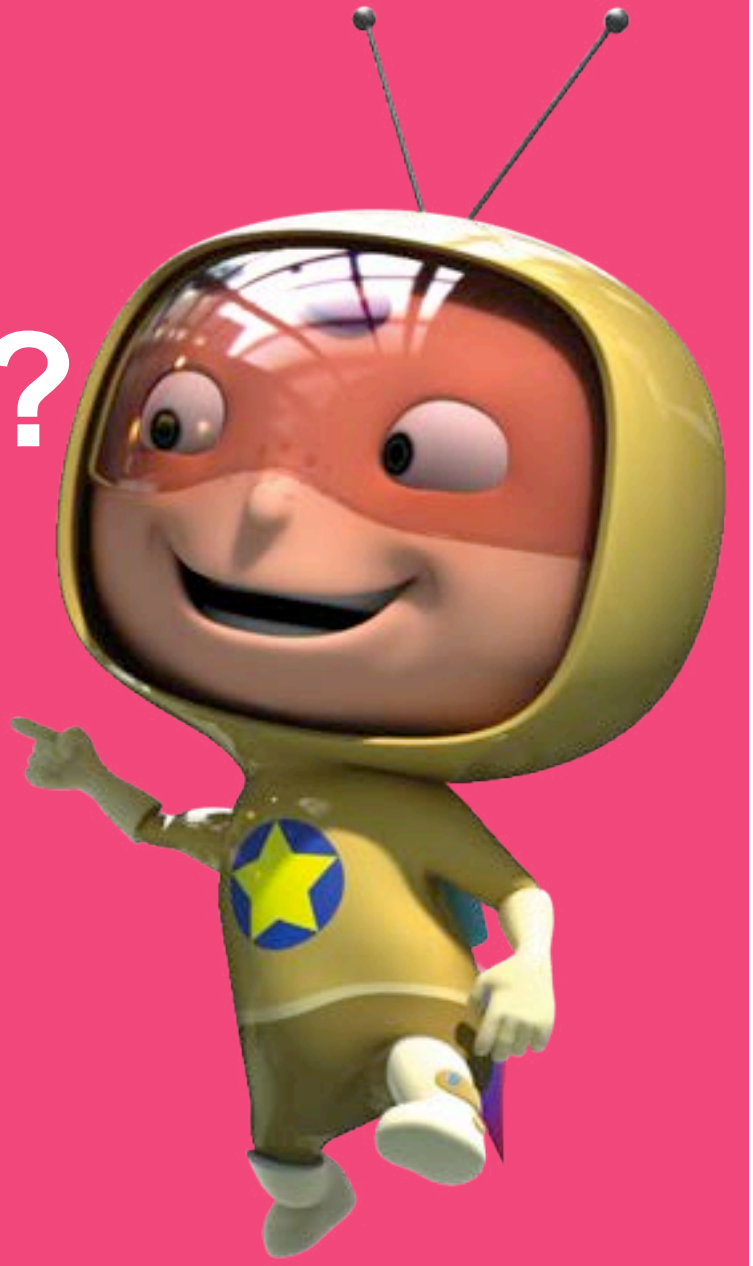
Real English?

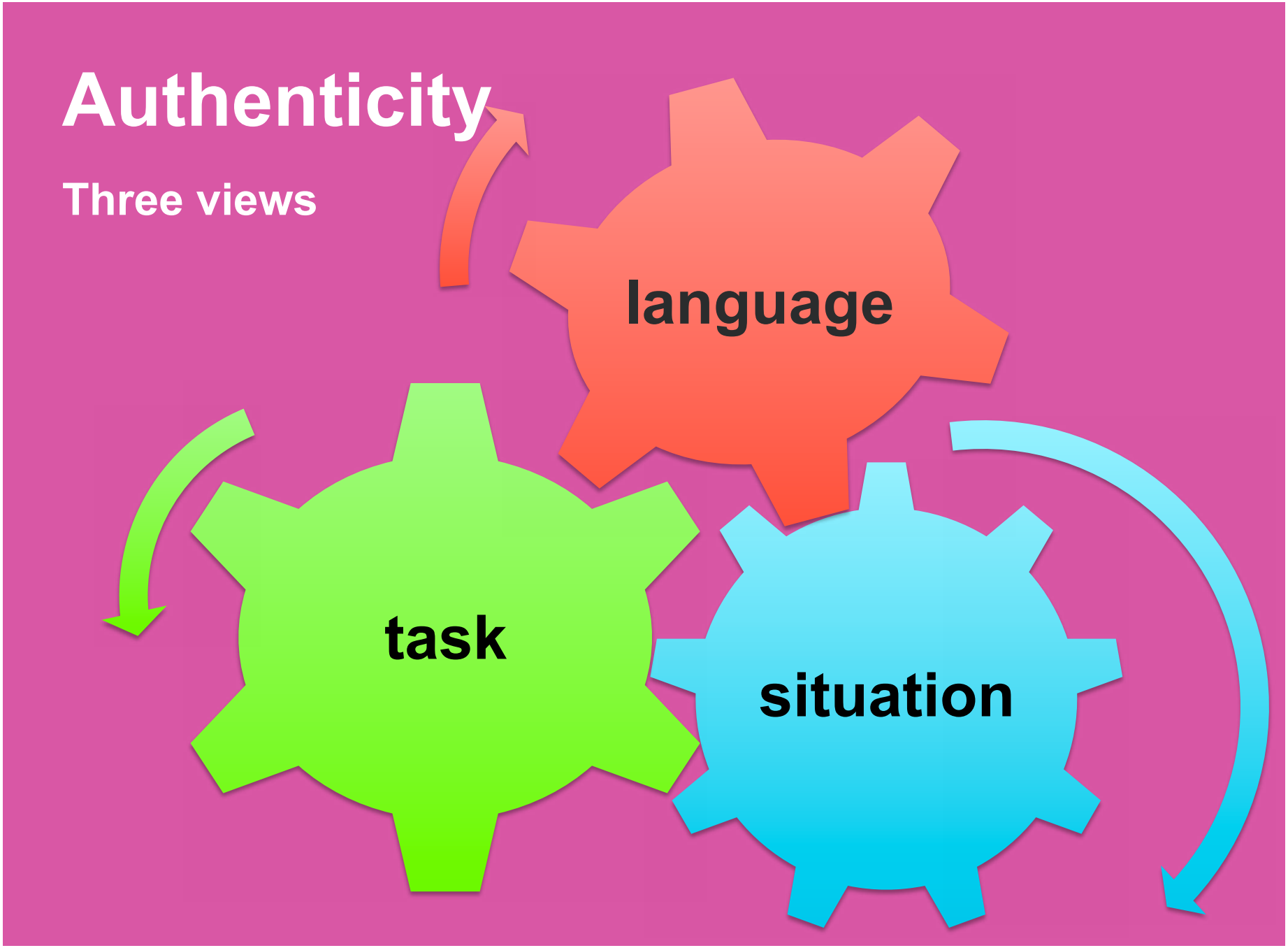
Creating authenticity in the classroom



Dr. Ken Beatty
TESOL Professor
Anaheim University

Authenticity

Three views



First, let's play an alphabet game!

You need a pen and paper.

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On your own!

- Name all the creatures you know, in alphabetical order.
- A is for alligator, B is for …, C is for …

