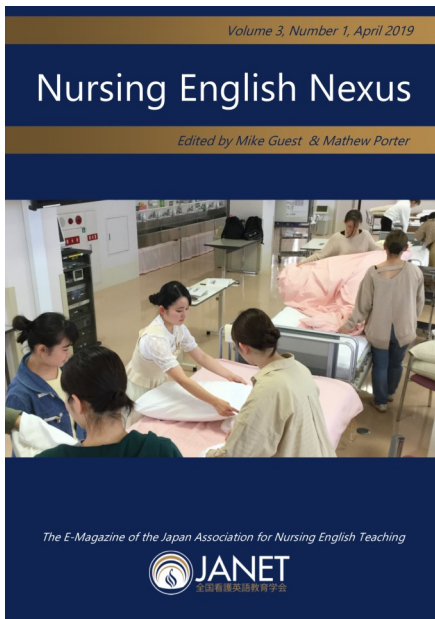


# Poster Projects for Nursing Students

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## Poster Projects for Nursing Students

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Posters are a great way to engage EFL students in both individual and group projects that include both written and spoken output. Such projects can be used at various levels of proficiency and with different age groups. For example, students from elementary, junior high, and high schools could be asked to make a poster about their favorite animal, food, sport, or manga character. For general English topics, high school or university students could be asked to make a poster about a famous person, an important invention, or a historical event. For cultural purposes, students could make posters about a foreign country or city they would like to visit, or a Japanese festival or holiday.

In the context of teaching English to university nursing students in Japan, I have recently carried out two relevant poster projects described here: 1)

major organs and parts of the body (in the spring semester), and 2) health-related NGOs (in the fall semester). The posters were then displayed on the classroom walls (for a week or two), and following the carousel presentations (explained below), students were given small stickers to put on their favorite posters, as a form of voting for the best examples, the creators of which were then 'cheered' for their job well done.

### Organ/Body Part Posters

To begin the poster project on major organs and parts of the body, I first generated a list of 17 relevant topics, as follows: eyes, ears, nose, mouth, brain, bones, blood, muscles, skin, heart, lungs, stomach, intestines, liver, kidneys, bladder, and gallbladder.

I then wrote these items on slips of paper and put them in a container. As there were about 30

