciation.
 12. Ask for volunteer pairs to read their dialogues to the class. Set them up with a few props: teacher at the desk, maybe with a laptop they are looking at, parent coming in to the room, etc.

Handout A: Reasons for High School Parents to Attend Teacher Conferences¹

Once a child reaches high school some parents don't see the point of attending parent-teacher conferences.

"I'm not sure if it's just the kids are kind of to the point where they are more self-sufficient and independent – so parents don't necessarily think they need to – but I think it's really important that they do," says Megan Penrice, who teaches at Pottstown High School in Pennsylvania.

Penrice says that for every 60 students she teaches, probably four or five parents attend parent-teacher conferences – a much smaller turnout than when she taught elementary school.

"The kids are so much younger, so the parents feel the need to be more involved in what's going on, I think," she says.

But parents of high schoolers should not discount the value of parent-teacher conferences.

These meetings may ultimately influence a teen's academic success. Here are three reasons why parents should attend.

1. Show your child that you care: *"When teens know that their parents care about their education they feel more encouraged to do their best," says North Carolina mom Kassandra Watson.*

"Whether your child wants you there or not, go there because you know that they do need you," says Watson, whose son Morris graduated from Heritage High School in Wake Forest last year. Watson is also the president of the Parent-Teacher-Student Association at Heritage.

"They might not voice it, but they do need you and they do appreciate you coming," she says.

Penrice, the Pennsylvania teacher, finds that the students of parents who are involved and come to parent-teacher conferences are typically the students who do well in school.

"Their parents are going to know early on if they are not doing well," she says. "They can't hide it real easy when the parent is involved."

2. Improve communication between parents and teachers: *The in-person meetings can help parents put a face to a name, Penrice says, and establish a relationship.*

Establishing those relationships early has been important for Michigan mom of three Alison Schwartz. Her middle son William, 17, is a senior at Groves High School in Beverly Hills. Although her son is doing well in school, she still regularly attends parent-teacher conferences.

¹ By Alexandra Pannoni, Blog Post, High School Notes, U.S. News, Nov.17, 2014

"It's just a way that the teacher kind of gets to know you," she says. "And if there are any problems in the future, you kind of feel like you know them."

"If you show that you want your child to learn, you want your child to do well, then the teacher is going to work harder to make sure that happens," says Watson, the North Carolina mom.

3. Learn something new about your child: *Parent-teacher conferences can be a time to discuss academic or behavioral issues, or give teachers the opportunity to tell parents something new about their child.*

"Sometimes they can give insight into an area of study that your kid maybe could improve on or books that would be useful for them," says Schwartz, the mom in Michigan.

Penrice says teachers can alert parents if their child is struggling in the meetings, so that they are not blindsided when report cards come home.

"They happen earlier enough on in a marking period that issues could be addressed," she says, of the date of conferences at her school.

Schwartz says that she thinks teachers appreciate it when parents come to conferences.

"They spend so many hours with your child," she says. "I think it is just kind of respectful to go to conferences."

Handout: Reasons for High School Parents to Attend Teacher Conferences²

Simpler version for beginning level students

Once a child reaches high school some parents don't think they need to attend parent teacher conferences any more. Their children are older and more independent. But it is still valuable to attend parent teacher conferences. Going to them may help teens do better in school.

*Here are **three** reasons why parents should attend.*

1. Show your child that you care: *When teens know that their parents care about their education they feel more encouraged to do their best.*

2. Improve communication between parents and teachers: *The in-person meetings can help parents put a face to a name and develop a closer relationship between parent and teacher. This helps in case there are problems in the future.*

3. Learn something new about your child: *Parent-teacher conferences can be a time to discuss academic or behavioral issues, or give teachers the opportunity to tell parents something new about their child.*

² By Alexandra Pannoni, Blog Post, High School Notes, U.S. News, Nov.17, 2014

Handout: High School Parent-Teacher Conference Dialogue

(Intermediate level)

Parent: *Hi Mr. Lopez, I am Jaime's mother, Rosa Perez.*

Teacher: *Ms. Perez, I'm glad to meet you. I am Jaime's English teacher. He is doing fairly well and will probably get a B- this marking period. His reading skills are strong and he participates well in class. But his writing needs to improve.*

Parent: *How much time should he spend on homework for your class every night?*

Teacher: *Well, students have reading they need to do every night. Once a week they have an essay to write about what we are reading. That is due every Monday. He should spend about half hour a night on my class. But don't forget he has other classes too.*