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Play it again, but in pairs

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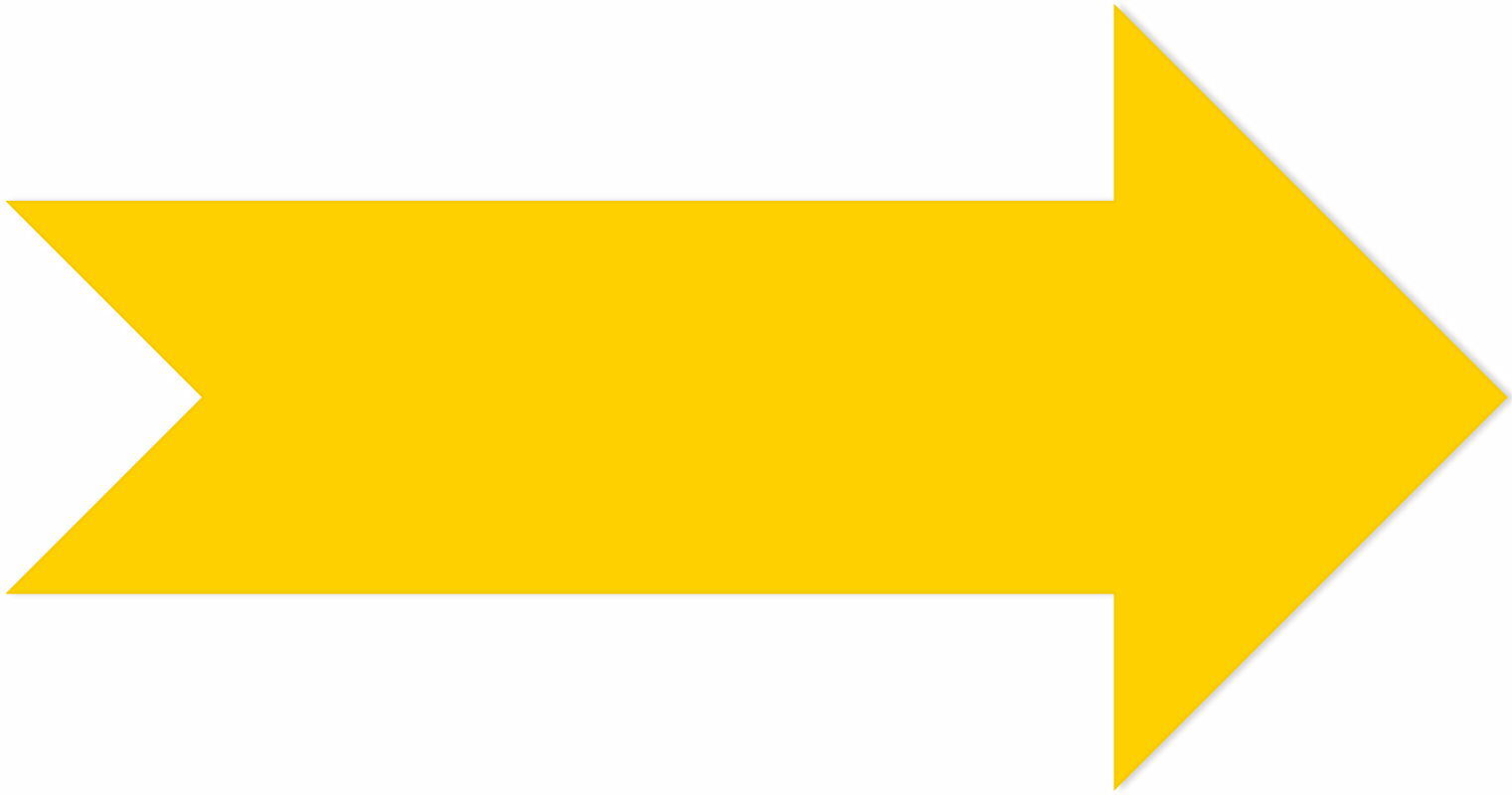
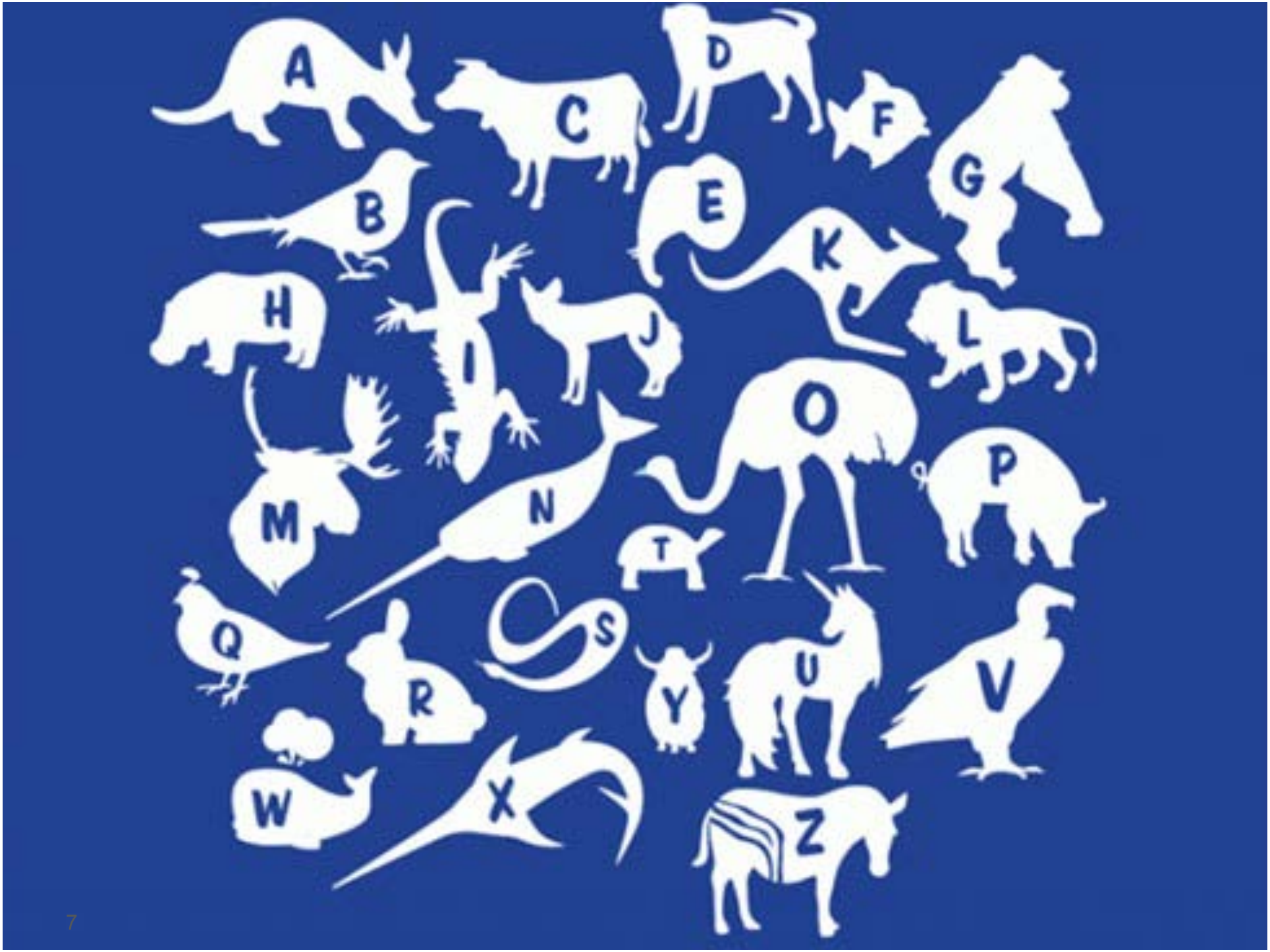
Play one last time, in a group, with a new image




A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L
M
N
O
P
Q
R
S
T
U
V
W
X
Y
Z

X-ray Fish (Pristella maxillaris)

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What is the significance of the three tasks?

1

2

3

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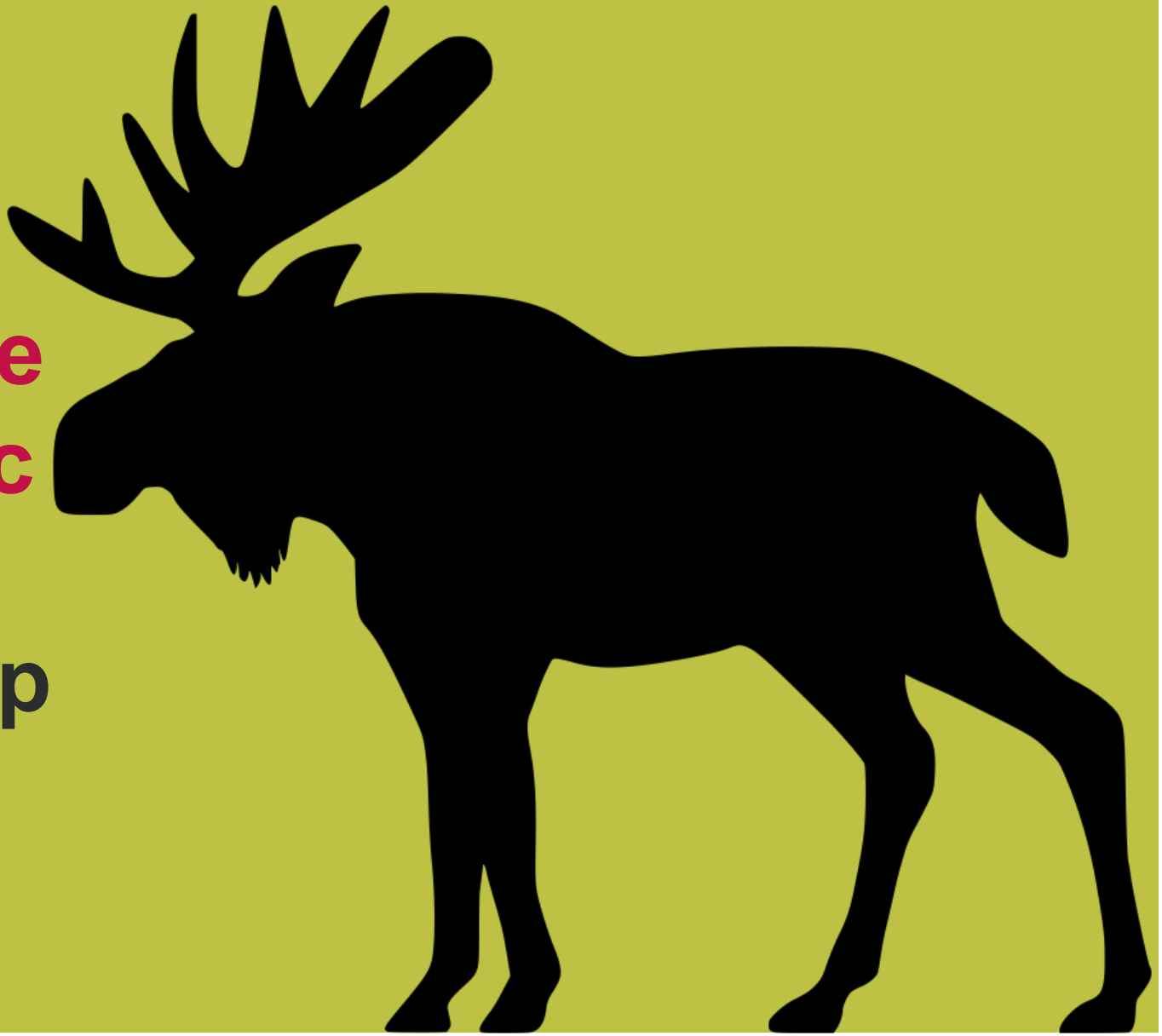
Are these authentic tasks?

Let's step back.

