

Learning English

American Stories

Athenaise

by Kate Chopin

Lesson Plan
by Jill Robbins, Ph.D.

Introduction

This lesson plan is to accompany the American Stories series episode, *Athenaise, by Kate Chopin*.

A transcript of the story is included at the end of this lesson to print so students can read as they listen. Teachers who cannot play the audio from the website can read the story aloud or have students read it.

This lesson plan is based on the CALLA Approach. See the end of the lesson for more information and resources on teaching with the CALLA approach. The following slide shows the five parts of this lesson plan.

Lesson Elements

Prepare

Present

Practice

Self-Evaluate

Expand

Prepare

Introduce the story. “Today we will read *Athenaise*, a story about a young woman, Athenaise. She is married, but doesn’t want to stay with her husband. She wants to go back to her life at home with her parents. Do you ever want to go back to an earlier time in your life?”

Listen to students’ responses. If they do not give an example, give one of your own when you wanted to be younger.

Teach the vocabulary for the story. Explain the setting of the story in the Louisiana Bayou: a rural, isolated place. The next slide has a photo showing the landscape of the bayou.

Louisiana Bayou



Vocabulary

shrug - *v.* to raise and lower your shoulders usually to show that you do not know or care about something

sensual - *adj.* relating to, devoted to, or producing physical or sexual pleasure

gumbo - *n.* a thick soup made in the southern U.S. with meat or seafood and usually okra

secure - *v.* to make (something) safe by guarding or protecting it

role - *n.* the character played by an actor

homesick - *adj.* sad because you are away from your family and home

overcome - *v.* to affect (someone) very strongly or severely - usually used as (be) overcome

Present

Introduce the task to students: “As we read the story today, we will practice the strategy *personalize*. When we personalize, we think about how what we are reading relates to our own experiences. Then we use that knowledge to help us understand the story. Today, we will try to personalize in relation to several characters. I’ll show you how to do this.”

Play or read aloud to “But he felt her absence like a deep pain.”

Tell students, “We have three characters so far. I’ll write them on my chart, then talk about how I personalize when I read about them. I will personalize when I have enough information about a character.” Explain as you fill out the chart, seen on the next slide. Write on the board or display on a screen for the class.

Personalize

Character	Description	How I personalize
Mr. Cazeau (Athenaise's husband)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worried about Athenaise Feels pain at Athenaise's absence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a member of my family is away from home, I worry about them I understand what it is like to miss someone
Athenaise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaves to visit her parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't know enough about Athenaise yet to personalize
Félicité (Mr. Cazeau's servant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criticizes Athenaise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The servant wants Mr. Cazeau to be happy, I think, so she is critical of his wife for making him unhappy
Montéclin (Athenaise's brother)		
Madame Miché (Athenaise's mother)		

Practice

Tell students, “Now it’s your turn. Make a table on your paper. As we read the next section, use your own experiences to personalize. Write the things you personalize on your own paper. Then I will ask you to share your knowledge with your partner.”

Play or read aloud to ‘I do not like living with a man, all his clothing everywhere and his ugly bare feet.’”

“Now, sit with your partner and write in your chart. What do the characters do in this part? Can you personalize based on your own experiences?”

Give students time to work together in their groups. Ask students to tell you what they wrote. Fill in the chart.

Personalize

(example of possible answers)

Character	Description	How I personalize
Mr. Cazeau (Athenaise's husband)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goes to bring his wife home • Gets angry at Montéclin • Agrees that what Montéclin says is true 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have not been in his situation, but understand his feeling of wanting to make the best of his marriage to Athenaise
Athenaise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaves to visit her parents • Wants to stay with her parents • Doesn't like being married 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had those feelings, too, after being married at a young age
Madame Miché (Athenaise's mother)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short, cheery, but tense • Said to give good parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand why she is nervous to meet her daughter's husband right after the daughter left him
Montéclin (Athenaise's brother)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislikes Cazeau for marrying his sister • Wants to protect Athenaise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My older brother was the same in that he always wanted to protect me

Instruct students to listen again. “With your partner, listen to the next part of the story. Notice what Montéclin does to give his sister a feeling of independence. Write down your ideas as you personalize based on this part of the story. I also want you to think of what advice you would give to Athenaise, if she were your friend.”

