

## Home Tutor Scheme

### Lesson Plan

#### Topic: PERSONAL STORIES

##### How to use personal stories

Everyone has their own personal story. For many of our students this may be an interesting one as they have moved country permanently and re-settled in a country with a different language and culture, sometimes by choice, sometimes by force. As a result your student may not want to recount their personal story, or just not feel comfortable in divulging their personal information. Please respect your student's choice to participate in parts of this lesson plan and do not coerce them to tell you anything they do not feel comfortable.

If they do want to participate it is a good chance to incorporate the four macro skills of speaking, listening reading and writing into your lessons.

Reading personal stories is a good way to develop reading and writing skills. We can use these stories to focus on grammar points such as the use of past tense verbs and time reference and to use as models in recount speaking & writing and to extend vocabulary.

For low level students high frequency words do not have a clear meaning unless they are used in context. Read the story for beginners that follows and you will see a high number of sight words in the text. This is a good place to begin.  
Words such as: am, I, from, and, come, in, for, about, five.

Write the sight words on small cards and write some sentences with blanks where the sight words should be. Ask your student to match the sight words to the blanks. Students can read and copy the words from the cards. Then write them in a sentence.

Sometimes we need to read a text in detail. We do this to find out specific information relevant to our purpose. Finding key words extends vocabulary and reinforces understanding. In this text the vocabulary of feelings can be highlighted in gap filling exercises.

For vocabulary present difficult words beforehand and elicit understanding by posing questions about meaning. Underlining the words in the text and on occasion guessing the meaning is all relevant to developing reading skills.

For high level students personal stories can be related to education or employment.

How many years did you go to school?

What did you do after you finished school?

Do you have tertiary qualifications?

Tell me about your job in your country of origin.

Where did you work?

Did you like your job?

What did you do everyday in your job?

Do you want to do further study in Australia?

For speaking and listening skills with beginner and intermediate students you may like to formulate a questionnaire or survey. You can adapt the questions to suit your student. First contextualize the personal story.

## My first day in Australia

Do you remember your first days in Australia? How did you feel? What did you see?  
Write some words or phrases under these headings.

**How did you feel?**

**What did you see?**

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Which part of Australia did you arrive in?



**What was different?**

**What were the people like?**

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## Beginner

### Nazrin's Story

My name is Nazrin. I was born in Iraq. I am 37 years old.

I am married and have 3 children.

I was a doctor in Iraq and my husband was a businessman.

We came to Australia about 5 years ago. I was excited.

I was also sad because I worried about my family in Iraq.

Now I study English at TAFE because I want to be a doctor in Australia.

My husband is a taxi driver and learns English too.

The children go to school and have new friends.

I feel safe and happy here. I am glad we came to Australia.

#### 1. Reading in detail. Answer the following questions

What's her name?	
Where does she come from?	
How old is she?	
Is she married?	
How many children does she have?	
What was her job in Iraq?	
What did her husband do?	
How does she feel in Australia now?	

#### 2. Fill in the present or past tense verbs in this story.

My name \_\_\_\_\_ Nazrin. I \_\_\_\_\_ born in Iraq 37 years ago.

I \_\_\_\_\_ married and I \_\_\_\_\_ 3 children.

I \_\_\_\_\_ to Australia 5 years ago with my family.

In Iraq I was a doctor and my husband \_\_\_\_\_ a businessman.

Now I \_\_\_\_\_ English at TAFE because I want to be a doctor in Australia.

My husband \_\_\_\_\_ a taxi driver and learns English too.

The children \_\_\_\_\_ to school and have new friends.

I \_\_\_\_\_ safe and happy here.

3. Circle the correct word from Nazrin's story

- 1 Nazrin comes from Lebanon  
China  
Iraq
- 2 Nazrin is 31 years old  
27 years old  
37 years old
- 3 She has no children  
5 children  
3 children
- 4 Now she studies English at AMES  
TAFE  
Home
- 5 Her husband is a taxi driver  
businessman  
bus driver

4. Ask your student to write their story (this needs to be completely optional, please respect your student's decision not to complete this exercise if they choose).