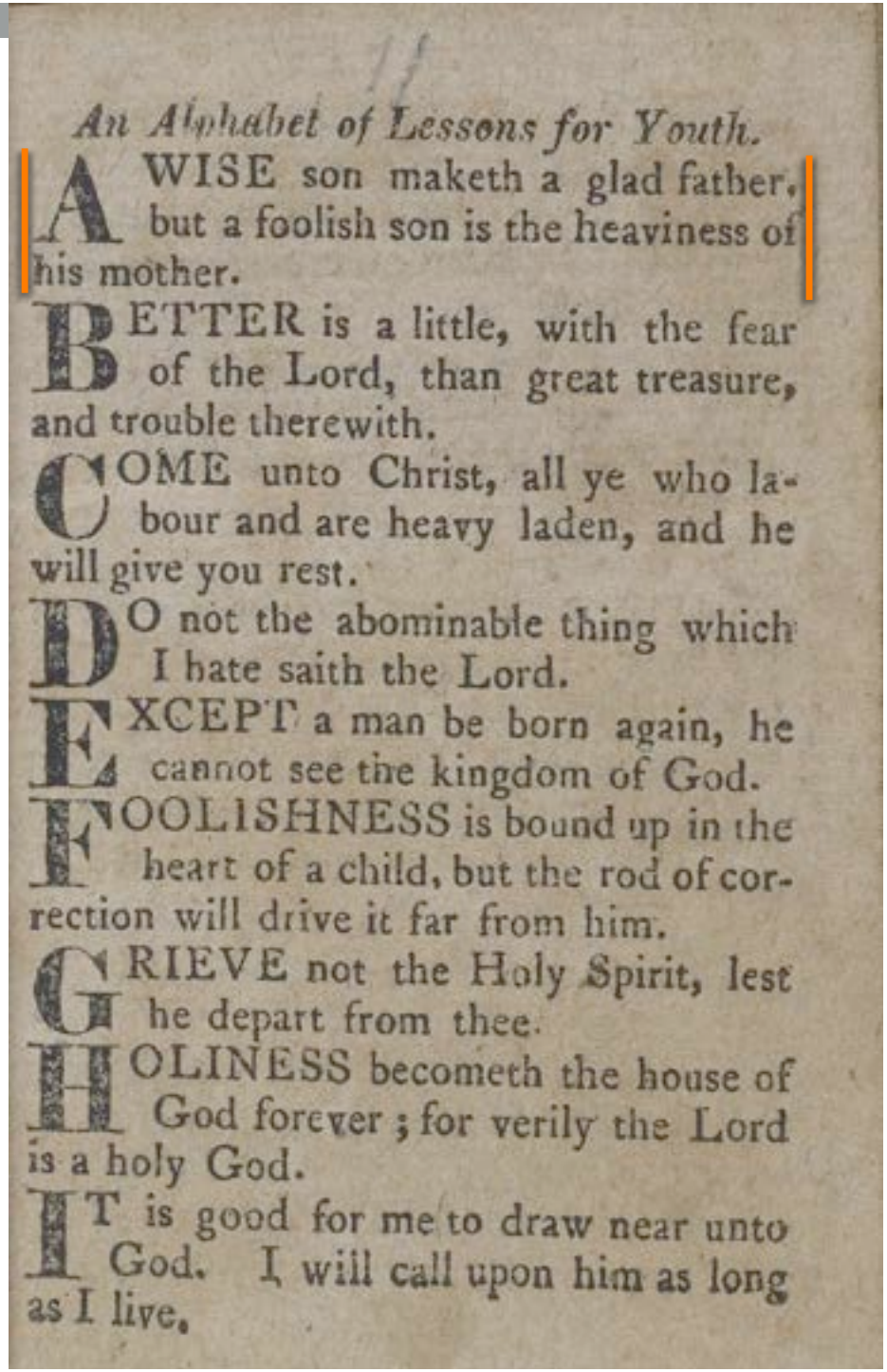


Authenticity

- Authenticity is a slippery concept.
- It's also a relatively new concept that continues to evolve.

18th century

- *The New England Primer,* 1771
- "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."



An Alphabet of Lessons for Youth.

A WISE son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

BETTER is a little, with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure, and trouble therewith.

COME unto Christ, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and he will give you rest.

DO not the abominable thing which I hate saith the Lord.

EXCEPT a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

FOOLISHNESS is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

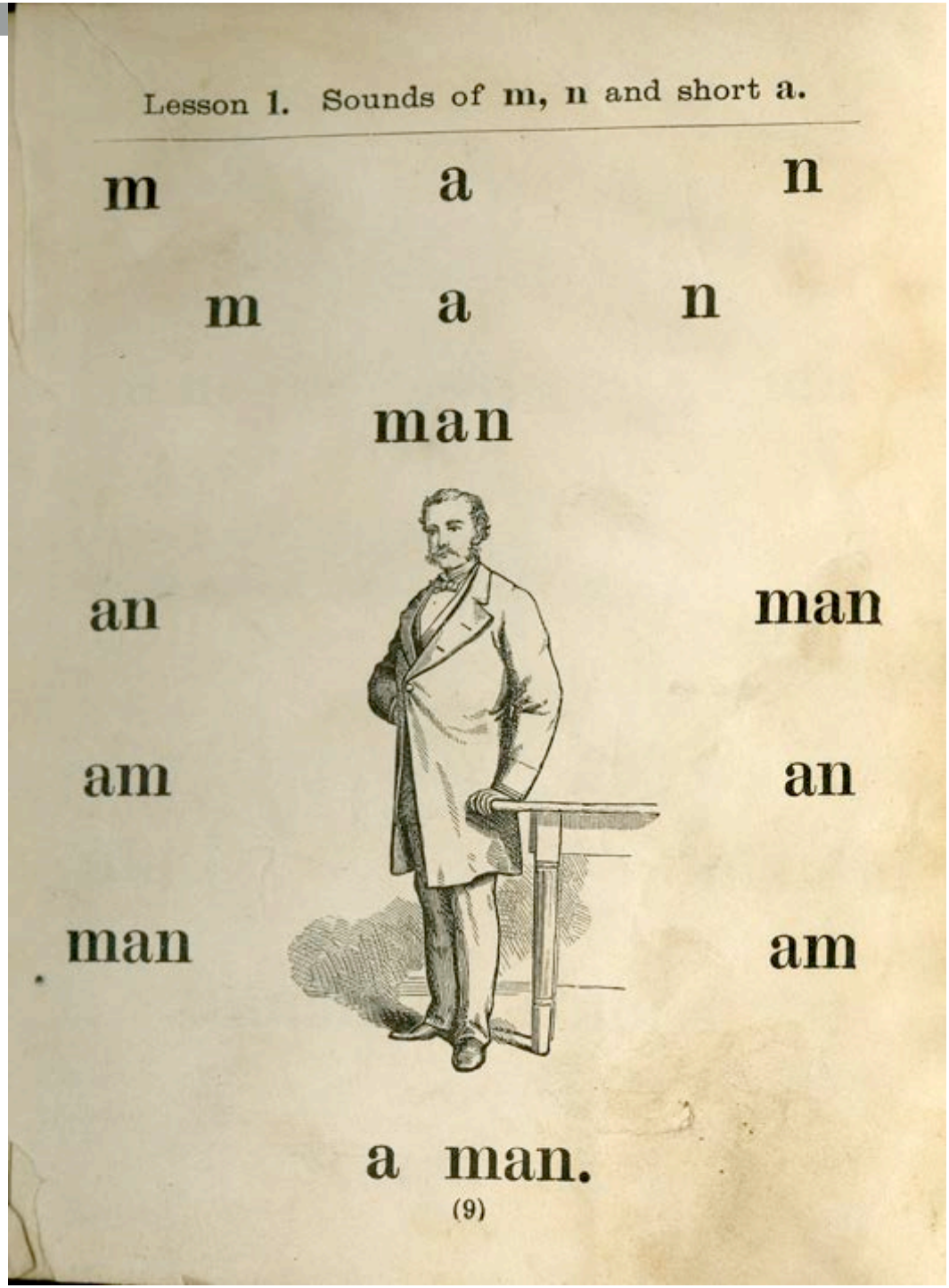
GRIEVE not the Holy Spirit, lest he depart from thee.

HOLINESS becometh the house of God forever; for verily the Lord is a holy God.

IT is good for me to draw near unto God. I will call upon him as long as I live.

19th century

The Monroe Reader, 1871



20th century
Who was Zerna Sharp?
(1889 -1981)

Zerna Sharp
(1889 -1981)
Teacher & writer

As she traveled from school to school, she noticed that children had reduced reading levels. She thought they should **identify** with the characters and learn one word at a time, repeated every third page.

20th century

Jane

See Jane.
See Jane run.
Run, Jane, run!

2

Baby

See Baby.
See Baby run.
Run, Baby, run!

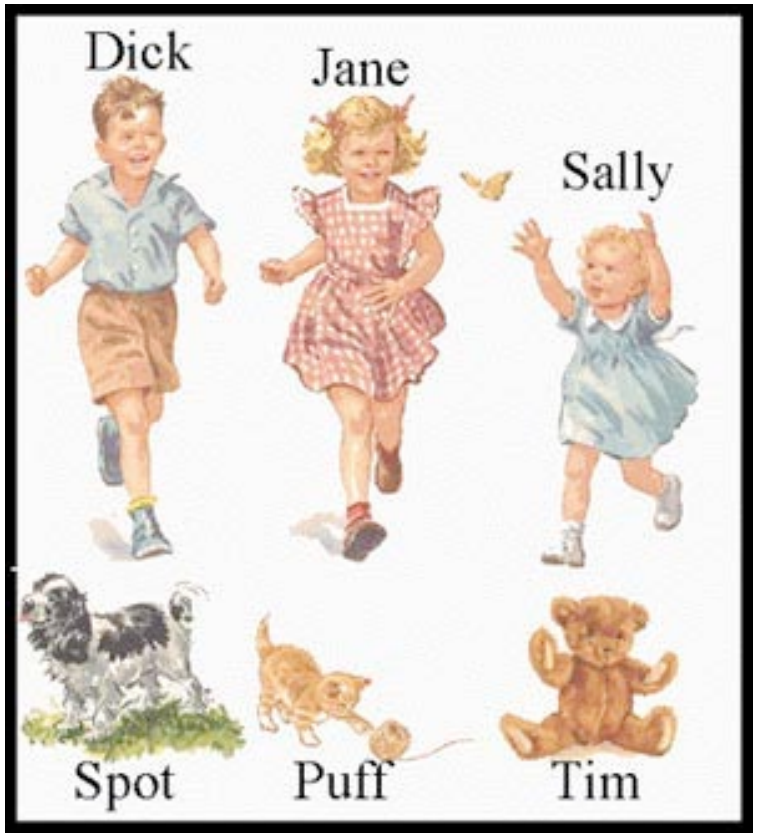
3

***Dick and Jane*, 1927**

Authentic: Yes/No/maybe?