Play or read aloud to ‘Bitter as this belief was, he accepted it.’

Guide students to complete their chart with their personalization of the events and people described in this section of the story.

Personalize

(example of possible answers)

Character	Description	How I personalize
Mr. Cazeau (Athenaise's husband)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loves Athenaise Treats his wife kindly Feels sense of loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He is like many loving husbands I know of I can understand his sense of loss
Athenaise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doesn't understand why she married Misses her family while in New Orleans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I know women that also want to be independent I also miss my family when traveling
Mister Gouvernail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staying at the hotel in New Orleans Falls in love with Athenaise Thinks Athenaise loves her husband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I know people like this who can see a person's character clearly
Montéclin (Athenaise's brother)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes a plan with Athenaise to 'secure her freedom' Helps Athenaise move to New Orleans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like any older brother he is trying to help his sister

Discuss what students understand by applying personalization to this part of the story. Ask students, “What advice would you give to Athenaise?”

Give students time to discuss the advice they would give to Athenaise.

Acknowledge students’ advice to Athenaise (for example, she should decide whether to stay married or not). Continue, “Let’s read the rest of the story. Remember to personalize if you can.”

Play to the end of the story.

Self-Evaluate

Ask students to stay with their partner and talk about the final sentence “How Juliette’s baby is crying! Poor darling, I wonder what is the matter with it?” Encourage students to explain, “What does this show about how Athenaise has changed?”

Give students time to talk about their ideas.

Comment on the students’ ideas. “She is finally caring about someone other than herself.” Ask, “Now I’d like to ask – what do you think about using this strategy, *personalizing*, when you read? Did it help you follow the story? Write a sentence or two on your paper to turn in about how *personalizing* helped you today.”

Expand

Ask students, “Are there other times when you can *personalize*?”

Listen to students’ responses.

Continue, “This strategy is helpful in both reading and listening. Personalizing helps us to see the common human experiences in what we read. It helps us to understand and remember the people and events in the stories we read or hear. Try using this strategy tonight when you do your homework, or in your next class. Let me know how it goes!”

Our story today is called "Athenaise." It was written by Kate Chopin. Here is Barbara Klein with the story.

Athenaise went away one morning to visit her parents, ten miles back on the Bon Dieu River in Louisiana. She did not return in the evening, and Cazeau, her husband, was worried.

Cazeau expressed his worries to his servant, Félicité, who served him dinner.

He ate alone by the light of a coal-oil lamp. Félicité stood nearby like a restless shadow.

"Only married two months and she has her head turned already to leave! It is not right!" she said.

Cazeau **shrugged** his shoulders. Félicité's opinion of his wife's behavior after two months of marriage did not matter to him. He was used to being alone and did not mind a night or two of it. Cazeau stood up and walked outside.

The night was beginning to deepen and gather black around the groups of trees in the yard. Far away, he could hear the sound of someone playing an accordion. Nearby, a baby was crying.

Cazeau's horse was waiting, saddled. He still had much farm work to do before bed time. He did not have time to think about Athenaise. But he felt her absence like a deep pain.

Before he slept that night Cazeau was visited by an image of Athenaise's pale, young face with its soft lips and **sensual** eyes. The marriage had been a mistake. He had only to look into her eyes to feel that, to sense her growing dislike of him. But, the marriage could not be undone. And he was ready to make the best of it and expected the same effort from her.

These sad thoughts kept Cazeau awake far into the night. The moon was shining and its pale light reached into the room. It was still outside, with no sound except the distant notes of the accordion.