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I was born in \_\_\_\_\_ I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. I am \_\_\_\_\_ and have \_\_\_\_\_ children.  
I came to Australia \_\_\_\_\_ ago with \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
In \_\_\_\_\_ I was a \_\_\_\_\_.  
Now I study \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
I feel \_\_\_\_\_ in Australia.

5. Underline these feeling words in the story. Do you know what they mean?

relieved	sad	glad	safe	excited	unhappy
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Put the feeling words in the correct box



happy	worried

## Post beginner

What's your name?
What year were you born?
What languages do you speak?
When did you start school?
When did you finish school?
What did your Mum & Dad do while you were at school?
Did you have brothers & sisters?
Did you have a job while you were at school or jobs around the house to do?
What did you do when you left school?
Did you work?
When did you get married?
Why did you decide to come to Australia?
Have you got a job?
What do you want to do in the future?
How do you feel about life in Australia now?

1. Ask your student to complete their story (this needs to be completely optional, please respect your student's decision not to complete this exercise if they choose).

### My Story

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I come from \_\_\_\_\_ and I speak \_\_\_\_\_ and a little English. I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old. I was born in 19\_\_\_\_\_.

I started school when I was \_\_\_\_\_ years old. I left school when I was \_\_\_\_\_ years old. After that I \_\_\_\_\_

I got married in 19 \_\_\_\_ and I have \_\_\_\_\_ child \_\_\_\_\_. I came to Australia \_\_\_\_\_ years ago because \_\_\_\_\_

I live in \_\_\_\_\_ with my \_\_\_\_\_

At the moment I'm studying \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

When I finish I want to \_\_\_\_\_

I feel \_\_\_\_\_ in Australia because \_\_\_\_\_

### Intermediate

1. Ask your student to complete their story (this needs to be completely optional, please respect your student's decision not to complete this exercise if they choose).

How did you feel when you got off the plane/boat in Australia?
What was the weather like?
How long was your flight?
Who met you at the airport? How did you feel when you saw them?
How long had they been in Australia?
Where did you stay on your first night here?
How did you feel?
What did you talk about?
What did you do the next day?
How did you feel then?
What were your hopes when you arrived in Australia?
How do you feel about living here now?
When will go back to your country?

### 2. My First Day in Australia

My first day in Australia was a \_\_\_\_\_ experience. I arrived on a (weather) \_\_\_\_\_ day in 200\_\_\_\_\_.

It took me \_\_\_\_\_ hours to fly/come by boat from \_\_\_\_\_ to Australia.

I was feeling \_\_\_\_\_ about the journey and \_\_\_\_\_ when I arrived.

We drove to (suburb) \_\_\_\_\_ it took about \_\_\_\_\_ mins/hrs. When we got there I felt \_\_\_\_\_. We talked about \_\_\_\_\_.

The next day I \_\_\_\_\_.

I knew my life would never be the same again. I was in a new country and everything was different the language , \_\_\_\_\_.

I hoped my new life would be \_\_\_\_\_.

Now I feel \_\_\_\_\_ about living in Australia but I miss \_\_\_\_\_ in my country.

I hope to return to my country \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Later students can try to tell their story without reading

## Nazrin's Story

Do you know the meaning of these words?

Gynecologist \_\_\_\_\_

Public hospital \_\_\_\_\_

Refugee \_\_\_\_\_

Homesick \_\_\_\_\_

My name is Nazrin. I was born in Iraq and I am 37 years old. I came to Australia 5 years ago with my husband and three children.

In Iraq I was a gynaecologist in a large public hospital. My husband had a small business but we started to feel very worried about our future.

Life was very difficult for us there. We felt unsafe and decided to leave Iraq. We got a refugee visa for Australia.

I was excited but I was sad to leave Iraq and my family.

When I arrived in Sydney I was worried about many things. I didn't speak good English and I didn't have a job.

Now I am studying an English course for doctors at TAFE and I feel content with my life.

The children like their school and have new friends. They are very happy here.



Sometimes I feel homesick but life is good here and I feel safe in Australia.