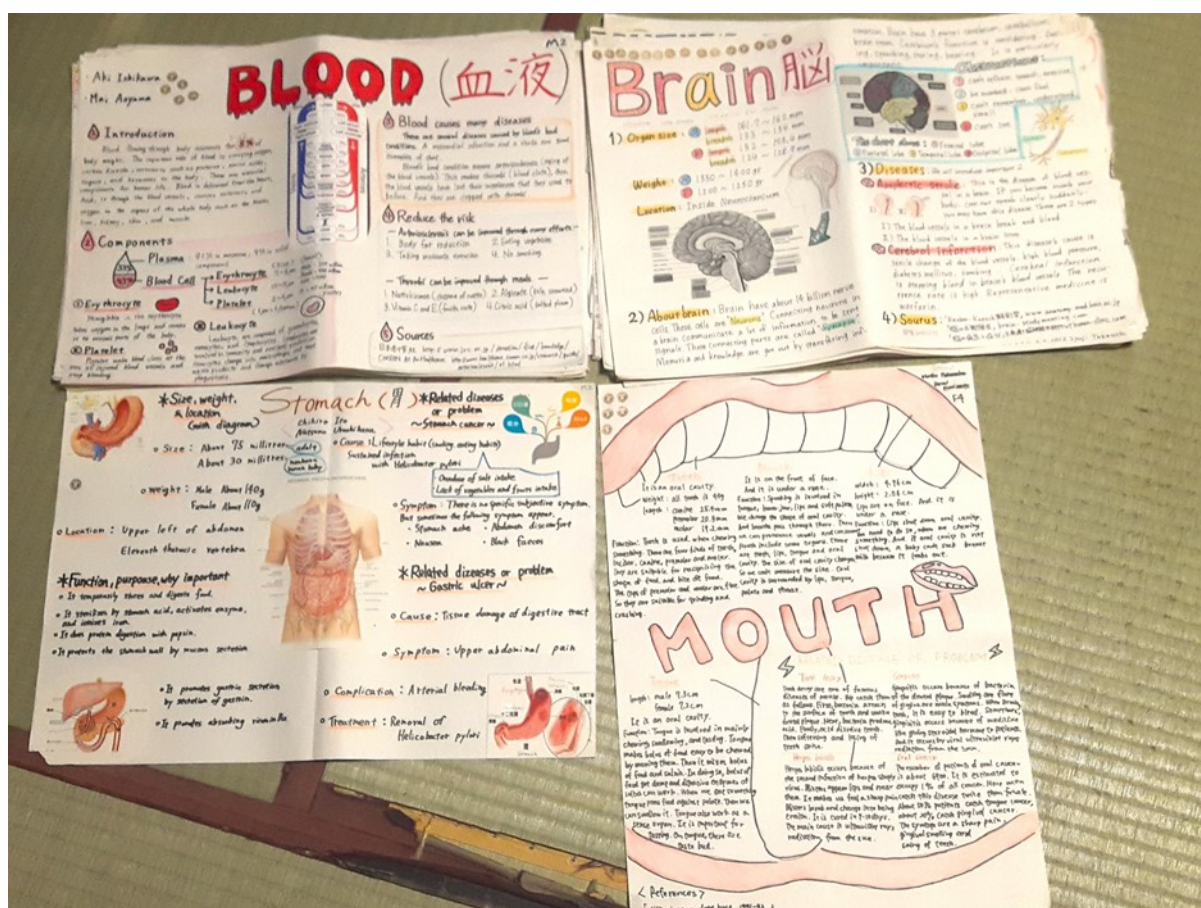


Fig. 1: Organ/body part posters created by first-year students in 2018.

students per class—and not enough topics to do individual posters—I asked them to find a partner on their own. The pairs then randomly chose one slip of paper from the container, to avoid a situation where multiple pairs would want to do the same organ/body part. After the 15 items were drawn, I allowed the pairs to either exchange their topic with either of the two remaining items, or else trade amongst each other if they wanted.

Next, I passed out a blank A3 paper to each pair, and explained that they should research and design a poster about their chosen organ/body part which included the following: 1) a diagram of the organ/body part, 2) its average size and location, 3) its function/purpose, and 4) common problems that affect the organ/body part. Examples of the posters can be seen in Fig. 1.

### Medical NGO posters

For the second semester poster project, I created a handout (Appendix A) with a number of suggested NGOs to choose from, and the following points for inclusion:

- Logo & Pictures
- Countries where it operates

- Purpose: Mission statement
- Annual budget or donations
- When it was founded (& by whom)
- Website or QR code
- Where it is based (headquarters)
- Appeal for support

Some of the suggested health-related NGOs included: The Japanese Red Cross Society, Medicines Sans Frontiers, Mercy Corps, Oxfam, Japan Heart, Good Neighbors Japan, Save the Children, Plan International, World Vision, UNICEF, AAR Japan: Assoc. for Aid & Relief, JOICFP, CARE, BAJ: Bridge Asia Japan, JVC: Japan Int'l Volunteer Center, ICAN: Int'l Children's Action Network, ACE: Action against Child Exploitation, Peace Winds Japan, and Humanitarian Medical Assistance.

As with the organ/body part poster project, the students could choose their own partners, and, either randomly choose their NGO from a container, or else sign-up on a list on a first-come, first-serve basis (alternatively, the teacher can assign partners and/or NGOs if they wish). Examples of these posters can be seen in Fig. 2.