1. “Oh! Look! Oh, oh, Look!”

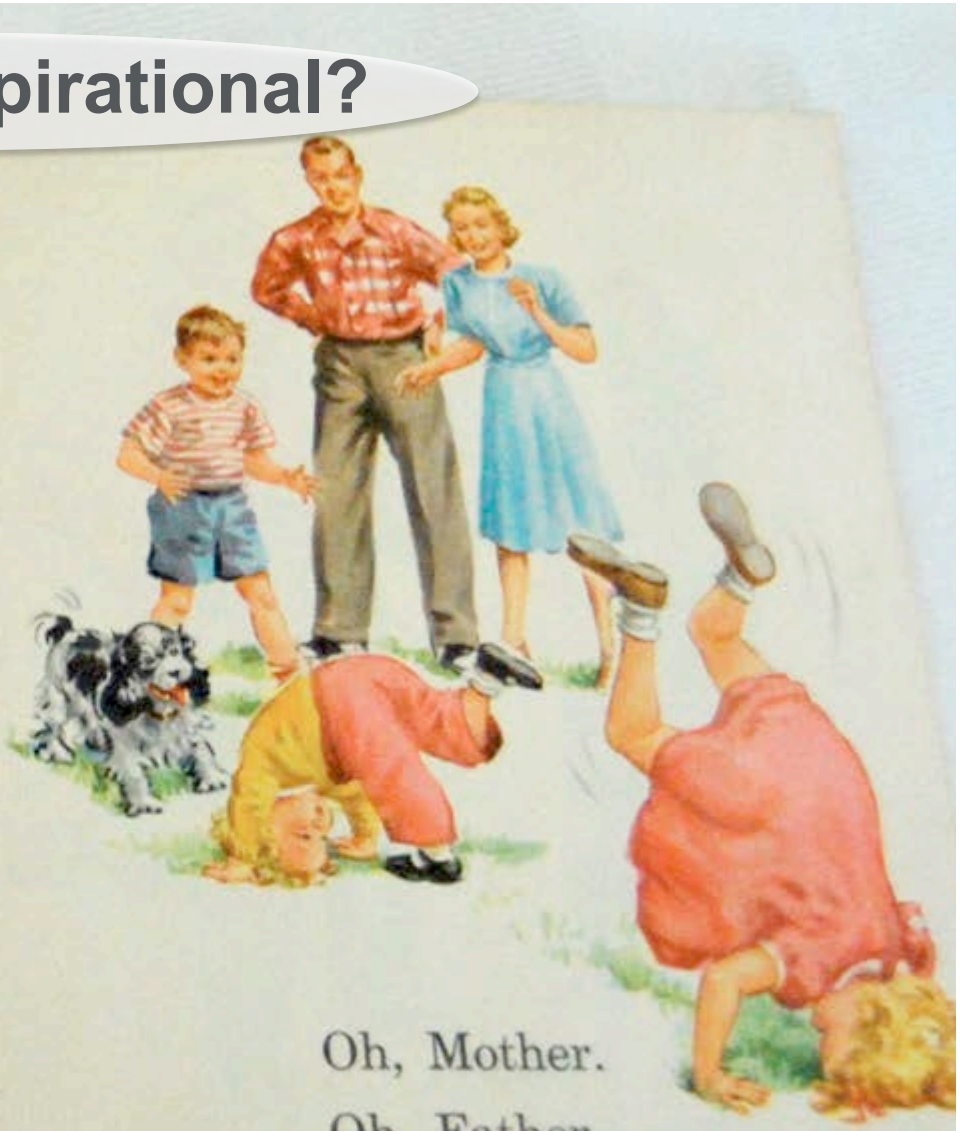
2. “Oh, father. See funny Dick. Dick can play. Oh, mother. Oh, Father. Jane can play. Sally can play.”



Authentic vs. Aspirational?

Oh, Father.
See funny Dick.
Dick can play.

12



Oh, Mother.
Oh, Father.
Jane can play.
Sally can play.

13

New toys and technologies

Look, Jane.
Look, look.
See Dick.

12

See, see.
Oh, see.
See Dick.

13

Father said, "No, Spot, no!
Look at Dick.
Get Dick.
Go and get Dick!"

Huge gender role issues!

Mother and Sally

But even when dad makes it to the kitchen …

Dick said, "Oh, Mother!
I want to go with you."

Father said, "Come here, Dick.
You can help me with this.
You and I will see what we can do."

Father said, "Look here.
See this go up.
Now down it comes.
See me get it."

Dick said, "I can do that.
I want to do that now."

ADAPTING TO LOCAL CONCERNS

Catholic & Seventh Day Adventist Editions from 1940s to 1960s

There were also Canadian and French-Canadian, versions

But does localization equal authenticity?

1964 Civil Rights Act

1965: introduction of black characters

"Look here," said Father.
"Look at Mother and me.
Here we come."

142

Pam said, "Away we go!
Mike and Penny and me.
Father and Mother.
Away we go!"

143

21st century

Authenticity vs. pedagogical purpose?

Is this conversation authentic?

Starship English

Unit 6

How many robots do you have?

Look, listen, and talk

Track 36

How many robots do you have?

One.

What color is it?

It's red.

How many dinosaurs do you have?

Seven.

What color are they?

They're green and yellow.

How many dinosaurs does he have?

None!

38

21st century

Which is more important, authenticity or pedagogy?

Starship English

Unit 6

How many robots do you have?

Look, listen, and talk

Track 36

How many robots do you have?

One.

What color is it?

It's red.

How many dinosaurs do you have?

Seven.

What color are they?

They're green and yellow.

How many dinosaurs does he have?

None!

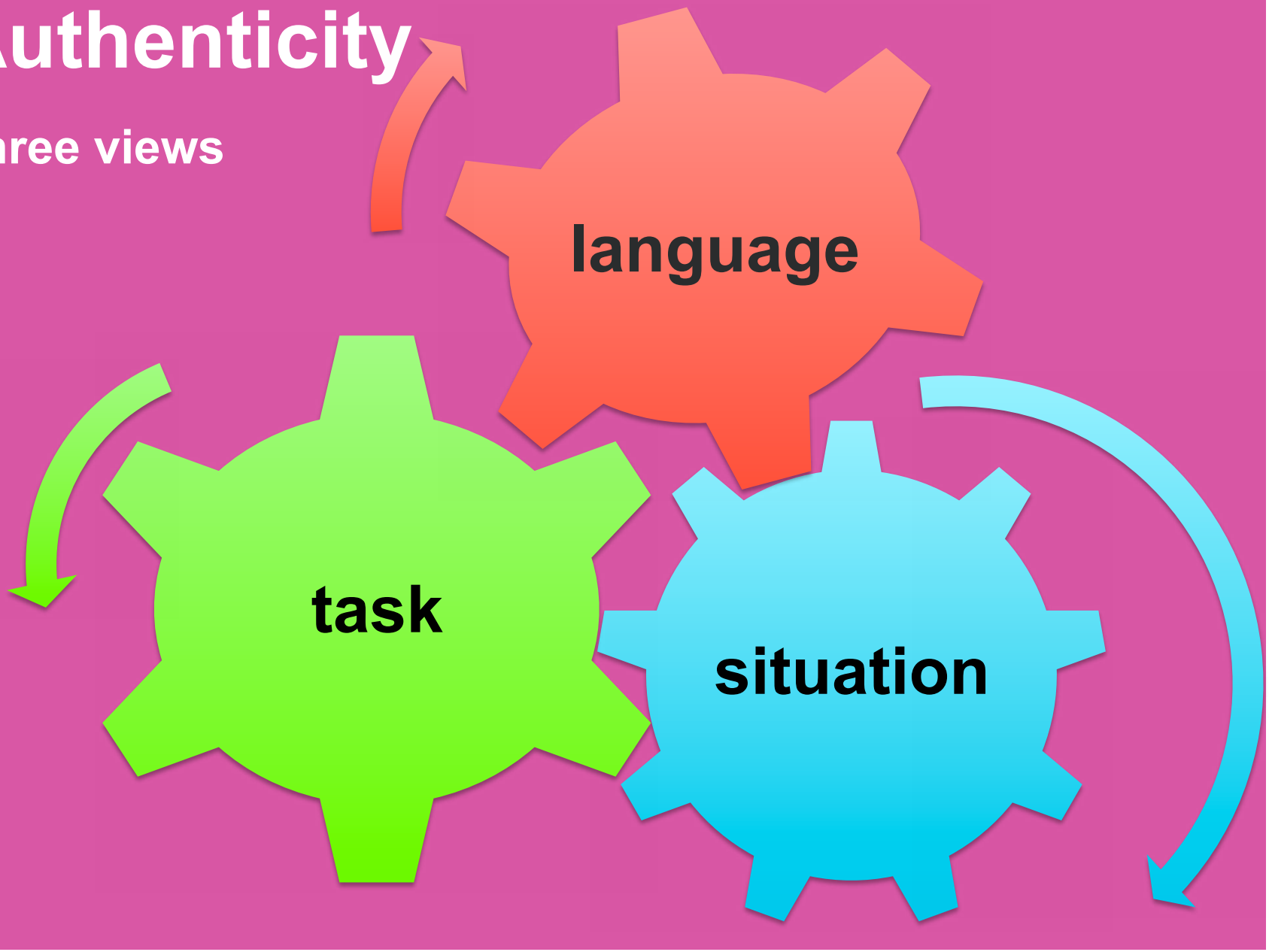
38

21st century Pedagogical tasks

- Vocabulary
- Questions
- Answers
- Numbers
- Colors
- Punctuation
- Conjunctions
- Contractions
- Pronouns
- Verbs: *to be, to do, to have*
- Subject-verb agreement

Authenticity

Three views



The theoretical perspective:
Defining authenticity

- **Nunan** (1988) “those [materials] which have been produced for purposes other than to teach language” (p. 99)
- **Rogers & Medley** (1988) the criteria should include the quality, appropriateness and naturalness of the language rather than the source and purpose of the sample
- **Widdowson** (2012): language has to do with genuineness and is a social construct
- **Cardew** (2006) “just because the materials are authentic, it is no guarantee that the lesson will be successful.”

