



Consumer.gov – Lesson Plan Imposter Scams

Teacher's Notes

This lesson plan is designed to be flexible, so that you can use all or part of it depending on the level(s) of your learners, their learning goals, and the work you and they have done with other parts of Consumer.gov previously. You can also spread the activities over multiple class meetings as needed.

The section on Imposter Scams shares both concepts and vocabulary with the Scams Against Immigrants section and the Job Scams section in Scams and Identity Theft, as well as with a portion of the Sending Money Overseas section in Managing Your Money. The lesson plan includes extension activities that are designed to take advantage of these connections in order to help learners understand the similarities and differences among different types of scams. There is also a separate worksheet, Scams and Scammers, with brief guidelines for using it to help learners activate existing knowledge and summarize what they have learned across the four lesson plans.

- The lesson plan content is complex. Start each class session with an oral elicitation activity that establishes what learners already know and focuses them on the topic at hand. Allow time for learners to review concepts orally at several points to ensure that they understand.
- The lesson plan has content objectives, language objectives, and web navigation objectives. Select the ones that are appropriate for your learners, and review them with the learners at the beginning of each lesson to prepare for learning and then again at the end to assess learning.
- The lesson plan includes a vocabulary list. Select the vocabulary items that are new to your learners or are most important, and present no more than 6-8 new items per lesson for learners with basic skills, and no more than 10-12 for those with intermediate and higher skills.
- The web page on Imposter Scams has three sections: What It Is, What To Know, and What To Do. The lesson plan uses What It Is for initial concept development, vocabulary development, and site navigation activities. It uses What To Know for guided practice activities, and What To Do for independent practice and extension activities.
- The lesson plan is structured for two types of learners: those who read at or above the NRS Low Intermediate Basic Education / Low Intermediate ESL level and those who read at levels below those (Beginning ABE Literacy, Beginning Basic Education, Beginning ESL Literacy, Low Beginning ESL, High Beginning ESL). Where appropriate, guidance is provided for differentiating activities for English learners and native speakers. Activities can be mixed and matched across levels where learners need tasks that are more accessible or more challenging.
- Time allotments for activities will vary depending on the number of learners and their levels. Activities can be extended, shortened, or skipped to meet learners' needs and to accommodate different class/ tutorial schedules.

Objectives and Standards

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| | Learners will be able to | |
| Content Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List different types of scams Describe the ways that scammers typically behave or things they do Describe how different types of money wiring scams work Explain how to determine whether something is a scam | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List different types of scams Describe the ways that scammers typically behave or things they do Say how they know something is a scam |
| Language Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize key vocabulary when reading and listening Use key vocabulary appropriately when speaking and writing Use complex sentences to give advice about avoiding scams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize key vocabulary when reading and listening Use key vocabulary appropriately when speaking Recognize complex sentences giving advice about avoiding scams |
| Web Navigation Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and navigate among the three parts of the Imposter Scams section Recognize the relationship of the Imposter Scams section to the rest of the Scams and Identity Theft section and to the other two major sections of the site Use the Search function to locate information on the site Recognize when they need to scroll down, and use the scroll bar to do so Use the <i>text size</i>, <i>listen</i>, and volume adjustment buttons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the difference between site content and site navigation Recognize and navigate among the three parts of the Imposter Scams section Use the <i>text size</i>, <i>listen</i>, and volume adjustment buttons |
| College and Career Readiness Standards (For guidance on these, see the companion Resource Sheet <i>Using the College and Career Readiness Standards in Instruction Based on Consumer.gov Content</i>) | <u>English Language Arts and Literacy</u> Language: L1, L3, L4, L5, L6 Speaking/Listening: SL1, SL2, SL4 Reading Foundations: RF2, RF3, RF4 Reading (Informational Text): RI1, RI2, RI3, RI4, RI5, RI9 Writing: W3 | <u>English Language Arts and Literacy</u> Language: L1, L3, L4, L6 Speaking/Listening: SL1, SL2, SL4 Reading Foundations: RF2, RF3 Reading (Informational Text): RI1, RI2, RI5, RI9 Writing: W3 |