Athenaise did not return the next day, although her husband sent a message to do so through her brother, Montéclin. On the third day, Cazeau prepared his horse and went himself in search of her.

Athenaise's parents, the Michés, lived in a large home owned by a trader who lived in town. The house was far too big for their use. Upstairs, the rooms were

so large and empty that they were used for parties. A dance at the Miché home and a plate of Madame Miché's **gumbo** were pleasures not to be missed.

Madame Miché was sitting on the porch outside the house. She stood up to greet Cazeau. She was short and fat with a cheery face. But she was clearly tense as Cazeau arrived.

Montéclin was there too. But he was not uneasy. He made no effort to hide his dislike of Cazeau.

"Dirty pig!" He said under his breath as Cazeau climbed the stairs to the porch. Montéclin disliked Cazeau for refusing to lend him money long ago. Now that this man was his sister's husband, he disliked him even more.

Miché and his oldest son were away. They both respected Cazeau and talked highly of him.

Cazeau shook hands with Madame Miché who offered him a chair. Athénaise had shut herself in her room.

"You know, nothing would do last night," Madame Miché said. "Athenaise just had to stay for a little dance. The boys would not let their sister leave!"

Cazeau shrugged his shoulders to show he knew nothing about last night.

"Didn't Montéclin tell you we were going to keep Athenaise?" she asked. But Montéclin had told him nothing.

"And how about the night before?" asked Cazeau. "And last night? Do you have dances every night?"

Madame Miché laughed and told her son to go tell Athenaise her husband had arrived. Montéclin did not move.

"You know as well as I do that it is no use to tell Athenaise anything," said Montéclin. "You and pa have been talking to her since Monday. When Athenaise said she was not returning to Cazeau she meant it."

Two fiery red spots rose to Cazeau's cheeks. What Montéclin said was true.

Upon arriving home, Athenaise had announced she was there to stay. It was difficult for her to understand why she had married. Girls were just expected to get married. And she did like Cazeau.

Montéclin had asked Athenaise to explain herself. He had asked her if Cazeau abused her, or if he drank too much.

“No!” Athenaise had said. “It is just being married that I hate. I do not like being Missus Cazeau. I want to be Athenaise Miché again. I do not like living with a man, all his clothing everywhere and his ugly bare feet.”

At the time, Montéclin had been sorry his sister had no serious evidence to use against Cazeau.

And now, there was Cazeau himself looking like he wanted to hit Montéclin.

Cazeau stood up and went inside the house to his wife’s room.

“Athenaise, get ready,” he said quietly. “It is late and we do not have time to lose.”

Athenaise was not prepared for his calm request. She felt a sense of hopelessness about continuing to rebel against the idea of marriage. She gathered her hat and gloves. Then, she walked downstairs past her brother and mother, got on her horse and rode away. Cazeau followed behind her.

It was late when they reached home. Cazeau once more ate dinner alone. Athenaise sat in her room crying.

Athenaise’s parents had hoped that marriage would bring a sense of responsibility so deeply lacking in her character. No one could understand why she so hated her **role** as wife. Cazeau had never spoken angrily to her or called her names or failed to give her everything she wanted. His main offense seemed to be that he loved her.

And Athenaise was not a woman to be loved against her will.

At breakfast, Athenaise complained to her husband.

“Why did you have to marry me when there were so many other girls to choose from?” she asked. “And, it is strange that if you hate my brother so much, you would marry his sister!”

“I do not know what any of them have to do with it,” Cazeau said. “I married you because I loved you. I guess I was a fool to think I could make you happy. I do not know what else to do but make the best of a bad deal and shake hands over it.”

It now seemed to Athenaise that her brother was the only friend left to her in the world. Her parents had turned from her and her friends laughed at her. But

Montéclin had an idea for **securing** his sister's freedom. After some thought, Athenaise agreed to his plan.