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Authenticity

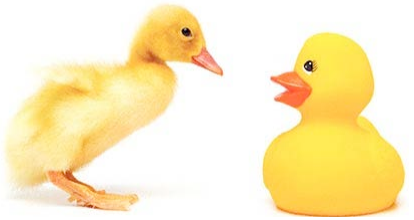
No PARSNIP!

Topics to be avoided: politics, alcohol, religion, sex, narcotics, *isms* (*communism* for example) and pork.

Look at four language excerpts:

Which of the following four excerpts is an example of authentic language?

Excerpt 1:



A: Where are you going?
B: I'm going to the post office.
A: What are you doing?
B: I'm buying some paper and two envelopes.
A: What's he doing?
B: He's writing a postcard.
A: Who is it for?
B: It's for his grandma.

1

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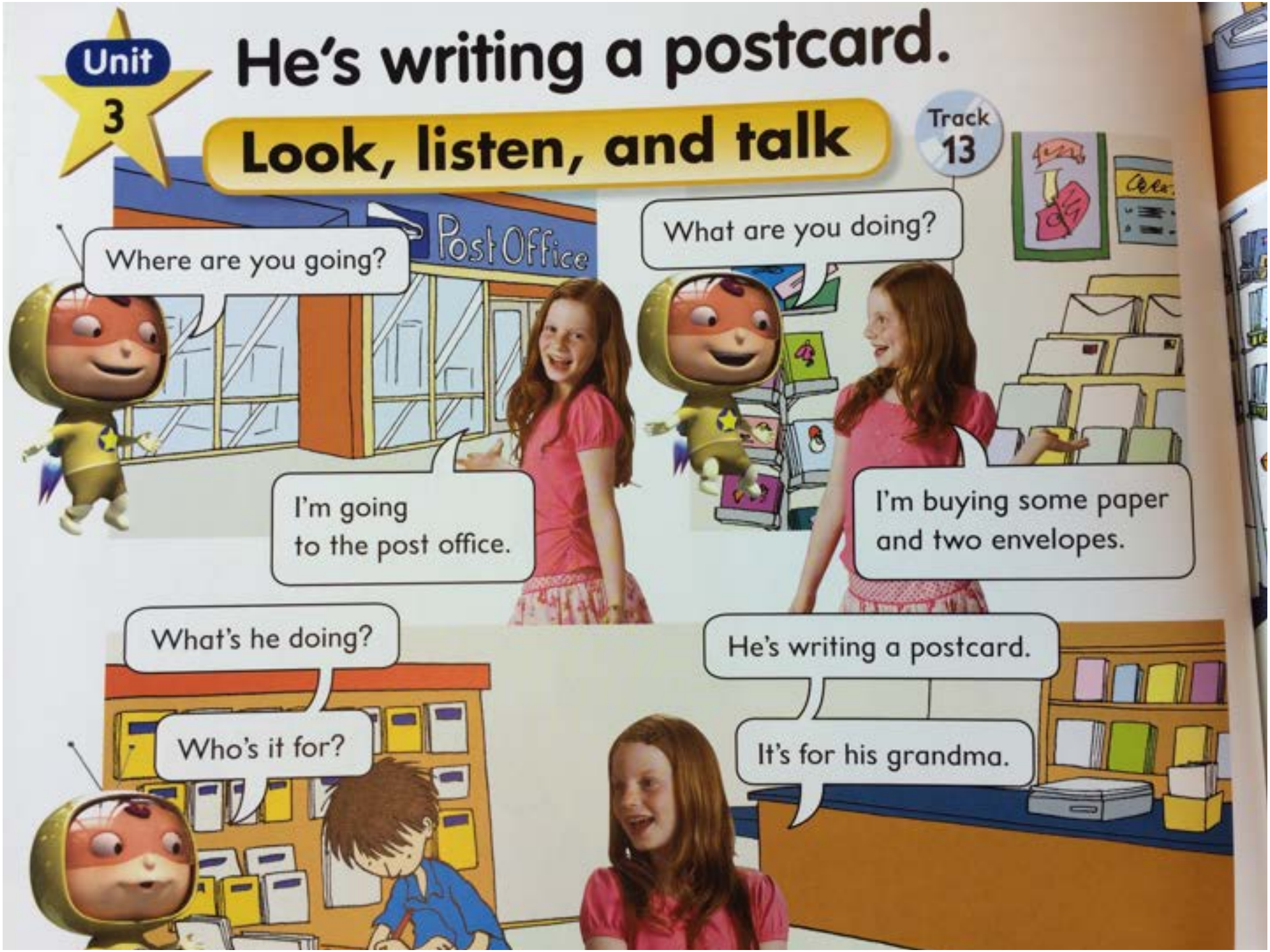
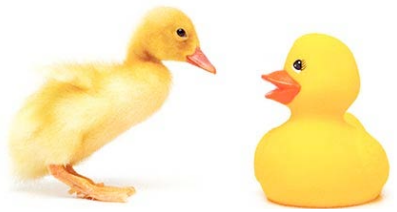

Unit 3
He's writing a postcard.
Look, listen, and talk
Track 13
Post Office
Where are you going?
I'm going to the post office.
What are you doing?
I'm buying some paper and two envelopes.
What's he doing?
Who's it for?
He's writing a postcard.
It's for his grandma.

Excerpt 2:



A: Wow, this spider can bite. It has big fangs.
B: Have you ever been bitten by a spider?
A: No, but I've been stung by a bee, and it hurt.
B: Let's look at that bee over there. It's the biggest bee I've ever seen!

2

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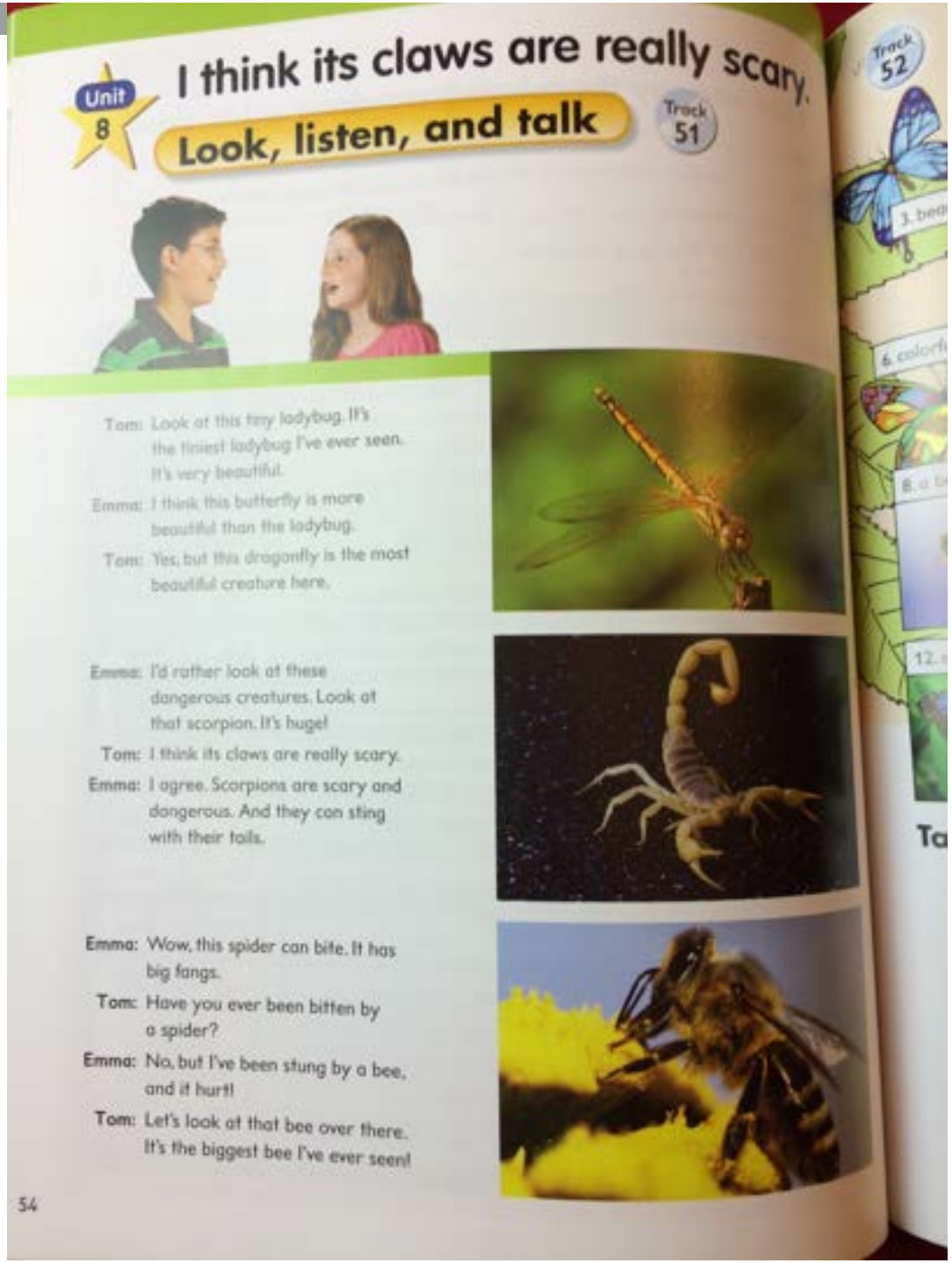
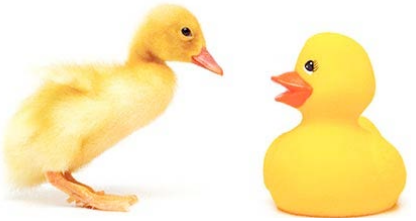
Excerpt 2

A: Wow, this spider can bite. It has big fangs.
B: Have you ever been bitten by a spider?
A: No, but I've been stung by a bee, and it hurt.
B: Let's look at that bee over there. It's the biggest bee I've ever seen!