Vocabulary and Materials

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| <p>Vocabulary</p> <p>Select the vocabulary items that are new to your learners or that are most important for understanding the content. The starred words are key vocabulary for the web content; the others are more general terms. For English learners and some native English speakers, you may need to teach these as oral vocabulary before introducing them in written material.</p> | <p>Select 10-12 items for direct teaching.</p> <p>dishonest donation fee fool *gift card *imposter inherit *IRS pretend prize rush scam scammer transfer trick *wire</p> | <p>Select 6-8 items for direct teaching.</p> <p>dishonest donation fee fool *gift card *imposter inherit *IRS pretend prize rush scam scammer transfer trick *wire</p> |
| <p>Materials</p> | <p>Internet: Imposter Scams section of consumer.gov</p> <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scams and Scammers ● Partner Talk ● Screenshots of <i>What It Is, What To Know</i>, and <i>What To Do</i> ● Questions for Guided Reading ● Money Wiring Stories ● Is It a Scam? ● Giving Advice ● Money Wiring Scams Video Transcript ● A Story About a Scam ● Two by Two | <p>Internet: Imposter Scams section of consumer.gov</p> <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scams and Scammers ● Words To Know ● Screenshots of <i>What It Is, What To Know</i>, and <i>What To Do</i> ● Questions for Guided Reading ● Money Wiring Stories ● Is It a Scam? ● Giving Advice ● Money Wiring Scams Video Transcript ● A Story About a Scam ● Two by Two |

Activities

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| <p>Build Background</p> <p><i>Use this discussion time to connect the lesson content with learners' existing knowledge.</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introduce the topic of imposter scams with learners by asking them what ways they know of to make a payment or send money to someone, and what they think about sending money to someone they do not know. If learners have already worked through one or more of the related sections (Sending Money Overseas, Scams Against Immigrants, Job Scams), connect the discussion to the vocabulary and concepts from those sections.2. If you have used the <i>Scams and Scammers</i> worksheet as an introduction to these four linked lessons, have learners review what they said or wrote about the other types of scams.3. As learners share their ideas, make notes of relevant vocabulary they use on the board. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introduce the topic of imposter scams with learners by asking them what ways they know of to make a payment or send money to someone, and what they think about sending money to someone they do not know. If learners have already worked through one or more of the related sections (Sending Money Overseas, Scams Against Immigrants, Job Scams), connect the discussion to the vocabulary and concepts from those sections.2. If you have used a <i>Scams and Scammers</i> master worksheet as an introduction to these four linked lessons, have learners review what the group said about money wiring scams. |

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| <p>Preview Vocabulary</p> <p><i>Use the worksheet version that is most appropriate for your learners. Edit the handout to include only the words you need or want to emphasize.</i></p> <p><i>Handouts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Partner Talk (low Intermediate & above)</i> ● <i>Words To Know (basic/beginning)</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read each vocabulary item from the board aloud and ask learners to define the words they've used. Provide information when learners do not know a word or to more fully provide definitions. Encourage learners to identify words that they have encountered when working on other sections of the site and what topics they were used for. 2. Put learners in pairs and distribute the <i>Partner Talk</i> worksheet. Partners take turns reading the words and example sentences; then they note the definitions the class has reviewed and create sentences of their own. You may want to shorten the list if some of the items are already known. If you have a mixed native speaker and non-native speaker class you may want to pair up native and non-native speakers. Circulate during this activity to answer questions. 3. When all pairs have finished, discuss the answers to the questions in the whole group to be sure all understand the vocabulary. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Without distributing the <i>Words To Know</i> worksheet, read each vocabulary item aloud and ask learners to suggest definitions. Provide the definition yourself when learners do not know a word. Encourage learners to identify words that they have encountered when working on other sections of the site and what topics they were used for. 2. Distribute the <i>Words To Know</i> worksheet and have learners take turns reading the words and the example sentences. Then ask them to make up sentences of their own orally. 3. Write learners' sentences on a white board or poster paper and ask other learners to read them aloud. Save the sentences for later use in reading practice. |

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| <p>Preview Website</p> <p><i>These activities are designed to help learners identify the difference between site content (different on every page) and site navigation (same on every page), and understand how to use site navigation and functionality. They are designed for learners with little experience on the web and on Consumer.gov. As you work through various sections of Consumer.gov and learners become more comfortable with site navigation, you can reduce or eliminate the time devoted to this preview.</i></p> <p><i>Handouts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Screenshots of What It Is, What To Know, and What To Do</i> ● <i>Printouts of the three sections (if computers are not available)</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the Imposter Scams section of Consumer.gov with the learners, using one central computer so that all can follow along, but allowing individuals to use their personal devices if they have them. Answer the following questions as a group: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How many parts does the Imposter Scams section have? What are they? Why do you think they have these names? b. How do you know which part of the Imposter Scams section you are in? c. How can you change the size of the letters on the screen? d. How can you listen to someone reading the text aloud? e. How can you adjust the volume? f. How can you read the text that goes down below the bottom of the screen? 2. Ask learners to find the vocabulary items from <i>Partner Talk</i> in the Imposter Scams section of the site. They can do this orally using the computer, or on paper using printouts of the pages. 3. Ask learners to predict what content they think they will find on each of the pages: What It Is, What To Know, What To Do. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute the screenshot handouts for the three parts of Imposter Scams. Have learners work in pairs or small groups to identify which things are the same on every page and which things are different. 2. Discuss the answers in the whole group. Using one central computer so that all can follow along, show learners that the navigation and function buttons stay the same on every page, and the informational text is what changes. Demonstrate the navigation among What It Is, What To Know, and What To Do, and demonstrate the use of the <i>text size</i> and <i>listen</i> buttons, the volume control, and the scroll bar. 3. Do a round robin in which each learner asks another to demonstrate how to do a specific task (for example, “Show how you change the text size,” “Show how you move to What To Do”). If learners are more experienced, you can extend this activity to the rest of the Scams and Identity Theft section. 4. Ask learners to find the vocabulary items from <i>Words To Know</i> in the Imposter Scams section of the site. They can do this orally using the computer, or on paper using printouts of the pages. |