The next morning, Cazeau woke up to find his wife was gone. She had packed her belongings and left in the night.

Cazeau felt a terrible sense of loss. It was not new; he had felt it for weeks.

He realized he had missed his chance for happiness. He could not think of loving any other woman, and could not imagine Athenaise ever caring for him. He wrote her a letter stating that he did not want her back unless she returned of her own free will.

Athenaise had escaped to the big city of New Orleans. She was staying at a private hotel that Montéclin had chosen and paid to rent for a month. A woman named Sylvie owned the hotel and took good care of Athenaise.

Athenaise soon became friends with Mister Gouvernail who was also staying at the hotel. This friendship helped her feel less lonely about missing her family. But Mister Gouvernail soon started to fall in love with Athenaise. He knew she was uninformed, unsatisfied and strong-willed. But he also suspected that she loved her husband, although she did not know it. Bitter as this belief was, he accepted it.

Athenaise's last week in the city was coming to an end. She had not found a job and was too **homesick** to stay any longer. Also, she had not been feeling well. She complained in detail about her sickness to Sylvie. Sylvie was very wise, and Athenaise was very stupid. Sylvie very calmly explained to Athenaise that she was feeling sick because she was pregnant.

Athenaise sat very still for a long time thinking about this new information. Her whole being was **overcome** with a wave of happiness. Then, she stood up, ready to take action.

She had to tell her mother! And Cazeau! As she thought of him, a whole new sense of life swept over her. She could not wait to return to him.

The next day Athenaise spent travelling home. When she arrived at Cazeau's, he lifted her out of the horse carriage and they held each other tight. The country night was warm and still except for a baby crying in the distance.

"Listen, Cazeau!" said Athenaise. "How Juliette's baby is crying! Poor darling, I wonder what is the matter with it?"

You have heard the story "Athenaise" by Kate Chopin. Your storyteller was Barbara Klein. This story was adapted and produced by Dana Demange.

Words in This Story

shrug - *v.* to raise and lower your shoulders usually to show that you do not know or care about something

sensual - *adj.* relating to, devoted to, or producing physical or sexual pleasure

gumbo - *n.* a thick soup made in the southern U.S. with meat or seafood and usually okra

secure - *v.* to make (something) safe by guarding or protecting it

role - *n.* the character played by an actor

homesick - *adj.* sad because you are away from your family and home

overcome - *v.* to affect (someone) very strongly or severely - usually used as (be) overcome

About the CALLA Approach

The Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) is an instructional model for second and foreign language learners based on cognitive theory and research.





CALLA integrates instruction in priority topics from the content curriculum, development of the language skills needed for learning in school, and explicit instruction in using learning strategies for academic tasks.

The goals of CALLA are for students to learn essential academic content and language and to become independent and self-regulated learners through their increasing command over a variety of strategies for learning in school. CALLA can be used in ESL, EFL, bilingual, foreign language, and general education classrooms.

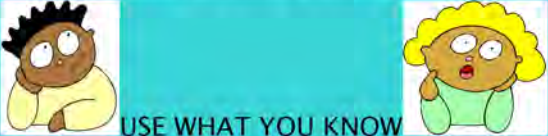




CALLA was developed by Anna Uhl Chamot and J. Michael O'Malley, and is being implemented in approximately 30 school districts in the United States as well as in several other countries.

See a list of language learning strategies below.