Parent: *Does he complete his work on time?*

Teacher: *Sometimes he doesn't hand in his essays on time. Maybe you could remind him at the beginning of the weekend that he has to get it done. Ask him when he plans to do it.*

Parent: *Okay, I could try that. I wonder if he spends too much time on sports and his part time job at Wendy's.*

Teacher: *Well, see what his other teachers say about whether he gets his assignments done.*

Parent: *We want Jaime to go to college. Is he taking courses which prepare him for college? Do you think he will do well in college?*

Teacher: *Jaime is in 10th grade, and grades matter if he wants to get in to a four year college. Remember he has to take and pass English for all four years. You might want to talk to the guidance department. They are the ones who help families plan for college.*

Parent: *Is there anything else I can do to help Jaime?*

Teacher: *Why don't you talk to him about writing. Ask him if he wants extra help with writing. Maybe you could find a tutor for him.*

Parent: *Thank you for the suggestion.*

Teacher: *Well, Ms. Perez, that is all the time we have. You have to talk to Jaime's other teachers and I have parents waiting. Feel free to contact me at any time. Here is my phone number and my email address.*

Handout: High School Parent-Teacher Conference Dialogue

(Beginner level)

Parent: *Hi Mr. Lopez. I am Jaime's mother, Rosa.*

Teacher: *I am happy to meet you. I am Jaime's English teacher.*

Parent: *How is he doing in English?*

Teacher: *He is doing okay. He will get a B this term. He reads well, but his writing needs to improve.*

Parent: *Does he do his homework on time?*

Teacher: *Sometimes he doesn't turn in his writing on Mondays. That is when it is due.*

Parent: *What can I do to help?*

Teacher: *On Saturday morning, you can tell him he has to plan when he is going to do his homework. This is called time management.*

Parent: *My husband and I want Jaime to go to college. Is he taking the right classes?*

Teacher: *You should meet with the guidance department. They help families plan for college. He has to take English classes all four years of high school. And he needs to get good grades in English.*

Parent: *What can I do to help?*

Teacher: *Maybe you could find a tutor for Jaime to help him with his writing.*

Parent: *Thank you for your suggestion.*

Teacher: *Call me any time. Here is my number and my email.*

Parent: *Thank you so much for your time.*

ACTIVITY #4: PARENTS GAIN CONFIDENCE

Note to teachers: *This 30 minute dramatic video called “Welcome Parents” is part of the Emmy award winning We Speak NYC video series created by the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs English Language Learning Program. Each episode in the two seasons is accompanied by a wealth of supplementary materials for teachers and learners alike. We use “Welcome Parents” here as it is portrays parents preparing for parent-teacher conferences. We recommend you explore other episodes as well to see if they would supplement themes being addressed in your classes as this is an excellent resource.*

Rationale:

Parent-Teacher conferences, especially if they are conducted in English, can make immigrant students very nervous. This video portrays parents helping each other to overcome their nervousness by practicing and role playing their questions together.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will be able to explain details and draw inferences from a video.*
- *Students will be able to explain what parents in the video did to prepare for their conferences.*
- *Students will gain experience doing ESOL exercises on-line.*

Materials:

- *“Welcome Parents,” a 30 minute video produced by We Speak NYC, plus assorted supplementary materials for students,*
<https://wespeaknyc.cityofnewyork.us/episodes/welcome-parents/>

Activity Outline:

1. *Before showing the video, select which of the follow-up skill building exercises you want your students to do, either in class or at home or both.*
2. *Ideally you will project the video and watch it as a class. The video itself needs little explanation beyond that it is about parents like themselves and how they feel about parent-teacher conferences.*
3. *After watching the video, ask whether students liked the video and why. Then have them talk in pairs about what, if anything, they had in common with any of the parents portrayed in the video. You may need to explain the concept of “have in common.” Bring the class back together and ask what made the parents in the video feel more confident.*

4. Go back to the projector and model for students the follow-up exercise(s) you have chosen that you want them to do. Then give them this shortened link to find the site and relevant exercises on their own devices. <https://tinyurl.com/y9ymy7x3>
Have them work independently and circulate to assist if necessary.

Follow-up:

- Have students choose another episode they are interested in and watch it at home. They will report back to the class what they chose and what the episode was about.