Excerpt 3:



A. How was Egypt?
B: It was great. We were taken to some really interesting places by our guides.
A: What did you like the best?
B: I liked the pyramids and The Great Sphinx.
A: What's so good about the pyramids?
B: Well, they're huge and they're built from really big blocks of stone. And they're about 4,000 years old!

3

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Unit 5

How was Egypt?

Look, listen, and talk

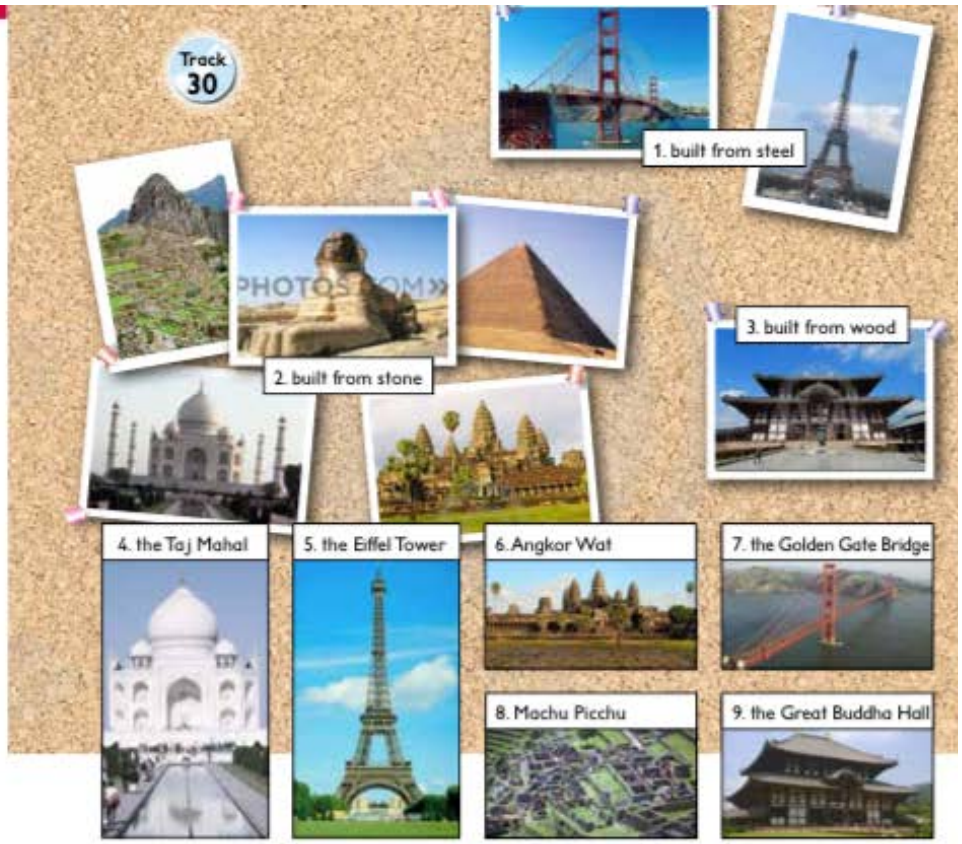
Track 29

Emma: How was Egypt?
Tessa: It was great. We were taken to some really interesting places by our guides.
Emma: What did you like the best?
Tessa: I liked the pyramids and The Great Sphinx.

Emma: What's so good about the pyramids?
Tessa: Well, they're huge and they're built from really big blocks of stone. And they're about 4,000 years old!
Emma: Wow! I didn't know they were built so long ago.

Emma: Why were the pyramids built?
Tessa: They were built for the Egyptian pharaohs. Here, take a look at this guidebook. It has lots of information about how and why the pyramids were built.

Track 30



Talk.

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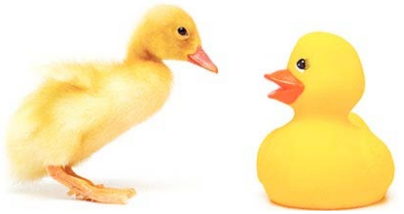
Excerpt 4:



A: Do you think we could watch a movie?
B: Ah, yeah. That's gonna happen. Have you practiced piano?
A: I'll just get a snack first?
B: Sure. We can eat it during the movie.

Excerpt 4: What would a teacher or textbook do?

A: ~~Do you think we c~~Could we watch a movie?
B: ~~Ah, yeah. That's gonna happen.~~ No, we can't. Have you practiced piano?
A: No, I haven't. ~~I'll just get~~ May I have a snack first?
B: ~~Sure. We can eat it during the movie.~~ No, you may not.

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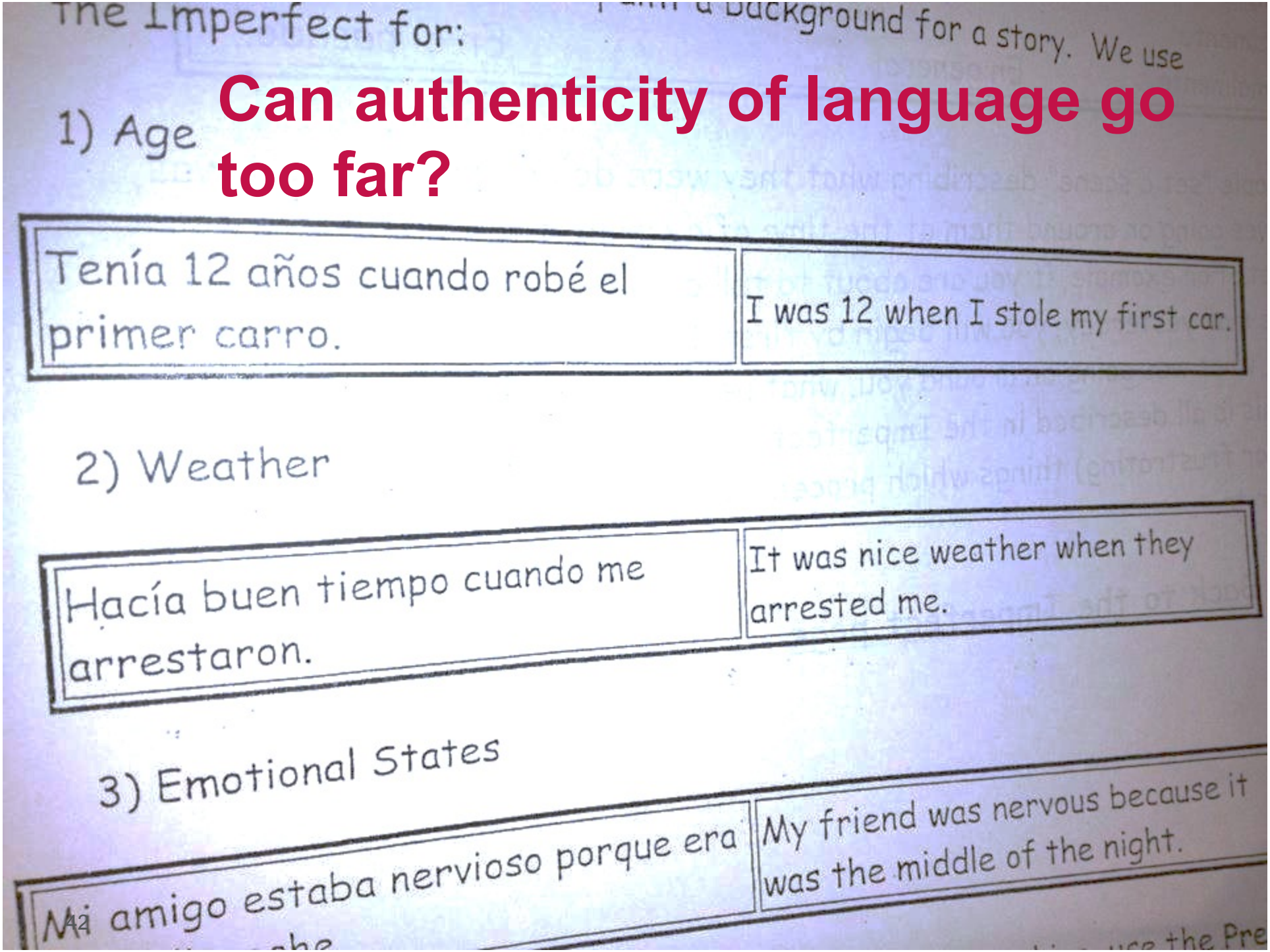
The Imperfect for:
background for a story. We use
1) Age
Can authenticity of language go too far?
Tenía 12 años cuando robé el primer carro.
I was 12 when I stole my first car.
2) Weather
Hacía buen tiempo cuando me arrestaron.
It was nice weather when they arrested me.
3) Emotional States
Mi amigo estaba nervioso porque era
My friend was nervous because it was the middle of the night.