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| <p>Guided Reading 1</p> <p><i>Handout:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Questions for Guided Reading</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute the <i>Questions for Guided Reading</i> handout. In the whole group, have learners read the questions and say what kind of information they will be looking for on the website to answer each one. Encourage them to predict what the answers will be if they are already familiar with the topic or a related one. 2. Direct learners to the What It Is page of the Imposter Scams section. Have them work in pairs or individually to read the webpage and answer the questions on the worksheet. Remind them that they can use the Listen button to play the text if they wish. 3. When all have finished, review the answers with the whole group. Have learners say or show where on the page they found each answer. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribute the printout of What It Is, or direct the learners to that page on the computer. Play the audio of this section, or read it aloud yourself, as learners follow along. 2. Have the learners read the section again, with or without listening (ask which they would prefer). Ask them to think about this question as they read: When you wire money, can you get it back? 3. Review the answer to the question with the whole group. Have learners show where in the text they found the answer. Be open to learner suggestions that are not provided in the text. 4. Ask learners the questions on the <i>Questions for Guided Reading</i> worksheet and have them answer orally, demonstrating where the answer can be found on the page. |

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| <p>Guided Listening</p> <p>Handout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Money Wiring Stories</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct learners to the <i>What To Know</i> section and have them watch the <i>Imposter Scams</i> video as a group. Show them how to start and stop the video, and how to view it full screen with captions by clicking the square icon on the bottom right. You may want to stop the video at key points to check for understanding. 2. Distribute the <i>Money Wiring Stories</i> handout and have learners watch the video again, completing the worksheet as the video progresses. Allow learners to watch and listen more than once if they need or want to. 3. Have learners pair up to check each other's answers. Then review answers in the whole group. 4. Ask learners for suggestions for Lisa and Henry. What could Lisa have done to check on the scammer's story? What could Henry have done differently? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display a poster-sized copy of the <i>Money Wiring Stories</i> handout. Tell learners they will be watching a short video about four different people: Lisa, Eddie, Henry, and Anita. Ask them to listen/watch for what happens to each of these people as the video plays. 2. Using the Smartboard or a shared computer screen, have learners watch and listen to the <i>Imposter Scams</i> video as a group. Ask them to retell anything they remember about what happens to each of the people in the video. Make notes on the poster board for the group. 3. Replay the video again, stopping at the end of the first part about Lisa. Have learners tell you what they heard to continue completing the poster board. 4. Continue this process with the remaining parts of the video, one by one, until the entire chart is filled in. You may want to use the video transcript and read difficult portions more slowly as needed. 5. When the poster board is completed with notes, ask for volunteers to each re-tell one of the stories. If appropriate for your learners, you may also distribute the handouts for them to make notes on or copy yours at this stage. |

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| <p>Applying Concepts</p> <p>Handout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Is It a Scam?</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have learners pair up and distribute <i>Is It a Scam?</i> Ask learners to read the situations described and decide if each is a scam. 2. When the group finishes, ask each group to answer one of the questions and explain why they thought it was or was not a scam. 3. You can continue the activity with a discussion of what to do in each of these situations. (For example: never pay with a gift card, ask for a number to return the call later, notify the FTC, never send money, etc.) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have learners pair up. Explain that you will read some situations to them and that each pair should decide if the situation is a scam. 2. Read the situations from <i>Is It a Scam?</i> one at a time and give learners about a minute or so to talk with their partner. Then ask if they think it is a scam or not and to explain why. 3. You can continue the activity with a discussion of what to do in each of these situations. (For example: never pay with a gift card, ask for a number to return the call later, notify the FTC, never send money, etc.) |
| <p>Grammar Practice</p> <p>Handout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Giving Advice</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write the following sentence starter on the board: <i>When you wire money</i>, and ask learners to complete the sentence. Note their suggestions on the board. 2. Write the following advice on the board: <i>don't send them money</i>. Ask learners how to start the sentence. Note their suggestions on the board. 3. Distribute <i>Giving Advice</i> and ask learners to copy their suggestions onto the sheet before making more sentences from the given column. They can work individually before sharing with a partner, or in pairs. Encourage learners to make more sentences if they can think of them, or to look around the Imposter Scams section to brainstorm and write more. 4. Ask learners to share out the sentences they've come up with. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose some of the sentence starters from column A and column B of <i>Giving Advice</i> to read aloud one at a time. Each time, ask learners how they could complete the sentence. Write their sentences on the board. 2. Distribute <i>Giving Advice</i> and ask learners to copy their sentences onto the sheet. 3. If appropriate, encourage learners to make sentences for all of the given sentence starters on the worksheet and then review all of their ideas orally. |