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**Now underline the feeling words in Nazrin's story**

**Put the feeling words in the correct box**

happy      unhappy      sad      glad      excited      safe  
 worried      depressed      unsafe      content      homesick      difficult

happy 	Unhappy 
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When people write a story sometimes they tell us how they feel.  
 Find words in the story to finish the sentences.

1. In Iraq Nazrin felt \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. When she got a refugee visa she felt \_\_\_\_\_
3. When she arrived in Australia Nazrin felt \_\_\_\_\_
4. Now Nazrin feels \_\_\_\_\_

**Look at the pictures. How do think they feel?**

1 \_\_\_\_\_



2 \_\_\_\_\_



3 \_\_\_\_\_



4 \_\_\_\_\_



5 \_\_\_\_\_



6 \_\_\_\_\_





## Advanced

### Nazrin's Story

My name is Nazrin. I was born in Iraq 37 years ago and came to Australia a few months before the Iraq war. I arrived with my husband and three children.

As a child, I always wanted to have a job that would help people. I worked hard and was lucky to gain a place at the University of Baghdad where I studied to become a gynaecologist. After graduation I worked at a large public hospital. My husband ran a small family business and the children went to school. Gradually, life became very difficult for us in Iraq. At the hospital, we never had enough medicine for our patients. Often, we could not help them. It was heartbreaking to see people suffer. My husband held political views that were unpopular with the government. We began to feel unsafe.

In the end, things got so bad that we knew we had to leave. We were very upset. We spent 10 months in a refugee camp in Germany. Then, at long last, we received good news. The Australian government said we could come to Australia as refugees.

I'll never forget the day we arrived in Sydney. We were elated. We felt safe and very relieved. My cousin's friend met us at the airport. On the way to his house, he drove us through the city. We saw the Opera house and the Harbour Bridge. We were very excited and the children were jumping for joy.

Then we had to make a new life for ourselves. It wasn't easy. Everything was different. We got lost every time we went out. We didn't know how to enroll the children at school. Everything seemed very expensive and we had very little money. In Iraq, everyone said my English was good. Here people didn't understand my accent and I didn't understand them. At the end of each day, we felt exhausted.

A year later, life was a little better. The children were happy at school and had made some new friends. They were learning English fast. It was different for my husband and me. We missed our family and friends very much. The war broke out and we were constantly anxious about them. We watched the bombing of Baghdad on the news and felt sick with worry. We also worried about our future. In the refugee camp they said Australia needed doctors. I took a special English test because I wanted to study for registration to work in Australia. I failed. I felt frustrated and worthless but in my country I had a good job and I felt respected in my profession.

Time has passed and we are beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel. I am now studying a special English course for doctors at TAFE. This time I think I will pass. My husband has a part time job and his English is getting better. The children's school reports are very good. Most importantly, we are now in contact with our family in Iraq. Their lives are very difficult but we help them a little. They have moved to a small town and we know that they are safe. We feel content now and hope one day it will be possible to return to our country for a visit.



Now look at the words in the list and tick the ones you know. Then search the story for the ones that are new to you. Try to work out their meaning by looking at them in context. Finally check the meaning in your dictionary.

Tick	Words	I think it means	Dictionary meaning
	gynecologist		
	graduation		
	expensive		
	unpopular		
	refugee		
	political		
	government		
	enroll		
	patient		
	bombing		
	jumping for joy		

Underline all the feeling words in the story and write them in the appropriate box.

<u>Positive feelings</u>	<u>Negative feelings</u>

**Use a feeling word from the text to describe how you would feel.**

- I felt \_\_\_\_\_ when I my daughter got a high mark in her HSC exam.
- I was \_\_\_\_\_ when my daughter was late home from a party.
- I was \_\_\_\_\_ to go on a holiday to Queensland.
- I felt \_\_\_\_\_ when my husband couldn't get a visa to come to Australia.
- It was \_\_\_\_\_ to see my friend so sick.
- I felt \_\_\_\_\_ because I couldn't speak English well.
- I ran in the city to surf race and felt \_\_\_\_\_ at the finish.
- I lost my job because I couldn't speak good English. I felt \_\_\_\_\_.
- I like my job and my family are all doing well in their jobs. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ with my life.