Authenticity

1

2

3

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inauthentic, constructed, authentic

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lemonade $.50
potato salad $1.00
sandwich $3.00
watermelon $1.50
strawberry $1.00
popsicle $1.00
ketchup FREE
milkshake $2.00
mustard FREE

bell peppers in a tasty cheese sauce, melted in the oven and

Inauthentic, constructed, authentic?

Buffalo Chicken Quesadillas

Delicious grilled chicken tossed in our buffalo style hot sauce, melted Monterey jack cheese, and folded in to a crispy hot tortilla. Served with a side of blue cheese dipping sauce. 8.99

Fried Mozzarella Sticks

Hot and gooey inside. Crisp and golden outside. Served with marinara sauce. 7.99

Moose Boneless Wings

Tender chicken strips served with your choice of one of our dipping sauces (blue cheese, hot sauce, or mild sauce). 8.99

Add .50 cents for more than one type of sauce.

Guacamole, Salsa & Chips

Handmade guacamole and fresh salsa served with corn tortilla chips. Olé! 4.49

Pot Stickers Chinese Pork Dumplings

Steamed, then pan-fried and served with Asian sesame sauce. 7.99

Steakburger Sliders

Good things come in fours, so we are serving up four delicious sliders. Each juicy burger is topped with carmelized onions and served with a chipotle mayo on a hearth baked roll. 8.99

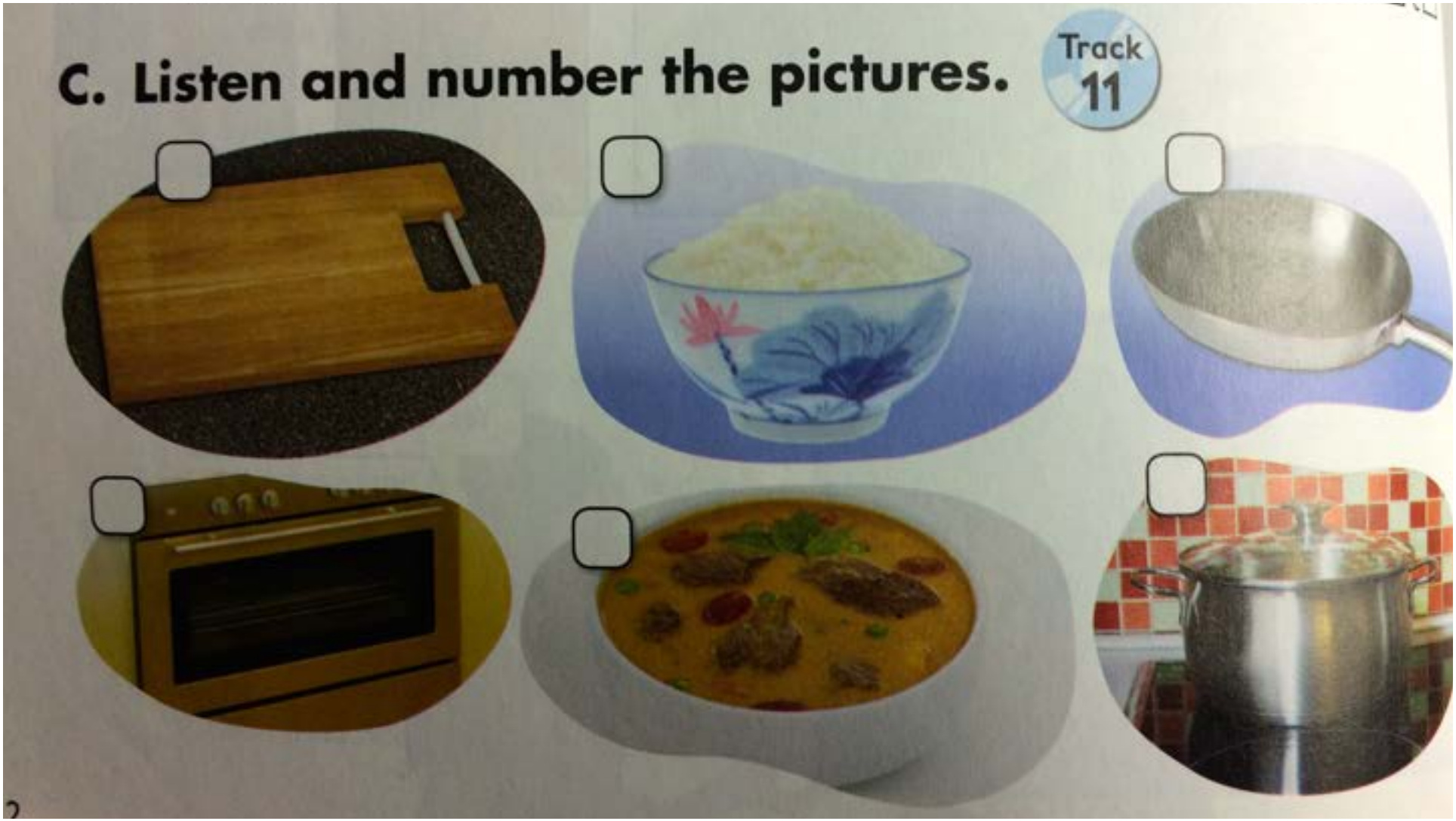
During summer, moose consume thirty to forty pounds of vegetation a day.
That would be like you or me eating 7 pounds of salad every day.

= A MOOSE TOOTH SPECIALTY

Moose Boneless Wings

Tender chicken strips served with your choice of one of our dipping sauces (blue cheese, hot sauce, or mild sauce). 8.99

Listening discrimination



Role-play

B. Role-play with a partner.

Girl: I'm hungry. Let's make something for lunch.
Dad: What do you want to eat?
Girl: Can we make pancakes, please?
Dad: Yes. I like banana pancakes the best.
Girl: Do we need a recipe?
Dad: No. We just need flour, milk, and an egg.
Girl: Have you put the ingredients in the bowl?
Dad: Yes, and I've stirred the mixture.
Girl: I'll cut the bananas.
Dad: And I'll cook the pancakes.
Girl: Then we can eat them!

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Personalize

Listen

A. Listen and check. Track 9

1

☐ I have .... ☐ I've never ....

2

☐ I have .... ☐ I've never ....

3

☐ I have .... ☐ I've never ...

4

☐ I have .... ☐ I've never ....

5

☐ I have .... ☐ I've never ....

6

☐ I have .... ☐ I've never ...

Pract

A. Numl

☐ Yes, I'll h

1 Do you

B. Rol

Girl: I'm

Dad: W

Girl: C

Dad: Y

Girl:

Dad:

Girl:

Dad:

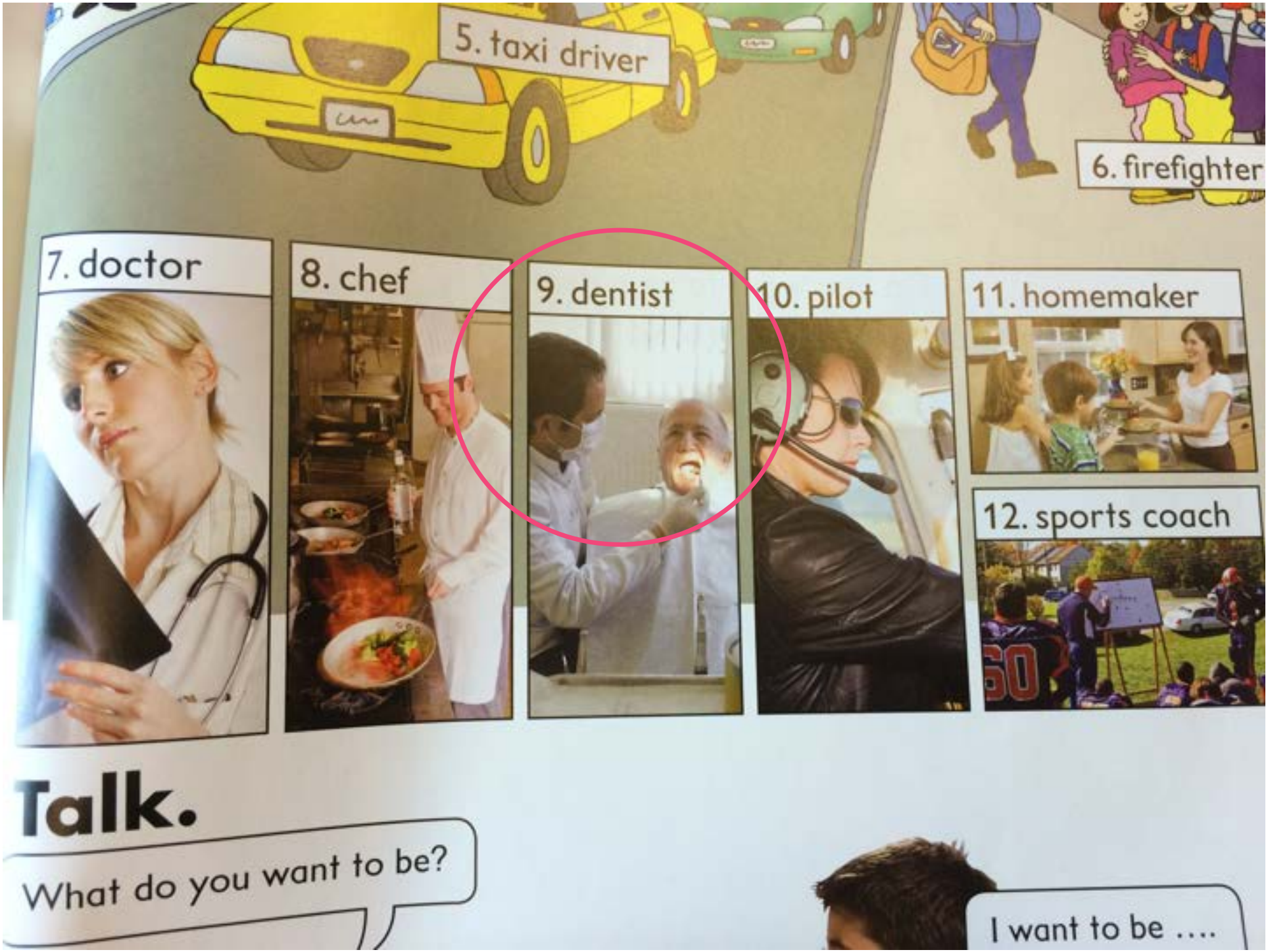
Girl:

Authenticity

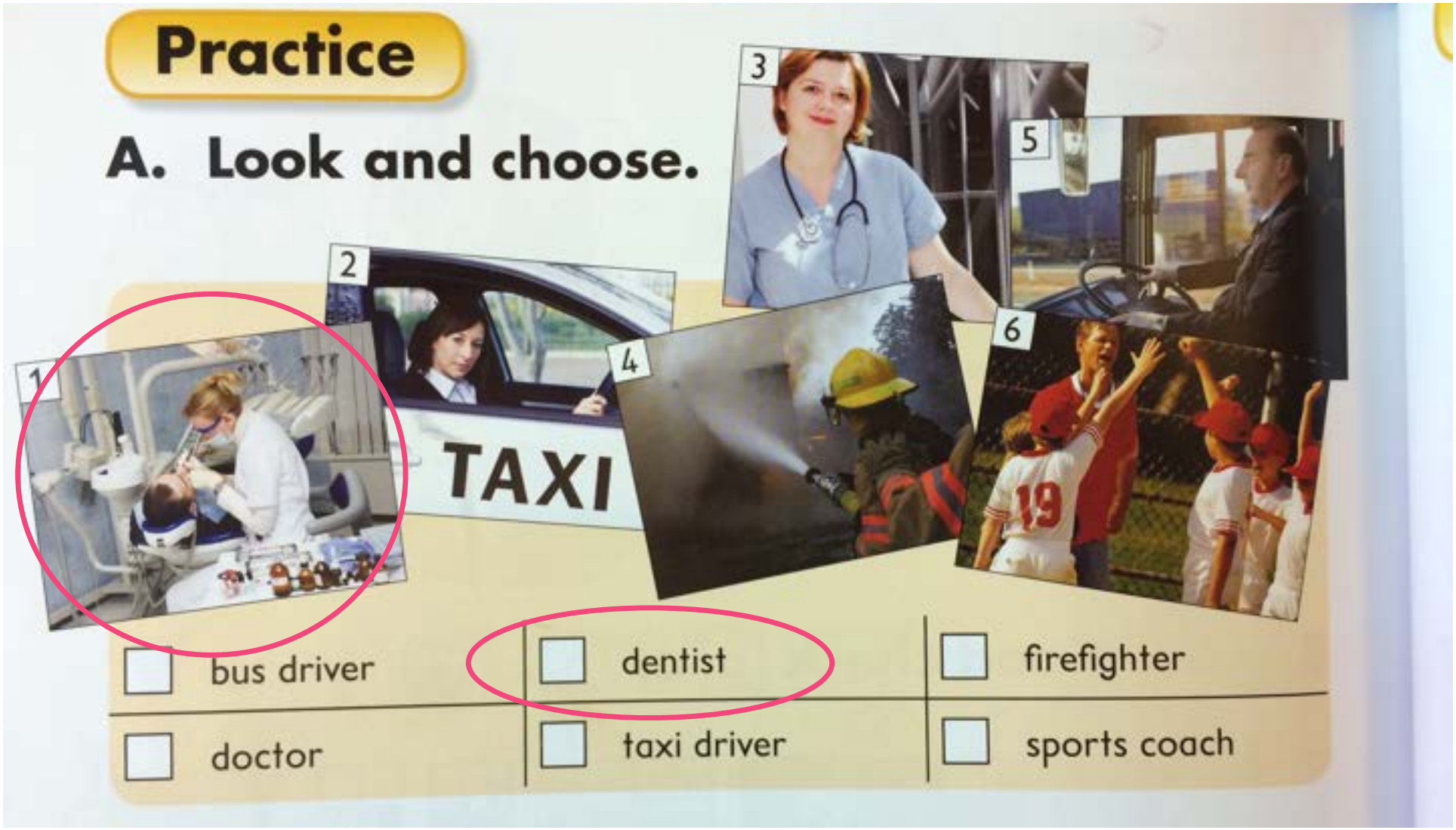
What are the opportunities for learning in place?

Authentic situation:
Moscow's Pushkin Museum, The Porch of the Caryatids

Where's the authenticity in the situation?


5. taxi driver
6. firefighter
7. doctor
8. chef
9. dentist
10. pilot
11. homemaker
12. sports coach
Talk.
What do you want to be?
I want to be ....

An authentic situation/task?



Authentic Situation:
going to the dentist?

What's the range?

- Inauthentic
- Constructed
- Authentic

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And selected materials …

We continually make choices about what language, tasks and situations we use to engage our students.

What can we take away from all of this?

Four rules

1. **Construct** materials from authentic sources to familiarize learners with language: vocabulary, structure and usage.
2. **Develop** learner strategies to deal with the unexpected in authentic language, tasks and situations.
3. **Create** pedagogical scenarios for roleplays in which learners play parts connected with their own realities.
4. **Introduce** authentic materials learners are likely to come across and develop realistic L1 course content in terms of language, tasks and situations (but don't reinvent the wheel).

Rethink authenticity

"… both educators and materials designers need to stop thinking about authenticity as a dictated imperative having an 'either-or' quality but rather think of it as being multifaceted and applicable to different phases of language classroom processes."
(Shomoossi & Ketabi, 2007)

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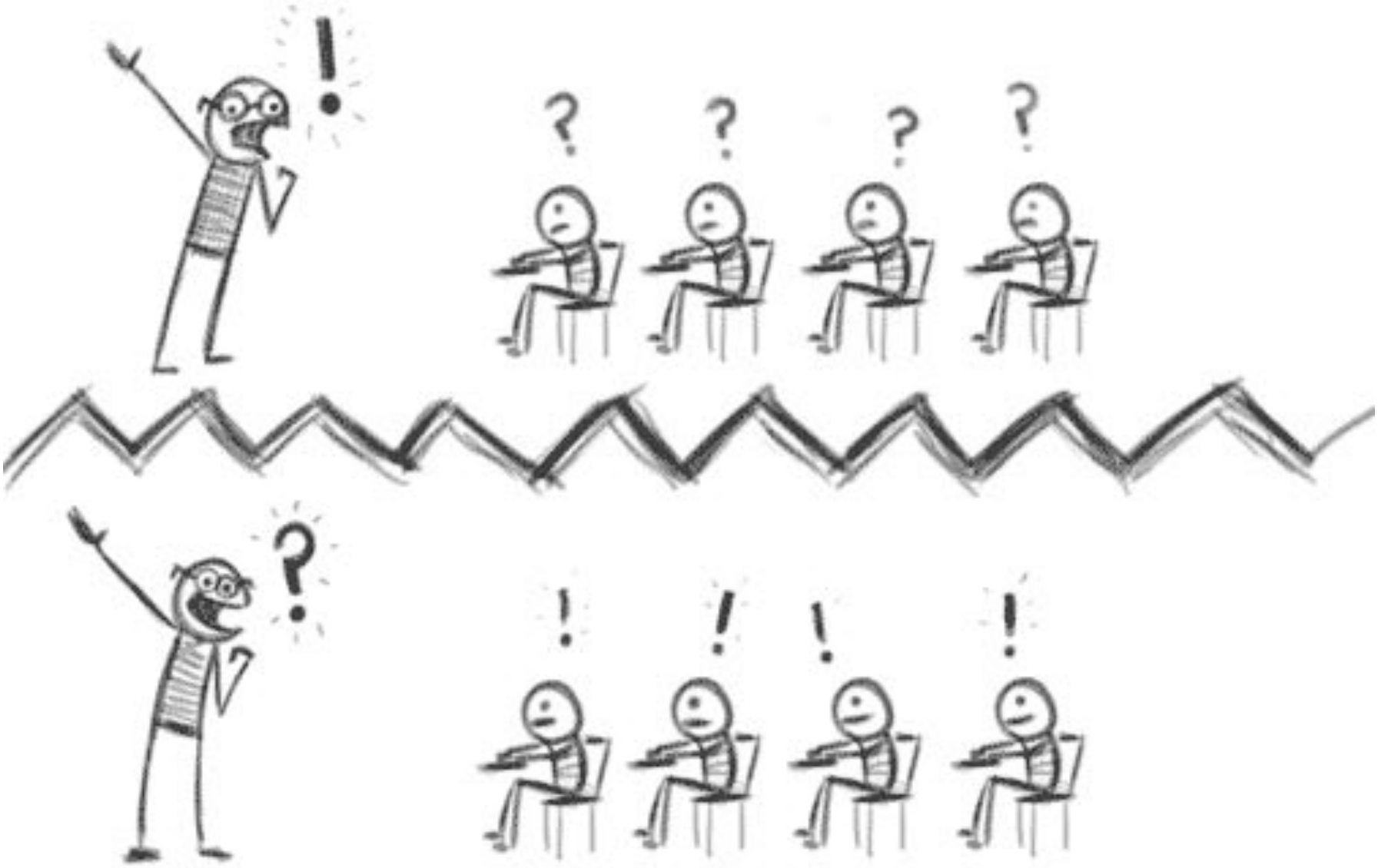

Questions?

Dr. Ken Beatty

kenbeatty@mac.com

LinkedIn