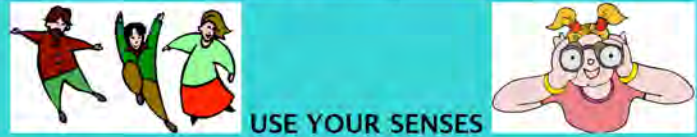


Metacognitive Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES		
Plan / Organize	 <p>Planner</p>	<p>Before beginning a task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Set goals. -Plan the task or content sequence. -Plan how to accomplish the task (choose strategies). -Preview a text.
Monitor / Identify Problems	 <p>Check</p>	<p>While working on a task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Check your progress on the task. -Check your comprehension as you use the language. Do you understand? If not, what is the problem? -Check your production as you use the language. Are you making sense? If not, what is the problem?
Evaluate	 <p>I did it!</p>	<p>After completing a task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assess how well you have accomplished the learning task. -Assess how well you have used learning strategies. -Decide how effective the strategies were. -Identify changes you will make the next time you have a similar task to do.
Manage Your Own Learning	 <p>Pace Yourself</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Determine how you learn best. -Arrange conditions that help you learn. -Seek opportunities for practice. -Focus your attention on the task.


Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
TASK-BASED STRATEGIES		
 <p style="text-align: center;">USE WHAT YOU KNOW</p>		
Use Background Knowledge	 <p style="text-align: center;">I know.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Think about and use what you already know to help you do the task. - Make associations between new information and your prior knowledge. -Use new information to clarify or modify your prior knowledge.
Make Inferences	 <p style="text-align: center;">Use Clues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use context and what you know to figure out meaning. -Read and listen between the lines. -Go beyond the text to understand its meaning.
Make Predictions	 <p style="text-align: center;">Crystal Ball</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Anticipate information to come. -Make logical guesses about what will happen in a written or oral text. -Make an estimate (math). -Make a hypothesis (science).
Personalize	 <p style="text-align: center;">Me</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Relate new concepts to your own life, to your experiences, knowledge, beliefs and feelings.


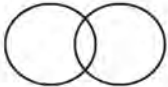


Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
TASK-BASED STRATEGIES		
Transfer / Use Cognates	 Coffee/Café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Apply your linguistic knowledge of other languages (including your native language) to the target language. -Recognize cognates.
Substitute / Paraphrase	 Make it work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use a synonym or descriptive phrase for unknown words or expressions.
 USE YOUR SENSES		
Use Images	 See it in your mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use or create an actual or mental image to understand and/or represent information. -Use or draw a picture or diagram.
Use Sounds	 Sound Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Say or read aloud a word, sentence, or paragraph to help your understanding. -Sound out/vocalize. - Use your "mental tape recorder" to remember sounds, words, phrases, and/or conversations.






Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
TASK-BASED STRATEGIES		
Use Your Kinesthetic Sense		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Act out a role, for example, in Readers' Theater, or imagine yourself in different roles in the target language. -Use real objects to help you remember words, sentences, or content information.
  USE YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS		
Find/Apply Patterns	 abacus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Apply a rule. -Make a rule. -Recognize and apply letter/sound, grammar, discourse, or register rules. -Identify patterns in literature (genre). -Identify patterns in math, science, and social studies.
Classify/Sequence	 Life cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Categorize words or ideas according to attributes. -Classify living things; identify natural cycles. -Identify order and sequences in math, science, and social studies. -Sequence events in history.

Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
TASK-BASED STRATEGIES		
Take Notes	 PDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Write down important words and ideas while listening or reading. -List ideas or words to include in speaking or writing..
Use Graphic Organizers	 A Venn diagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use or create visual representations (such as Venn diagrams, time lines, webs, and charts) of important relationships between concepts.
Summarize	 Main Idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create a mental, oral, or written summary of information.
Use Selective Attention	 Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus on specific information, structures, key words, phrases, or ideas.

Task-Based Strategies

CALLA CONTENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES		
STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION	
TASK-BASED STRATEGIES		
 		
USE A VARIETY OF RESOURCES		
Access Information Sources	 <p>Look it up!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use the dictionary, the internet, and other reference materials. -Seek out and use sources of information. -Follow a model -Ask questions
Cooperate	 <p>Together</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Work with others to complete tasks, build confidence, and give and receive feedback.
Talk Yourself Through It (Self-Talk)	 <p>I can do it!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use your inner resources. Reduce your anxiety by reminding yourself of your progress, the resources you have available, and your goals.