ACTIVITY #5: TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT SCHOOL

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Rationale:

A very important way for parents to be involved in their children's education is to talk frequently with their child about school. It is also crucial to know what their child is feeling about school in order to be prepared for a parent-teacher conference. Good questions to ask are modeled here.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will talk more often with their children about school.*
- *Students will gain new insights into their child's experience in school.*
- *Students will be able to correctly use the third person singular in speech.*

Materials:

- *Handout: Talk to Your Child About School*

Activity Outline:

1. *Explain objectives.*
2. *Opening class discussion question: Before you go to a teacher conference, why is it important to talk to your child about school? List reasons students give on the board. Explain that one important way they can be partners in their children's education is to **talk to them every day about school**. It shows you are interested, that you value school, and it is a good way to learn about your child's school.*
3. *Go over the handout and assign it as homework. When students have done the assignment, which they typically enjoy because it involves their children, they report back to the whole group what they have learned.*
4. *Before students share orally what they have learned from their children about school, review or teach the third person singular, the simple past tense and common irregular verbs in the past, , and review or teach pronouns. Students will be using those grammatical forms to report on what they learned from their children. For example: "She did a science experiment in school today."*
5. *Summary discussion question: When is a good time to talk to your children about school?*

Handout: Talk to Your Child About School

Directions: Choose one of your your teenage children to talk to. Ask them these questions. You can talk to them in whatever language you want. Write and practice the answers in English. Tell us what you learned in our next class.

1. What did you do in school today?
2. Tell me about one new thing you learned today?
3. What did you read today?
4. What was easy for you today?
5. What was hard for you today?
6. Tell me a question you asked the teacher today?
7. What was your favorite part of the day?

ACTIVITY #6: PREPARING FOR YOUR TEACHER CONFERENCE

(Can be used/adapted for use with beginning level students)

Rationale:

Being prepared for their own parent-teacher conference helps parents to get the most out of the typically brief time allotted to them.

Student Objectives:

- *Students will learn how to prepare for a parent-teacher conference.*
- *Students will be able to turn what they want to find out from their child's teacher into questions to ask the teacher.*

Materials:

- YouTube video: [Tips on How to Prepare for a Teacher/Parent Conference](#) (3 minutes). Or go to the Colorín Colorado website, www.colorincolorado.org/article/33953, and download the PDF tips for parents on how to prepare for a parent-teacher conference to read as a class. Students can watch the YouTube video as homework.
- Handout: [What Should I Ask My Child's Teacher?](#)
- Current [Guide to Boston Public Schools for Families and Students](#), "Preparing for a Productive Parent-Teacher Conference." Hard copies are available at most schools and at BPS Welcome Centers. If you do not have a hard copy of the Guide, you can download the page at <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/familyguide>

Activity Outline:

1. Explain objectives.
2. Opening discussion questions: Did you do anything to prepare for your last parent-teacher conference? What did you do? Write what students say on the board.
3. Watch video: **Tips on How to Prepare for a Teacher/Parent Conference**, three times. Tell students that these tips apply to conferences at both elementary, middle and high school levels. After each viewing, ask students what tips they can remember from the video and write those on an easel pad. After the third viewing, complete the list, read it aloud together, and have students copy it in their notebooks.
4. Distribute Handout: [What Should I Ask My Child's Teacher?](#) This will be difficult for students to do if they haven't already worked on how to form questions. If they have, reviewing how to construct questions would be a good idea.

5. *Circulate to help make suggestions and corrections. When a student has at least three correctly formed questions, have the student copy the questions in their notebooks, leaving a blank space for answers after each one.*
6. *Have students practice saying their questions with a partner, the same way the parents in the video wrote down and practiced saying their questions.*
7. *Distribute the page from the Guide on Preparing for a Productive Parent-Teacher Conference. Discuss possible questions parents could ask under the heading “How is My Child Doing?” Encourage parents to add any of these questions that they like to the list they have already compiled.*

Follow-Up:

- *If actual parent-teacher conferences are coming up, have students make another copy of the questions they generated and take those questions with them to the conference. After the conference, have them summarize in writing the teachers’ answers.*
- *Distribute copies of the Colorin Colorado tips for parents (see Materials) in both English and Spanish to review in class or at home.*

Handout: What Should I Ask My Child's Teacher

Write questions that you want to ask your child's teacher:

■ _____

■ _____

■ _____

■ _____