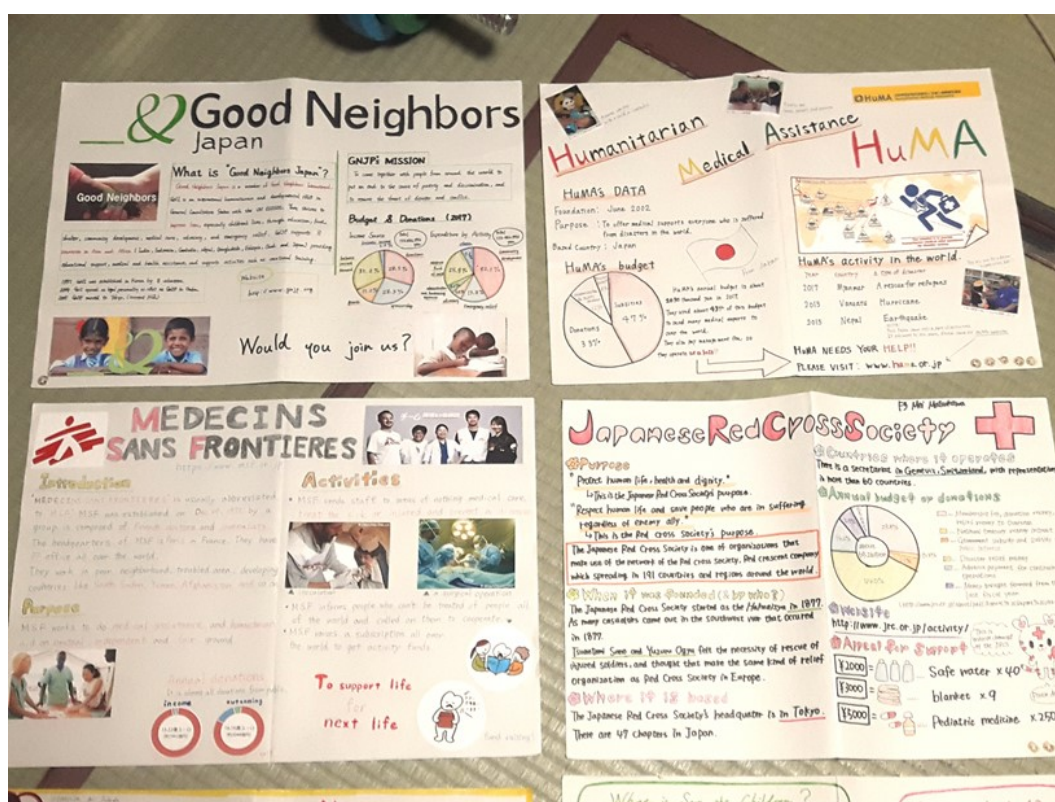


Fig. 2: Medical NGO posters created by first-year students in 2018.



As with the organ/body part poster project, the students could choose their own partners, and, either randomly choose their NGO from a container, or else sign-up on a list on a first-come, first-serve basis (alternatively, the teacher can assign partners and/or NGOs if they wish).

Among the benefits of these projects, beyond the written and spoken output in English, are that students develop skills in researching topics, selecting relevant data, summarizing information, designing layout, and engage in peer-to-peer learning.

### List of benefits for students

- Developing research & writing skills
- Displaying creativity with colorful design
- Advocating for a cause they care about
- Using persuasion to gain support (marketing)
- Understanding that writing is more than just reports for the teacher to grade
- Using English for real-world communication
- Presenting the results of their work publicly
- Learning from each other about organs/body parts and NGOs dealing with health problems
- Bonus: Helpful school promotion for Open Campus, Festivals, or Parents Days

### Speaking Activity: Poster carousel

In order to make this project interactive, with spoken output that included task repetition, the following poster carousel activity was used, in the same manner as explained by Foster and Hunter (2016):

Rather than have the students present to the whole class, the teacher divides the

pairs into As and Bs. The As stay with their poster while the Bs move in a clockwise direction to the next poster. The As make their presentation using the poster as a guide, and answer the Bs' questions. When they have finished, the Bs move in a clockwise direction to the next poster. The As now have to present for a second time to a new interlocutor. The process repeats until the Bs have returned to their original partner. At this point, the As and Bs swap over and the Bs make the presentation while the As visit the other presentations (p.289).

In conclusion, poster projects are an effective way to engage students in learning opportunities for both written and spoken output. For nursing students, the topics of organs/body parts and health-related NGOs are particularly relevant, and my students seemed to enjoy this interesting change of pace from their usual textbook-based lessons. Furthermore, they seemed very intrigued to see the concrete, real-world products of their classmates, which brought their academic studies to life. Therefore, I highly recommend this project for your own nursing students as well.

### Reference

Foster, P., & Hunter, A. (2016). When it's not what you do, but the way that you do it: how research into second language acquisition can help teachers to make the most of their classroom materials. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *SLA Research and Materials Development for Language Learning* (pp. 280-292). New York, NY: Routledge.

## Appendix A

## Handout for NGO Poster Project

**PROMOTING A BETTER WORLD with NGO POSTER PROJECTS****Who?:** High School or University Students (Writing class)

- Individually or in pairs/groups of 3



By Ray Franklin

**What?:** Choose an NGO or NPO

- Health or environmental related; non-political
- Either Japan-based or International

**Where?:** Research on the Internet: Download Logo & Pictures**When?:** Due in 2 weeks (or let students decide deadline)**Why?:** Consciousness raising about world problems**How?:** Include:

- Logo & Pictures
- Purpose: Mission statement
- When it was founded (& by who)
- Where it is based (headquarters)
- Countries where it operates
- Annual budget or donations
- Website or QR code
- Appeal for support



Step 1 – Explain the project; Show examples if possible

Step 2 – Students research on the Internet; Take notes (Don't copy!)

Step 3 – Students *handwrite* their posters on A3 paper (Not cut & paste)

Step 4 – Posters are displayed in classroom or school hallway

Step 5 – Presentation of posters to classmates in carousel format

Step 6 – Students put a small sticker on the poster they like best

Step 7 – Winners get cheered, and maybe a small prize

**Benefits for Students:**

1. Given **autonomy** in choosing topic
2. Develop research & writing skills
3. Display **creativity** with colorful design
4. Advocate for a cause they care about
5. Attempt **persuasion** to gain support (Marketing)
6. See that writing is more than just reports for the teacher to grade
7. Use English for **real-world message** communication
8. Present the results of their work publicly
9. **Learn from each other** about world problems and possible ways to solve them

**Bonus:** Good school promotion for Open Campus, Festivals, or Parents Day