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| <p>Independent Practice 1</p> <p><i>Handout:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Money Wiring Scams Video Transcript</i> <p><i>This activity helps learners understand how scammers convince their targets that they are for real, while giving them opportunities to practice using new vocabulary. It also prepares them for the activity in Independent Practice 2.</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put learners in pairs. Have each pair develop a conversation based on one of the stories from the video: Lisa and the caller, or Henry and the owner of the house, or Anita and the grandson. Distribute the <i>Money Wiring Scams Video Transcript</i> for learners to use for reference as needed. 2. Have pairs perform their scripts for the rest of the class. After each one, ask the rest of the class: Was the scammer believable? Did Lisa/Henry/Anita ask good questions? Discuss why they thought what they did. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With the whole group, develop the conversation between Lisa and the lottery caller. What did the caller say to make Lisa believe her/him? What questions did Lisa ask? To be persuasive, the caller might ask Lisa to read off the numbers on her most recent lottery ticket (“Yes! Those are the winning numbers!”) or have her provide other information. 2. Write the dialog on the board and have learners practice reading it and/or acting it out. 3. Repeat the process with the Henry and Anita stories. |
| <p>Independent Practice 2</p> <p><i>Handout:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>A Story About a Scam</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct learners to the <i>How do I spot an imposter scam</i> section of What To Do. 2. Put learners in pairs or small groups. Have each pair/group select one of the scenarios listed in the section and develop a story with a main character, a scammer, and a person/people to whom the main character turns for advice. Distribute the <i>A Story About a Scam</i> worksheet for pairs/groups to use as they develop their stories, and encourage them to use the stories from the video as models. 3. Collect each group’s final version and create typed handouts of them to distribute for reading practice. You may also ask learners to type their own stories for practice if keyboarding is part of your program. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct learners to the <i>How do I spot an imposter scam</i> section of What To Do. 2. Read through the scenarios listed in the section orally with the whole group. Then have the group select one scenario and develop a story with a main character, a scammer, and a person/people to whom the main character turns for advice. Use a poster-size (or projected) copy of the <i>A Story About a Scam</i> worksheet to guide development of the story. Remind the group about the events in the stories from the video as needed to help them develop the story line. 3. Create a typed handout of the story to distribute for reading practice. 4. Have learners work in pairs or small groups to create an oral story based on one of the other scenarios. Work with each pair/group to write up their story and make a typed handout of it. |

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| <p>Extension / expansion</p> <p><i>This activity assumes the Scams and Scammers extension worksheet has already been introduced. If it has not, it can be introduced and learners can work to complete the Imposter Scams column.</i></p> <p><i>Handout:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Scams and Scammers</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have learners add the information they have gained about imposter scams and scammers to their individual copies of the <i>Scams and Scammers</i> worksheet. Then have them work in pairs to compare answers. 2. Review answers in the whole group to ensure that all have developed comprehensive understanding. 3. Use the information that has been added to the chart so far as the basis for discussion of similarities and differences among types of scams. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with learners in the whole group to add the information they have gained about money wiring scams and scammers to the class master copy of <i>Scams and Scammers</i>. If appropriate, have them copy this information to individual copies of the worksheet. 2. Use the information that has been added to the chart so far as the basis for discussion of similarities and differences among types of scams. |
| <p>Assessment</p> <p><i>Handout:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Two by Two</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You may use the extension/expansion activity described above as wrap-up and assessment, or continue as described below. 2. Distribute the <i>Two by Two</i> sheet and have learners complete it individually. 3. Discuss answers in the whole group. Talk about how learners could obtain answers to the questions they still have. Use the sheet as the basis for an oral discussion of new knowledge and ongoing questions. The sheet can also be used at the beginning of the next lesson to review information, answer questions, and serve as part of the introduction to the next lesson. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You may use the extension/expansion activity described above as wrap-up and assessment, or continue as described below. 2. Distribute the <i>Two by Two</i> sheet and have learners complete it individually. 3. Discuss answers in the whole group. Talk about how learners could obtain answers to the questions they still have. Use the sheet as the basis for an oral discussion of new knowledge and ongoing questions. The sheet can also be used at the beginning of the next lesson to review information, answer questions, and serve as part of the introduction to the next lesson. |